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STUDY HABITS AS APREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated study habit as predictors of academic achievement among secondary school students in English Language in Anambra state. Four research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study consisted of 19,576 SS2 students in the 265 public secondary schools in the six Education Zones in the State as recorded by the Post Primary Schools Service Commission (PPSSC), Awka. The sample of this study comprised 1,958 students randomly selected from the population. This study adopted stratified and simple random sampling techniques for the study. The instruments for data collection were the Study Habit Inventory, (SHI) and students' scores in English Language which was used to determine academic achievement. The reliability coefficient of the SHI determined using Cronbach Alpha statistics was 0.67. Regression analysis was used to analyse the data collected. Research questions 1 and 2 were answered using a range of aggregate scores, while research questions 3 and 4 along with the null hypothesis, were answered and tested using regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed among other that secondary school students' study habits jointly is significant predictor of their academic achievement in English Language in Anambra State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others, that Stake holders in education should play a vital role inculcating good study habit in students 'and also includes it as a course in curriculum of students in secondary schools for better academic achievement in the subject. The school counsellor should more often, organize seminars, training and counselling sessions to orientate students on the importance of this subject, and expose them to the different arms of study habits.

Keywords: Secondary Education, Study Habits, Academic achievement, English Language

Introduction

Secondary education is a form of education students attain after primary education and before tertiary education. The goal of secondary school education is to prepare students for useful living within the society and for higher education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). In secondary

schools in Nigeria, students are exposed to a number of subjects in science and arts through which they acquire the requisite knowledge and skills for the realization of the goals of education. However, irrespective of students' desired course of study in the tertiary institutions, it is expected that they must offer and pass English language (Abidde, 2015). It becomes necessary that students should perform and achieve optimally in this subject.

In all educational institutions, including secondary schools, the whole teaching and learning process is mainly directed towards academic achievement. This was highlighted by Akudo (2020) who opined that the major goal of the school is to work towards attainment of academic excellence by students. According to Akudo, the school may have other peripheral objective however emphasis is always placed on the achievement of sound scholarship. This is often determined by the academic achievement of students in the subjects they offer.

Academic achievement has been conceptualized differently by scholars. Anene (2023) defined it as the ability to study and remember facts and be able to communicate knowledge verbally or otherwise. Oparaji and Ugwu (2019) extended this understanding of academic achievement to include how it can be measured. According to them, academic achievement is a knowledge attaining ability or degree of competence in school tasks usually measured by standardized tests and expressed in a grade or units based on pupils' performance. For Okorocha and Okeke (2018), academic achievement can be seen as the number of subjects failed or passed at the end of the term. Students' gaining the requisite academic achievement especially in their core subjects impacts positively different aspects of their life and the life of the school. According to Anene (2023), students' academic achievement is considered as a key criterion to judge one's total potentialities and capacities which is used to pass judgment on quality of education offered by schools. It is used to determine excellence in teachers and teaching, and also strongly determines one's success as well as providing access to securing a stable job later in life (Akudo, 2020). So, in this context, academic achievement can be conceptualized as the measurement of students' success across the subjects taught, demonstrated by the score in the subject area examined. These potentials can be harnessed if students attain the required achievement in their core subjects, especially English Language.

Despite the high status of English Language in secondary schools academic curriculum, the academic achievement of secondary school students in English Language in Senior Secondary School Certificate of Education (SSCE) examination in Nigeria in recent years has not been encouraging. Information from West African Examination Council Chief Examiner's Report (2023) showed that students' achievements especially in the two core subjects (English Language and Mathematics) in Nigeria are low. Statistics on the percentage of students that obtained credit in five subjects including English language validates this assertion. According

to the statistics, in the past six years (2015-2020), the percentages of students that obtained credit in five subject areas including English language in public secondary schools in Nigeria were inconsistent (Osuo-Siseken and Uboh, 2020). Although, the trend shows some improvement, there are fluctuations and students' achievement in this two subjects is still below expectation both at national and state levels. Anambra State, for example, is not at par with her counterpart states such as Abia and Imo. With 73.0% of students in Anambra State obtaining 5 credits in English language in 2019 and 2020 fell below 77.6% against 82.6% and 86.0% obtained in Abia and Imo states respectively in the subject. However, it recorded improvement in 2021 WAEC examination with 91.2% of her students obtaining 5 credits in five subjects including English language compared to Abia's 79.5% and Imo's 81.7%, and states in the south-east (National Bureau of Statistics, 2022). For sustained improvement in students' academic achievement in English Language in Anambra State, there is need to ascertain the factors that contribute to students' academic achievement in order to provide required interventions.

