



RESEARCH ARTICLE

STUDY HABIT AS PREDICTOR OF STUDENTS'S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH IN
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CALABAR METROPOLIS, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This research on "Study Habit as Predictor of Students' Academic Achievement in English in Secondary Schools in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria", was a survey involving 660 students from 22 public secondary schools in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria. Data was generated through a well-structured validated questionnaire titled "Students' Study Habit Rating Scale" (SSHRS), and Students Achievement Test in English (SATE). Data obtained were analysed using Independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the of the analysis showed that study habit has a significant influence on students' academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Calabar metropolis, Cross River Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Study habits are strategies, which a learner applies for acquiring knowledge, skills and ideas (Benwari and Nemine, 2014). According to Hussain (2000) study habit is the predispositions which students have developed towards private readings through a period of time. Study habits therefore, involve a series of activities and dispositions that a learner must acquire to enable him/her engage in academic studies. Good study habits enhance academic performance and educational success. Students, sometimes perform far below the expected average. This may not be because of low ability level, but often times the consequence of poor study habits. Some of such study habits include intensive individualized reading, note taking, attending to class activities, partaking in homework and assignment. A student studying English for academic purpose therefore needs to develop effective study habits in order to achieve academic success. Although the other variables like inadequacy of facilities and poor use of leisure time could affect performance, educational success requires the acquisition of effective and good study habits, dedication to learning and willingness to accept corrections (Agina-Obu, 2001). Consequently, Asagwara (2001) argued that bad study habits make the process of knowledge acquisition rigorous and painstaking whereas good reading habits make the learner to acquire knowledge with ease.

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He observed that there are good and poor study habits. The issue that quickly comes to mine at this point is what underscores habits formation. Habits, according to the above source are products of motives and needs. Besides, education becomes the machine through which individual character traits are fine-tuned. In education, teachers are saddled with the task of identifying, inculcating or promoting study habits that will enhance academic achievement. Students need good study habits for higher academic achievement. However, such habits do not come by chance. Koko (2011) therefore emphasised the need for teachers to identify the best ways of motivating students so that they can develop interest in learning. Habits are form by extensive experiences. The implication is that acquiring good study habits comes by means of regular repeated processes (Asagwara 2001). In trying to understand the relationship between study habit and academic achievement, Benwari and Nemine (2014) researched on the effect of intensive reading, homework and assignment as study habits on academic achievement of students in selected secondary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The sample for this study was made up of 140 students randomly selected from the schools. Two research questions were raised and the Chi Square statistical tool was used to analyse the data. The result yielded the χ^2 values of 13.2 and 14.32 with a critical value of 7.81 at 3 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant. Meaning that personal intensive reading, homework, and assignment as study habits were among the significant factors that affected academic achievement in Economics as a subject among secondary school students in

Bayelsa State. This conclusion has been replicated by Crede and Kuncel (2008); Nuthana and Yenaga (2009); Nonis and Hudson (2010); Osa-Edoh and Alutu (2012); Khurshid, Tanveer, Qasmi, (2012). Adekola (2014) investigated collaborative learning method and its effect on students' academic achievement in reading comprehension. The study was aimed at investigating whether collaborative learning (grouped/dependent) method is effective in enhancing students' academic achievement in reading at the senior secondary school level. This study adopted a quasi-experimental design approach. The target groups for the study were Senior Secondary School students in South Western States in Nigeria. Six hundred (600) students were drawn from four (4) Geo-political zones in Ogun state, Nigeria with the purposive sampling technique used in selecting five schools from each zone. In all, 496 students participated in the study. Completed questionnaires were returned comprising 272 male and 224 female Students. Results of the data analyses showed that both female and male students are experiencing high level of collaborative learning in reading comprehension. However, it was confirmed that there was no significant difference in the level of achievement of those exposed to collaborative and conventional (independent/un-grouped) method of teaching. However, male low achievers performed better than their female counterparts when exposed to collaborative learning in comprehension. Due to increase repeated failure in English language in national exams in Nigerian secondary schools, and considering the key roles English play in the country and indeed globally, there remain a constant need to continue investigation especially the study habits of the Nigerian secondary school child.

Study Objective

The objective of this study is to investigate the influence of study habit on students' academic achievement in English Language in Secondary Schools in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research Question

To what extent does student's study habit influence their academic performance in English language?

The Statement of the Hypothesis

There is no significance difference between student's study habit and their academic performance in English language?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research was a survey involving 660 students from 22 public secondary schools in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State, Nigeria. Data was generated through a well-structured validated questionnaire titled "Students' Study Habit Rating Scale" (SSHRS), and Students Achievement Test in English (SATE). Data obtained were analysed using Independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the of the analysis showed that study habit has a significant influence on students' academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Calabar metropolis, Cross River Nigeria.

Presentation of Results

HO: The null hypothesis stated that, there is no significant difference between students' study and their academic

achievement in English Language. The independent variable in this hypothesis is students' study habit while the dependent variable is academic achievement in English Language. The students' study habit was categorized into independent and dependent study habits. So the hypothesis was tested to verify the influence of students' study habit on their academic achievement in English Language. The independent t-test was employed to test for significance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Result of independent t-test analysis of the influence of study habit on academic achievement in English Language

| Dependent Variable | Study Habit | N | Mean | SD | df | t-cal |
|----------------------|-------------------------|-----|-------|------|------|-------|
| Academic achievement | Dependent study habit | 73 | 12.17 | 4.48 | 63.8 | 2.19* |
| | Independent study habit | 567 | 13.86 | 4.08 | | |

N=640, P < .05, significant*, critical t-value=1.96

The result on Table 1 shows the English Language academic achievement mean score and standard deviation for the two categories of respondents for study habit. The mean score for students with independent study habit was greater than the mean score for students with dependent study habit (13.86 > 12.77). This produced a calculated t-value of 2.19 which is higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 significance level with 638 degree of freedom. In other words, students with independent study habit performed better than students with dependent study habit. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate was upheld.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In the null form, the hypothesis was stated that, there is no significant influence of students' study habit on their academic achievement in English Language. Result of data analysis revealed that the mean score of achievement in English for students with independent study habit was greater than the mean score for students with dependent study habit (13.86 > 12.77), this produced a t-value of 2.19 with a p-value less than the 0 .05 significance level with 638 degree of freedom. The calculated t-value is higher than the critical t-value of 1.96. This implied that students' study habits exerted significant influence on academic achievement in English Language. This findings affirm those of Benwari and Nemine (2014), Adekola (2014), as well as Oluwatimilehin and Owoyele (2012) who found a significant influence of study habit (independent study habits such as: personal reading, note taking and homework) on academic achievement of students in secondary schools. The findings of this study also support the adage that hard work pays. Students who deploy energy to plan personal study times and adhere to them are likely to derive some cognitive benefits over their less studious mates. Students who are painstaking in taking and making notes, students who are strategic in planning their study at home, students who take out time especially their free periods in school to always visit the library to study, and who reads extensively are likely to have covered more contents than those who did not strategize.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that students' self-concept, attitude to study as well as their study

habits are important in their achievement in English language. In other words, students who have high self-concepts, who show a positive attitude to the study of English Language and develop independent study habits, are likely to have enhanced academic achievement in English language.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that Government through appropriate agencies together with Non-governmental Organizations should endeavour to sponsor seminars, conferences and workshops for teachers, parents and other stakeholders on the different students' variables. This will provide opportunity for these set of people to learn issues in child development, study habits and achievement. It will also help parents to create a more stimulating environment for their children thereby enhancing the development of positive attitude towards English Language and their education in general.

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