Study Habit as Predictor of Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Imo State.

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Abstract

In this study, the researcher investigated study habit as predictor of academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Imo state. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study consisted of 27, 652 SS3 students while the sample size obtained through the proportionate sampling technique is 5,248 students. The instrument used to collect responses from the respondents was a 12 – item questionnaire titled; "Study Habit as Predictor of Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Imo State Questionnaire, (SHPAPSPSSISQ). The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and one from the Department of Educational Foundation. The instrument consists of three sections with a cumulative value of 0.84 considered high enough to be reliable for the study. The reliability of the instrument was established through a pilot – testing and analysing using Cronbach alpha. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer research questions and test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The correlation of coefficients was classified in the forms they exhibited. In testing the null – hypotheses, when p-value is equal or greater than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$), the null – hypothesis is accepted, when it is otherwise, it is rejected. It was found among other things, that study habit is not natural with student but can be acquired. It was then recommended that school authorities and parents should provide good learning environment to enable students develop good study habit.

Key Words: Study habit, Predictor, Academic performance, Public secondary schools.

Introduction

Study habit could be explained as the way and manner a student goes about his study. It can also be referred to, as attitude to learning (Edumark, 2011). By definition, it is the regular effort a student makes to study his books. It is the ability of a student to spend quality time with devoted attention to his study on a consistent basis. Augustine (2014) sees it as a routine activity directed by a student to his study in order to improve learning.

Carey (2015) stated that a student's study habit is corollary to his perception of learning. In order words, a students' attitude to learning is defined by how he sees learning

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and how he sees it to contribute to the achievement of his dreams in life. This suggests that a student's perceived destination, in term of dream or goal achievement determines his study habit.

Studying is different from reading. According to Jeffrey (2006), every student who studies reads but not every student who reads studies. Stressing on this, he contended that studying has to do with reading in between the lines of a book in order to internalize the contents while reading involves going through the contents of a book in order to get an idea of the content. The later he maintained provides a peripheral knowledge of any literature to the student.

However, it is argued that study habit is not natural with students but that a lot of factors can make or mar good study habits of a student. One of such factors is environment (Schwartz, 2017). Environment can be defined as the social circumstances that surround the place a student engages in study. It could be the location of the study venue that is within an industrial estate, market or sports arena. It could as well be a quiet place void of any form of distraction. Foer (2020) suggests that the climate (environment) of study to a large extent influences the outcome.

Another factor that determines study habit is the availability or otherwise of external support. A good number of students study while listening to music, such students do not exercise interest in learning if there is no music around them that stimulates the curiosity to study (Sheryn, 2018). As a matter of fact, they understand more where there is an external energising factor like music or any other organised sound that sustains their learning or studying interest for a prolong period.

Economic factors can also affect study habit. A student from a poor economic background cannot have a good study habit. Such a student battles with feeding, payment of fees and the purchase of books and cannot concentrate on his study. This is not however absolute.

Time management is relevant in discussing study habit. Sometimes it is not how long a student studies that matters but how consistent and the degree of comprehension. Roedger and Jeffery (2006) opined that the regularity with which a student studies makes what he does a habit and that such consistency makes for increase in learning. The need for proper time management by a student cannot be over emphasized. It helps a student to break the contents of the study into regimentations which makes him to control the study process and account for the outcomes.

Parental mentoring and monitoring can build a good study habit. In most cases, the socio – economic status of parents could be brought to bear n the scholarship of a student.

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Jegide (2012) stated that students from educated parents tend to do better in school than students from uneducated parents. This according to him is because they are mentored and monitored by their parents who are conversant with what studying and learning entails.

However, it could be important to say that the study habit a student can be meaningful if in addition to right attitude to learning, he adopts a right or a more impactful method of reading or study. Edumark (2011) explained that no method of reading or study is the best but that the one to use depends the psychological and emotional disposition of the student at a given or particular time.

In most cases, students adopt memorization. This is the process of committing the contents of the study to memory. Some people lampoon against this but it could be the beginning of learning to students especially those at the junior high school (Relensuk, 2016). Beyond this, it increases the ability of a student to read and reproduce what he has read. In terms of definition, it expresses the concept of learning (Carey, 2015).