There are multiple factors associated with students' academic achievement such as school social and physical environment, teacher, management, family and student-related factors (Asaoah, Sundeme, Quainoo, Adom-Fynn Yalley and Afrane, 2020; Ozcan, 2021). Of these factors, the student-related factors appears to have greatest impact generally and specifically on their achievement (Tomul, Onder and Taslidere, 2021).

Among the students related factor that has been linked to their academic achievement is their study habit (Awang and Sinnadurai, 2017). In this regard, Mendezabal (2013) also reported that good study habits produce positive academic performance, while inefficient study habits lead to academic failure. Study habits generally refer to pupils' repeated actions to study from the beginning to the end of all educational programs. It typically denotes the degree to which the student engages in regular acts of studying characterized by appropriate studying routines occurring in an environment conducive to studying (Crede and Kuncel, 2018). It is a multidimensional concept that involves setting up strategies, scheduling a study plan and time, definite place, and behaviour patterns by a student to form a structured approach to self-learning and doing accordingly in his or her academic life.

An earlier articulation of study habits conceptualized as an eight-dimensional concepts consisting of eight dimensions, namely, homework and assignments, time allocation, reading and note taking, study period procedures, concentration; written work, examination; and teacher consultation (Egbujuo and Ajagun, 2019).

Homework and assignment look at the learners' dispositions in tasks like stopping or studying only easier parts of the lesson when assigned hard and too long homework; making up missed notes when absent from class; completing an assignment even when it seems dull and boring; not doing assignment until the last minute; completing and submitting assignment on time and doing assignment as soon as the

teacher gives it to him or her and not allowing the assignments to pile up (Anene, 2023).

In time allocation, the interest is examining the students' habits in time taken in talking or listening to radio, televisions and other media for the good of his or her studies, finding out if having many other things to do cause him or her to get behind in his or her school work, neglecting his school work due to problems outside school or homes, studying at least three hours each day after classes, spending equal or unequal time on each of his subjects, spending time in reading novels and other fictions for the good of his school work and so on (Bakere, 2013).

In reading and note taking, the interest would be to detect the students' habits in writing down of things which later turn to be unimportant while taking notes, forgetting what is read after reading several pages of an assignment, picking out salient points of a reading assignment, reading and stopping intermittently to remember what has been read in a long assignment, reading over again severally a material because the work does not has much meaning at the initial reading etc (Ebele and Olofu, 2017).

In study period procedure, things looked at include how the student keep his notes for each subject and carefully arrange for studying, time he needs to warm up before start studying, if the student feels tired, bored or sleepy when sitting to study, being restless and unable to sit for long to study, preferring lone study to cooperative one, planning his work at the beginning of study period so as to make the best use of his time, being beset by too many health problems trying to study efficiently etc (Bakere, 2013). While some scholars have found positive relationship between the study habits and students' academic achievement others have reported contrary findings (Ebele and Olofu, 2017).

