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Relationships Between Student's Study Habit And Academic Performance In Some Selected Tertiary Institutions In Sokoto State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the relationship between students' study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected public tertiary institutions in Sokoto State. Using a correlational research design, a sample of 357 students was drawn from a population of 4,373 through simple random sampling. Data were collected with an adapted Study Habit Questionnaire and a constructed Achievement Test, both validated for content and reliability. Descriptive statistics determined the levels of study habits, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation examined the relationship between study habits and academic performance. The results showed varying levels of study habits among students, and a statistically significant positive relationship was found between study habits and academic performance. In conclusion students' study habits significantly influence their academic performance, indicating that organized, consistent, and effective study practices enhance learning outcomes. Based on these findings, the recommends implementing programs to strengthen students' study habits, providing academic guidance, and creating supportive learning environments to improve academic achievement in tertiary institutions.

Keywords: Student's study habit, Academic performance, Tertiary institutions

INTRODUCTION

Academic performance in tertiary institutions has continued to attract attention from educators and policymakers, especially in regions like Sokoto State, due to concerns over declining standards, high failure rates, and prolonged study periods. While intelligence and institutional resources are important, students' behavioral characteristics particularly their study habits are critical determinants of academic success (Credé & Kuncel, 2008). Students' study habits are the regular practices and behaviours that students engage in, which significantly influence their academic performance and overall well-being. These habits can be both positive and negative and can influence various aspects of their lives, including studying, time management, social interactions, and health.

Positive student study habits include effective time management, regular study schedules, active participation in class, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. For example, a student who consistently reviews class material daily and completes assignments on time is likely to perform better academically (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2015). Additionally, participating in extracurricular activities can enhance social skills and reduce stress.

Conversely, negative habits such as procrastination, poor time management, and irregular sleep patterns can hinder academic success. For instance, a student who frequently procrastinates may find themselves cramming for exams and submitting assignments late, leading to increased stress and lower grades (Steel, 2017). Poor dietary and exercise habits can also affect concentration and energy levels, further influencing academic performance.In addition, student study habits encompass the strategies and routines employed by learners to acquire, retain, and apply knowledge effectively. These include elements such as time management, organization, class participation, note-taking, and the use of active learning techniques. As academic environments continue to evolve, understanding how these behaviors influence educational outcomes becomes increasingly important. In this regard, the study by Birol Baskan, Birol & Yildiz, (2020) offers a comprehensive examination of the relationship between study habits and academic performance, particularly among students in life sciences education.

Study Habit Habit according to Britanica Encyclopedia (2011) stated that habit in psychology is any regularly repeated behaviour that requires little or no thought and is learned rather than innate. Williams James (2012) Said habits means conserving high marital process for more demanding tasks, though they promote behavioural in flexibility, in line with this multidisciplinary International Journal (2015) cited Emerson who maintained that habit refers to that which we persist in doing, becomes easier, not that task itself has become easier, but that our ability to perform it has Improved. In addition Edo Journal of counselling (2010) cited Norramore (1974) who defined habit as a pattern of activity, which through repetition has been learned to the point that it has become automotive and can be carried on with a minimum of conscious effect.

The following are the problems associated with Study Habits:

Study habits are often influenced by a wide range of challenges that may hinder students' academic effectiveness. These challenges are rooted in both individual and environmental factors, including students' personal characteristics such as personality, emotional stability, and cognitive ability, as well as the learning conditions within which they operate. Research has shown that ineffective study habits may arise when students are unable to properly utilize their learning skills or align their study practices with academic goals and expectations (Bakare, 1977; Credé & Kuncel, 2008). In many cases, students possess the intellectual capacity to succeed but fail academically due to poor study behaviors and lack of structured learning strategies.