The pomodoro study method could be effective as it helps to account for what is learnt within a particular time. The concept was generated in Germany in the 80^s and even though it has not been empirically proved, it is very popular in that it grants the reader a 5 minute rest after 25 – 30 minutes of study. Another reading method is space mapping. This is distributed learning and it assists students to recall and retain what they read for a long time. It is the process of splitting a long reading session into shorter sessions (Gopalakrishan, 2009).

Retrieval and testing is one other method of learning that has been considered effective. It involves self-appraisal through testing and quizzing oneself after study. It can also take the form of problem solving and activity by recalling what one read. The PQRST is an enlargement of retrieval and testing technique. It stands for Preview, Question, Read, Summary and Test. This method is technical but it helps the learner to stress the facts or areas that appear relevant to his examination and helps him to figure out how to present such points in the examination (Edumark, 2011).

Reading and listening is another food learning method. It involves an interaction between the learner and what he is learning. This is epignosis. It enhances the understanding of the subject of the study and closes his idea with that of another. REAP method is a study skill encapsulated with the concept of reading and listening. It is an acronym for Read, Encode, annotate and Ponder (Robnolt and Rhodes, 2014).

Blocking and inter-learning are learning methods that can be used to increase learning. Blocking has to do with studying one topic at a given time. It helps the learner (a student) to maximize understanding. Inter-learning which appears to be opposite blocking

involves learning and practising different but related topics. It has been proven that inter learning is better than blocking in that it helps to widen a student's intellectual capacity (Schwartz, 2017).

Rote learning is closely linked to memorization. This is because; it aids memorization since it involves repetition. Repetition is the law of deep and lasting impression (Oyakhilome, 2009). However, rote learning is not exactly the same with memorization. Rote learning is more emotionally evolving than memorization. It brings the learning into a routine interaction or relationship with the subject of learning. Other study skills that are related to them (memorization and rote learning) are acronyms and mnemonics and flashcard training which is more used for revision (Shengn, 2014).

Study skills are learning methods that can be acquired by a study. However, they are not of general application. The skill or method to be used at a specific time depends on the subject of the study. Sometimes it could be determined by the capacity or ability of the student. They are models applied to learning and they are very important to the success of a student in school. They are all concerned with getting new or additional information, retaining them and recalling them for use during assessment or examination. The ability of a student to show thoroughness in the use of any or some of the skills indicates his performance in school (Mneller and Oppenhelieimer, 2014).

Performance means achievement. It is the extent of success or failure attained over a particular task and at a specific time. It is the outcome of efforts made within a defined period (Edumark, 2011). Academic performance therefore is the result of a student at end of a term or session. It is the outcome of all the efforts a student made over his academic exercise tests and examination. It is the representation of the totality of the energy and time spent on learning processes with the term or session (Carey, 2015).

Public secondary schools are schools owned and operated by the government (Federal or state). They are post – primary institutions that are established by the government in order to provide education opportunities to people. The primary aim of government in this regard is to increase literacy rate in the country and generate increase in human capital development (FGN, 2004).

In these schools, government employs staff (teaching and non-teaching) and posts them to these schools. Activities in these schools are regulated by the Ministry of Education. The ministry supervises pedagogy and ensures that teaching and learning is tandem with the contents of the curriculum.

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Statement of the Problem

Study habits are critical to the success of any student in school. The study skill adopted by a student determines to a great extent to his degree of academic performance. In other words, the desired educational attainment or height of a student can make or mar his study habit.

Beyond this, is the environmental factors that can support or inhibit learning processes. Time management is also important to study habit. The ability of a student to regiment his study into time and control the process to ensure that each time spent on study is accounted for can determine his academic performance.

However, most of the public secondary schools in the study area are located in areas free from noise. Students in the schools are seen to be studious, yet their academic performance needs much to be desired. It is in due consideration of all these factors that the study was intended to investigate study habit as predictor of students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imo state.