Media reports abound that the achievement of students in this core subject is not encouraging. In the same vein, the chief examiners' reports on the subjects in the external examinations like the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and the Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) has also continually raised a great hue and cry about the abysmal under performance of students in spoken and written English (BECE, 2020-2022), (WAEC, 2019, 2021 and 2022). On a more worrisome note, the researcher from experience as a counsellor has continually observed the pitiable under achievement of students in the subject. In view of the need to improve and sustain students' academic achievement in this core subject area in Anambra state, and the potential contribution of students' study habits to students' academic achievement, there is the need to examine the relationship between study habit and academic achievement among secondary school students in English Language in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

In the secondary school system, students are expected to acquire knowledge and skills. Students are expected to have credit in core subjects like English Language to enable them to enroll in university education. The importance of English Language in a student's academic pursuits

cannot be over emphasized. Formal education in Nigeria today is hinged on English language to the extent that without this core subject, there is the possibility that there may not be anything more than the elementary formal education in Nigeria. Despite the importance of English language, the achievement of students in the subjects over the years has been on a downward trend. However, despite teachers' efforts in improving the academic achievement of students in this core subject, the trend has persisted. The achievement rate in this subject as consistently recorded in major examinations like West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) is still worrisome.

In an attempt to remedy this ugly trend, researchers have suggested some variables that could improve students' academic achievement in English Language. These variables among others could be linked to students' study habit. Furthermore, in Anambra State, it seems that enough empirical studies have not been carried out to investigate this worrisome situation in English Language in relation to students' study habits. Studies have been carried out on the relationships between different psychological and social variables and the academic achievement of secondary school students such as parental engagement, study skills and achievement motivation among others. Yet there exists a gap in the area of study habits as predictors of academic achievement in secondary school students in English Language in Anambra State. Hence, the researchers deem it necessary to investigate study habits as predictors of academic achievement among secondary school (SSII) students in English Language in Anambra State. The problem of the study is thus; are students' study habits predictors of academic achievement among secondary school (SSII) students in English Language in Anambra State?

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are study habits scores of secondary school students in Anambra State?
2. What are academic achievement scores of secondary school students in English Language in Anambra State?
3. What are predictive powers of secondary school students' various aspects of study habits on their academic achievements in English Language in Anambra State?
4. What are joint predictive powers of secondary school students' study habits on their academic achievements in English Language in Anambra State?

Hypotheses

H_{01}: Secondary students' various aspects of study habits are not significant predictors of their academic achievements in English language in Anambra state.

H_{02}: Secondary school students' study habits are not jointly a significant predictor of their academic achievements in English language in Anambra state.

Research Method

The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study consisted of 19,576 SS2 students in the 265 public secondary schools in the six Education Zones in the State as recorded by the Post Primary Schools Service Commission (PPSSC), Awka. The sample of this study comprised 1,958 students randomly selected from the population. This study adopted stratified and simple random sampling techniques for the study. The instruments for data collection were the adopted Study Habit Inventory (SHI), and students' scores in English Language which was used to determine academic achievement. The SHI was analyzed using Cronbach Alpha statistics to verify the reliability of the instrument and the average reliability coefficient showed a value of 0.67 which is considered adequate for the study. Research questions 1 and 2 were answered using a range of aggregate scores, while research questions 3 and 4 along with the null hypothesis, were answered and tested using regression analysis.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What are the study habits scores of secondary school students in Anambra state?

Table 1: various study habits scores of secondary school students in Anambra state

Study Habits	Range of scores	N	%	Remarks
Homework and Assignment	6-17	265	13.60	Poor usage
	18-30	1682	86.40	Good usage
Time allocation	6-17	765	39.30	Poor usage
	18-30	1182	60.70	Good usage
Note Taking	9-26	627	32.20	Poor usage
	27-45	1320	67.80	Good usage
Study Period	8-23	685	35.20	Poor usage
	24-40	1262	64.80	Good usage
Concentration	3-8	896	46.20	Poor usage
	9-15	1051	54.00	Good usage
Written work	4-11	569	29.20	Poor usage
	12-20	1378	70.80	Good usage
Examination	7-20	964	48.60	Poor usage
	21-35	1001	51.40	Good usage
Teacher consultation	2-5	319	16.40	Poor usage
	6-10	1628	53.60	Good usage

In table 1 it was observed that many of the secondary school students with the percentage scores ranging from 51.4 and 86.4 percent make good use of all the eight different study habits.