Furthermore, study habit related problems manifest in several specific areas, including poor time allocation for study, lack of concentration, ineffective response to assignments, weak reading skills, and inadequate consultation with lecturers. Additional challenges include poor note-taking techniques, examination anxiety, inability to manage written work both in quality and quantity, lack of proper study preparation, and difficulties in verbal expression and classroom discussion. These issues collectively contribute to low academic performance, as students struggle to engage meaningfully with academic tasks. Studies have consistently emphasized that such deficiencies in study habits can significantly limit

students' academic success and overall competence (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002; Nonis & Hudson, 2010; Ogbodo, 2010).

The Teacher's Role in Developing Study Habits:

The teacher's emphasis will change the way ones study. Effective teaching with its four components, knowledge, understanding, application, and skill fulfilled, can definitely elevate one study habits. Some teachers encourage the students to memorize and some others emphasize the need for learning by understanding, avoiding memorization. Hence, in developing a study habit, it's not only a student who performs, but also a teacher. Teachers are unique in their teaching approach. According a student adopts a particular approach in a particular class. As is the teacher, so is the student. YAN Project (2012)

The Parents Role in Developing Study Habits:

YAN Project (2012) cited Ron Fry (2000) who says 'The Parents involvement is absolutely essential to a child's eventual success. A parent not even for a minute, underestimate success. Nancy I. Welshew (2003) as quoted in an article YAN Project (2012) points out, parents can help improve their children's behavior in school by becoming more involved in their education, monitoring their actions, and helping to increase their achievement, educational expectations, and positive self-perceptions. It is clear that parents have a specific role in developing one's study habits.

Academic performance is the outcome of education or an instruction- the extent to which a student, teacher or instruction has achieved their educational goals (Audu, 2015). There are two traditional indicators of academic performance, namely grades and highest level of educational attainment. These two indicators are arguably the most important to educator, students, their parents, and those people who make public policy decision.

Academic performance is the performance in academic subjects or the performance in a particular course by academic achievement; we mean the performance of a learner after course of instructions and measure in terms of masks and grades obtained in a given area of knowledge or skills acquired after undergoing a program of instruction. According to Ahmad

& Rana (2012). "Academic performance is the knowledge attained or skill developed in the school subjects usually designed by test scores are makes assigned by Teacher, or both".

Academic performance is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts. (Abdullahi, 2015). In some institutions, the performance of schools is measured by the Academic Performance Index. At school, students engage in extensive peer interactions, aggression is a salient issue because it may inflict harm on others and undermine group functioning (Dodge, Coie, & Lynam, 2016).

Causes of Poor Academic Performance:

Poor academic performance among students is a multidimensional issue influenced by psychological, environmental, socio-economic, and institutional factors. Below are the major causes:

1. Socio-Economic Background

Students from low-income families often lack access to essential resources such as books, internet, stable electricity, and conducive study environments. Economic hardship can also force students to combine work with school, leading to reduced study time and fatigue. A student who must engage in part-time jobs to support family expenses may struggle to keep up with assignments or exam preparation. Sirin (2005) found that socio-economic status (SES) is strongly correlated with academic achievement, particularly through its influence on access to learning materials and educational opportunities.

Poverty creates both material deprivation and psychological stress, which lower learning outcomes.

2. Poor Study Habits and Time Management

Inefficient study strategies, procrastination, and lack of time management skills hinder comprehension and retention of knowledge. A student who crams the night before an exam instead of practicing consistent study habits is less likely to achieve high performance. Crede and Kuncel (2008) demonstrated that effective study skills and self-regulation are stronger predictors of academic success than standardized test scores. Developing strong study routines and self-discipline is essential for sustainable academic achievement.

3. Motivation Deficiency

Lack of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation can result in disinterest in academic work. Students without clear goals or encouragement may disengage from learning. A student who does not see the relevance of mathematics to their future may neglect assignments and class participation. Ryan and Deci (2000) in Self-Determination Theory highlight that motivation is central to learning persistence, effort, and performance.

Teachers and parents must help students connect learning to personal values and future aspirations.