Purpose of the Study

The study examined the relationship between study habit and students' academic performance. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to investigate;

1. How study habits can influence the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Imo State.
2. How environmental factors can affect study habits of students in Imo State.
3. How economic factors can affect the study habits of students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the influence of study habit on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Imo State?
2. How do environmental factors affect the study habits of students in public secondary schools in Imo State?
3. How do economic factors affect study habits of students in public secondary schools in Imo State?

Hypotheses

The following Null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance;

1. There is no significant relationship between study habit and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

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2. There is no significant relationship between environment factors and study habit of students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

3. There is no significant relationship between economic factors and study habit of students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Method

In this study, the researcher investigated study habit as predictor of academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Imo state. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study consists of 27,652 SS3 students and through the proportionate random sampling technique, 5,248 students were selected as the sample size of the study.

The instrument used to collect data from the respondents was a 12 – item questionnaire titled: "Study Habit as Predictor of Academic Performance of Students in Public Secondary Schools in Imo State Questionnaire, (SHPAPSPSSISQ)." The instrument was divided into three sections. Section A was concerned with the relationship between study habit and students' academic performance. Section B dealt with the environmental factors that affect study habit while section C treated the economic factors that affect students' study habit. The instrument is structured on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agee (SA) – 4, Agree (A) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2 and Strongly Agree (SD) – 1. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from the Department of Education Foundations, all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

The reliability of the instrument was established through pilot-testing and analysis using Cronbach alpha with an average of 0.86 which was considered high enough for the instrument to be reliable. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions and determine the homogeneity of the respondents' views while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In testing the null hypotheses, if p-value was equal to or greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), the null – hypothesis was accepted, where it was otherwise, it was rejected.

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Results

Research Question 1

What is the influence of study habit on the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Imo State?

Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings and standard deviation on the influence of study habit and students' academic performance

S/N	Questionnaire Item	$\overline{X}$	SD	Remarks
1	Study habit is a consistent process of learning.	2.86	0.71	Agree
2	It is spending regular and quality time reading or studying.	3.52	0.89	Strongly Agree
3	It helps to increase comprehension.	2.84	0.82	Agree
4	Good study habit enhances students' academic performance.	3.72	0.90	Strongly Agree
	Grand Mean	**3.24**		**Agree**

Data in table shows that students out of 4 items listed on influence of study habit on students' academic performance, items 1, and 3 are rated agree with mean scores ranged between 2.86 and 2.84 while the remaining two items are rated strongly agree with mean scores between 3.52 and 3.72. The grand mean score of 3.24 shows that on the whole, students agree that study habit influence students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Imo State. The standard deviation scores ranged between 0.71 and 0.90 showing that respondents are not wide apart in their mean responses.

Research Question 2

How do environmental factors affect the study habits of students in public secondary schools in Imo State?

Table 2: Respondents' mean ratings and standard deviation on environmental factors that affect students' study habit

S/N	Questionnaire Item	$\overline{X}$	SD	Remark
5	School in industrial place or location affects the study habits of students.	3.66	0.61	Strongly Agree
6	A noisy environment affects study habits.	3.50	0.76	Strongly Agree
7	An unventilated study room affects study habit.	3.82	0.64	Strongly Agree
8	A dirty environment can also inhibit learning.	2.82	0.85	Agree
	Grand Mean	**3.45**		**Agree**

Data in table 2 respondents strongly agree that school in industrial place or location, a noise environment and an unventilated affect their study habit with mean scores ranged between 3.50 and 3.82 while they agree that a dirty environment affect their study habit with mean score of 2.82. The grand mean score of 3.45 shows that on the whole, environmental factors affect the study habit of students in public secondary schools in Imo State. The standard deviation scores ranged between 0.61 and 0.85 showing that respondents are not wide apart in their mean responses.

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Research Question 3

How do economic factors affect study habits of students in public secondary schools in Imp

State?