The findings of this study showed that a very great number of the secondary school students in Anambra State use all the eight different dimensions of study habit. It implied that the Anambra State secondary school students usefully engaged home works, time allocations, note taking, study period, concentration, written work, examinations and teacher consultations in their habits of study both in English Language and Mathematics. It showed that

the secondary school student make good usage of all the identified styles that would help them practise regularly to incorporate knowledge into their cognitive structure. This finding of this study is in line with Abisola and Kudirat (2017) who carried out a research on study habits and academic performance of secondary school students in mathematic: a case study of selected secondary schools in Uyo Local Education Council and revealed that note taking, students' use of library, time allocation for study are factors to be considered for good students' academic performance in mathematics.

Research Question 2: What are the academic achievement scores of secondary school students in English language in Anambra state?

Table 2: Academic achievement scores of secondary school students in English language

English language scores	N	%	Remarks
70 – 100	389	20.0	Excellent achievement
60 – 69	611	31.4	Very good achievement
50 – 59	541	27.8	Good achievement
40 – 49	292	15.0	Fair achievement
0 – 39	113	5.8	Poor achievement

Table 2 reveals that 389 (20.0%) of the secondary school students with the scores ranging from 70 and 100 have excellent academic achievement in English language, 611 (31.4%) of the students who scored between 60 and 69 have very good achievement in English language; while 541 (27.8%) of the students scored between 50 and 59 have good achievement in English language. Also, 292(15.0%) of the students who scored between 40 and 49 have fair achievement in English language and 113 (5.8%) of the students who scored between 0 and 39 have poor achievement in English language in Anambra State. Majority of the students achieved good results in English language.

The findings of this study showed that a very good number of students at secondary education level in Anambra State have at least good academic achievements in the English Language. The reason for this finding could the good usage of all the eight sub scales of study habit by the secondary school students of Anambra State that contributed to the barely general good academic achievement by these students in English Language. This finding is in line with Ebele and Olofu (2017) who among others consented that good academic achievement is an outcome of proper study habit. Hence, the students' good academic achievements in English Language should be much expected by these students who have been found to have good usage of study habits in English Language.

Research Question 3: What are the predictive powers of secondary students' various aspects of study habits on their academic achievements in English language in Anambra State?

Null Hypothesis 1: Secondary students' various aspects of study habits are not

significant predictors of their academic achievements in English language in Anambra state.

Table 3: Regression analysis on Secondary students' study habits as predictors of their academic achievements in English language

Study Habits	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Beta	df	Cal F	Cal t	P<0.05	Remark
	0.258	0.067	0.063		1938	17.32			
Homework and Assignment				-0.080	1946		-2.507	0.012	S
Time Allocation				0.123	1946		4.326	0.000	S
Note Taking				0.113	1946		3.081	0.002	S
Study Period				0.166	1946		5.627	0.000	S
Concentration				-0.052	1946		-1.868	0.062	NS
Written Work				-0.193	1946		-6.996	0.000	S
Examination				0.090	1946		2.716	0.007	S
Teacher Consultation				-0.054	1946		-1.906	0.050	S

In table 3 it was observed that secondary school students' homework aspect of study habits had Beta of -0.080. This indicates that secondary school students' homework aspect of study habits contributed only -8.0 percent of their achievements scores in English language. Also at 1df numerator, 1946 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t2.507 with P-value 0.012 which is less than the 0.05, the third null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, secondary school students' homework aspect of study habits is a significant predictor of their achievements scores in English language. Again, table 3 shows that secondary school students' time allocation aspect of study habits had Beta of 0.123. This indicates that secondary school students' time allocation aspect of study habits contributed only 12.3 percent of their achievements scores in English language. Again, at 1df numerator, 1946 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t 4.326 with P-value 0.000 which is less than the 0.05, the null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, secondary school students' time allocation aspect of study habits is a significant predictor of their achievements scores in English language.

Table 3 further reveals that secondary school students' note taking aspect of study habits had Beta of 0.113. This indicates that secondary school students' note taking aspect of study habits contributed 11.3 percent of their achievements scores in English language. Also at 1df numerator, 1946 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t3.08 with P-value 0.002 which is less than the 0.05, the null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, secondary school students' note taking aspect of study habits is a significant predictor of their achievements scores in English language.