4. Teacher-Related Factors

Teaching quality significantly affects student performance. Inadequate teaching methods, poor communication skills, or lack of teacher commitment reduce student engagement and comprehension. A teacher who relies solely on rote memorization without explaining concepts may leave students confused and underprepared. Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) reported that teacher effectiveness is one of the most critical factors influencing student achievement. Teacher training and pedagogical innovation are crucial for improving learning outcomes.

The present study is anchored on Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Theory, developed by Barry J. Zimmerman, which posits that students achieve better academic outcomes when they actively regulate their own learning through effective planning, goal setting, time management, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. The theory emphasizes that successful learners are not only influenced by external factors such as teaching quality and learning resources but also by their personal study behaviours and learning strategies. Students who develop positive study habits, including regular reading, effective note-taking, proper time management, and consistent revision, are more likely to understand course content, complete academic tasks successfully, and perform better in examinations. Conversely, poor study habits such as procrastination, irregular reading, and inadequate preparation can hinder learning and reduce academic achievement. Therefore, Self-Regulated Learning Theory provides a strong theoretical foundation for examining the relationship between students' study habits and academic performance among tertiary institution students in Sokoto State.

Statement of the problem

Academic performance among students in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, particularly in Sokoto State, has continued to generate serious concern among educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in the education sector. Despite increased access to higher education and the expansion of tertiary institutions, many students still record unsatisfactory academic outcomes, including low grades, high failure rates, and prolonged duration of study. These persistent challenges raise questions about the underlying factors influencing students' academic success. While considerable attention has been given to external factors such as teaching quality, institutional facilities, and socio-economic background, less emphasis has been placed on the interplay of key student-related variables such as study habits and achievement motivation which are crucial determinants of learning and academic performance.

Students in tertiary institutions are expected to be self-directed learners; however, observations indicate that many exhibit poor study habits, including irregular reading patterns, ineffective time management, and over-reliance on last-minute preparation. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of students' study habits on their academic performance in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State, with the goal of providing evidence to inform strategies for improving learning outcomes among students.

Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives to determine:

1. The level of study habits among students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State;
2. The relationship between positive study habits and academic performance among students in the selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State;
3. The relationship between negative study habits and academic performance among students in the selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered:

1. What is the level of study habits among students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State?
2. What is the relationship between positive study habits and academic performance among students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State?
3. What is the relationship between negative study habits and academic performance among students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H_o1: There is no significant relationship between positive study habits and academic performance among students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State.

H_o2: There is no significant relationship between negative study habits and academic performance among students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlational research design to examine the relationship between students' study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected public tertiary institutions in Sokoto State. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables without manipulating them. The population of the study comprised 4,373 second-year students drawn from the selected public tertiary institutions, as they had spent sufficient time in the tertiary system to develop identifiable study habits and had participated in several academic assessments. A sample of 357 students was selected from the population using an appropriate sampling technique to ensure adequate representation of students across institutions and academic disciplines.

Data were collected using two instruments: an adapted Study Habit Questionnaire and a researcher-constructed Achievement Test. The adapted questionnaire measured students' study behaviors such as time management, reading habits, note-taking, concentration, and examination preparation, while the achievement test assessed students' academic performance based on general course content taught at their level. The instruments were subjected to validity and reliability procedures to ensure accuracy and consistency. The collected data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at the 0.05 level of significance to determine the nature and strength of the relationship between students' study habits and academic performance.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Null Hypotheses 1 (H_{01}): There is no significant relationship between positive study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State.

Table 1. Summary of the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis examining the relationship between positive study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State.