Table 3: Respondents' mean ratings and standard deviation on economic factors that affect students' study habit

S/N	Questionnaire Item	$\overline{X}$	SD	Remark
9	A child from poor economic background cannot concentrate to study.	2.80	0.76	Agree
10	A student needs to feed well to have a good study habit.	3.02	0.49	Agree
11	A student needs to buy study materials to study and learn.	3.24	0.88	Agree
12	Good economic background helps a student to develop good study habit.	3.52	0.57	Strongly Agree
	Grand Mean	**3.15**		**Agree**

Data in table 3 shows that the grand mean score is 3.15. This shows that the students

agree that economic factors have effect on their study habit. The item by item analysis

revealed that items 9, 10 and 11 are rated agree with mean scores ranged between 2.80 and

3.24 while the remaining one item (item 12) is rated strongly agree with mean score of 3.52.

The standard deviation scores ranged between 0.49 and 0.88 showing that respondents are not

wide apart in their mean responses.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between study habit and academic performance of

students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 4: Correlation coefficient of the relationship between study habit and students' academic performance

		Students' Academic Performance
Study Habit	Pearson Correlation(r)	.895
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	5,223

Table 4 shows that r is .895 with a p-value of .001 which is less than 0.05 alpha level

($P < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is a significant

relationship between students' study habit and their academic performance in public

secondary schools in Imo State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between environment factors and study habit of students

in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 5: Correlation coefficient of the relationship between environmental factors and study habit of students

		Students' Study Habit
Environmental Factors	Pearson Correlation(r)	.795
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011
	N	5,223

Table 5 shows that r is .795 with a p-value of .011 which is less than 0.05 alpha level (P < 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between environmental factors and study habit of students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between economic factors and study habit of students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Table 6: Correlation coefficient of the relationship between economic factors and study habit of students

		Students' Study Habit
Economic Factors	Pearson Correlation(r)	.867
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	5,223

Table 6 shows that r is .867 with a p-value of .000 which is less than 0.05 alpha level (p < 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between economic factors and study habit of students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Discussion

The findings of the study as contained in Table 1 indicate that there is a significant relationship between study habit and students' academic performance. Performance in another language connotes academic achievement. It is the outcome of students' academic activities or efforts made in a term or academic session. A student's study habit consists of his endeavour at reading or studying books, participating in assignments and sitting for his tests or examinations. When a student is consistent in his studies, it suggests a good study habit especially when it is coupled with the attempt to memorize and recall (Idris, 2017). The academic performance or result of such a student will definitely represent his effort.

Another finding of the study as indicated in Table 2 shows that there is a strong or significant relationship between environmental factors and the study habit of students in public secondary schools. A lot of factors can constitute the study environment of a student. These are industrial noise, unventilated study room, a dirty and stinky environment, pollution or noise from the movement of vehicles or market located close to a school.

Naturally, the human person responds to events or activities in his environment where a school is located close to an industrial estate or zone, students' academic activities and performance will be inhibited. Beyond, where a student lives close to a market or road with regular and heavy vehicular movement, his study habit will be affected. The same situation applies to a student who stays or studies in an unventilated room or class.

One other finding of the study as shown in Table 3 is that there is a significant relationship between economic factors and the study habits of students in public secondary schools. Academic activities require or take energy and demands good emotional and psychological state. All these require money (Ejimofor, 2018). Students need to feed well to withstand the rigours of research or reading. Non-payment or late payment of school fees is a big distraction to students. Also, a student that does not have books and non materials relevant to his subjects does not have study materials, such a student will be inhibited. Equally frustrating to a student is lack or inadequate feeding by a student due to poor economic background. All these adverse economic circumstances pointed out above affect the study habits of students (Linus, 2016).

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it could be seen that there is a significant relationship between study habit and the academic performance of students in public secondary schools. Study habit has been explained to mean consistency or regularity of the efforts of a student at reading or going through his books or non-book materials. It is the recipe for learning and an

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indication of commitment to excel in school by a student. School authorities and parents have a role to play in assisting students create and maintain good study habit. This they can do by providing what their students need for a good study habit.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been put forward.

1. Government should endeavour to locate schools in environments that are good or conducive for study.

2. Government and parents should endeavour to provide books and non-book materials that students need for study.

3. Parents should provide students with two or three square meals daily, so that they can be strong enough to face the rigours of research or regular and deep reading of their books.

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