In table 3 it was observed that secondary school students' study period aspect of study habits had Beta of 0.166. This indicated that secondary school students' study period aspect of study habits contributed 16.6 percent of their achievements scores in English language. Also at 1df numerator, 1946 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t5.627 with P-value 0.000 which is less than the 0.05, the null hypothesis is not accepted.

Therefore, secondary school students' study period aspect of study habits is a significant predictor of their achievements scores in English language.

Table 3 further shows that secondary school students' concentration aspect of study habits had Beta of -0.052 This indicates that secondary school students' concentration aspect of study habits contributed -5.2 percent of their achievements scores in English language. Also at 1df numerator, 1946 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t1.886 with P-value 0.062 which is greater than the 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, secondary school students' concentration aspect of study habits is not a significant predictor of their achievements scores in English language.

Again, table 3 indicates that secondary school students' written work aspect of study habits had Beta of -0.193. This indicates that secondary school students' written work aspect of study habits contributed -19.3 percent of their achievements scores in English language.

Also at 1df numerator, 1946 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t6.996 with P-value 0.000 which is less than the 0.05, the null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, secondary school students' written work aspect of study habits is a significant predictor of their achievements scores in English language. Furthermore, table 3 shows that secondary school students' examination aspect of study habits had Beta of 0.090. This indicates that secondary school students' examination aspect of study habits contributed 9.0 percent of their achievements scores in English language. In addition, at 1df numerator, 1946 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t 2.716 with P-value 0.007 which is less than the 0.05, the null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, secondary school students' examination aspect of study habits is a significant predictor of their achievements scores in English language.

Finally, table 3 indicates that secondary school students' teacher consultation aspect of study habits had Beta of -0.054. This indicates that secondary school students' teacher consultation aspect of study habits contributed 5.4 percent of their achievements scores in English language. Also at 1df numerator, 1946 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t 1.906 with P-value 0.057 which is greater than the 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, secondary school students' teacher consultation aspect of study habits is not a significant predictor of their achievements scores in English language.

These findings support Abisola and Kudirat (2017) which reported that there is significance relationship between note taking, students' use of library, time allocation for study and students' academic performance. It is also in line with Ebele and Olofu (2017) which also recorded that there is a significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance.

Research Question 4: What is the joint predictive power of secondary school students' study habits on their academic

achievements in English language in Anambra state?

Null Hypothesis 2: Secondary school students' study habits are not jointly a significant predictor of their academic achievements in English language in Anambra state.

Table 4: Regression analysis on Secondary school students' study habits jointly as predictor of their academic achievements in English language

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	%	df	Cal F	P<0.05	Remark
0.258	0.067	0.063	6.3	1938	17.32	0.000	S

Table 4 reveals that secondary school students' study habits jointly had R^2 adjusted of 0.063. This indicates that secondary school students' study habits had contributed to 6.3 percent for academic achievements in English language. Also at 8 df numerator, 1938 df denominator and 0.05 level of significant, the calculated 17.32 with P-value 0.000 which is less than the 0.05, the fourth null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, secondary school students' study habits jointly are significant predictor of their academic achievements in English language.

The study disclosed that in Anambra State, the secondary school students' study habits had contributed to 6.3 percent for academic achievements in English language. It also disclosed that secondary school students' study habits jointly are significant predictor of their academic achievements in English language in Anambra State. This supports Abisola and Kudirat (2017) and Ebele and Olofu (2017) which recorded that there is a significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that in Anambra State, secondary school students' study habits in English language is a significant predictor of their academic achievements in English language.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Teachers should be taught strategies through workshops organized by the guidance counsellors, these trainings and development will help teachers understand the role their relationship has in their students' academic endeavours and the need for adequate study habits.
2. Curriculum makers should find the result relevant for inclusion in the counselling unit programmes or scheme for post-primary schools in the country.
3. Teachers of English Language should not label students in any dimension as poor students but should work towards a balance and

wholeness of knowledge acquisition by shaping attitudes and orientation of the students towards all round learning by training of students on study habit.

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