Method	N	Mean	SD	df	r	p- value	Decision
Positive Study Habits	113	51.97	4.774				
				224	0.764	0.000	Rejected
Academic performance	113	46.78	4.688				

Source field work (2024) **α- value= 0.05**

Table 1. presents the summary of the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis examining the relationship between positive study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State. The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.764$) indicates a strong positive relationship between positive study habits and academic performance. This implies that as students' positive study habits increase, their academic performance also tends to improve. Furthermore, the obtained p-value ($p = 0.000$) is less than the alpha level of 0.05, indicating that the relationship is statistically significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant

relationship between positive study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected tertiary institutions in Sokoto State was rejected.

This implies that positive study habits are a strong and meaningful determinant of academic performance among second-year students in the selected tertiary institutions. In practical terms, students who consistently engage in effective study behaviours such as regular reading, proper time management, active note-taking, and adequate preparation for examinations are more likely to achieve higher academic outcomes than those who do not.

Null Hypotheses 2 (H_{02}): There is no significant relationship between negative study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected public tertiary institutions in Sokoto State.

Table 2. Summary of Pearson product-moment correlation Analysis of the relationship between negative study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected public tertiary institutions in Sokoto State.

Method	N	Mean	SD	df	r	p- value	Decision
Negative Study Habits	76	45.18	4.536	150	-0.421	0.070	Rejected
Academic performance	76	42.21	9.163				

Source field work (2024) **α- value= 0.05**

Table 2. presents the summary the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis of the relationship between negative study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected public tertiary institutions in Sokoto State. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r = -0.421) indicates a moderate negative relationship between negative study habits and academic performance, suggesting that higher levels of negative study habits are associated with lower academic performance. However, the p-value (p = 0.070) is greater than the alpha level of 0.05, indicating that this relationship is not statistically significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between negative study habits and academic performance among second-year students, is not rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Finding from the research hypothesis one revealed that there was significant relationship between positive study habit and academic performance among second year students in selected public tertiary institutions in Sokoto state. This finding is consistent with the work of Bakare (1977), whose Study Habit Inventory conceptualizes study habits along a continuum ranging from poor to highly effective behaviors. According to Bakare, students with moderate study habits demonstrate inconsistent and partial engagement in effective study practices such as time management, regular reading, note-taking, assignment completion, and examination preparation. Bakare further emphasized that this inconsistency may result in fluctuating academic performance, as moderate study habits do not provide the level of cognitive reinforcement and academic discipline necessary for optimal achievement. Consequently, students within this category are neither academically at high risk nor fully positioned to attain superior academic outcomes unless deliberate interventions are introduced to strengthen and stabilize their study behaviors.

Finding from research hypothesis two revealed that the relationship between negative study habits and academic performance among second-year students in selected public tertiary institutions in Sokoto State. This is in line with the study of Ogunsanya (2018) emphasized that students who exhibit negative study habits are more likely to experience academic difficulties, as these behaviors undermine consistent learning and knowledge retention. The proportion of students with negative study habits observed in this study therefore underscores the importance of targeted academic support programs, study-skills workshops, and guidance services to mitigate the adverse effects of poor study practices.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that students' study habits play a significant role in determining academic performance among second-year students in selected public tertiary institutions in Sokoto State. Findings

revealed that a sizable proportion of students exhibited moderate study habits, indicating inconsistent engagement in effective learning behaviors, while only a smaller proportion demonstrated positive study habits conducive to higher academic achievement. The analysis also established a statistically significant positive relationship between students' study habits and their academic performance, suggesting that students who adopt organized, disciplined, and purposeful study routines are more likely to achieve better academically. Therefore, study habits are a critical non-cognitive factor that can enhance students' learning outcomes and overall academic success**.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1.Strengthening Positive Study Habits: Since positive study habits showed a significant relationship with academic performance, tertiary institutions should intensify efforts to promote effective study practices through structured study skills programs, academic workshops, and continuous student orientation.

2.Addressing Negative Study Habits: Given that negative study habits were significantly related to academic performance, institutions should provide targeted counselling services and academic support to help students overcome poor study behaviours such as procrastination, poor time management, and lack of concentration.

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