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Study habits, use of school libraries and students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State

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The study was on study habits, use of libraries and students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Ondo West Local Government Area of Ondo State. Survey technique was adopted for the study, and the instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Complete enumeration was the procedure used for the study. 296 copies of questionnaire were administered and retrieved but 14 copies were invalid. Thus, 284 (95%) copies were valid for analysis. Major findings of the study revealed among others that irregular use of school libraries by the students was one of the factors for poor scores in test and examination, many students did not study outside the school, and academic performance of the students was poor in Mathematics and English Language. The study concluded that study habits of the students were bad and academic performance of the students was poor. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that library study hours should be included on the school time table to allow students to have a specific time to use the school library on a regular basis; school libraries should open beyond school hours to enable the students the opportunity to study after school hours, students should find suitable and comfortable places to study outside the class each day, and amount of time used by the students for study must be increased both at school library and at home in order to devote quality time to study.

Key words: Study habits, academic performance, library influence, reading and learning, access, information.

INTRODUCTION

A good study habit is very important for good academic performance, and such every parent and teacher would desire their children to be avid and excited readers. Therefore, it is essential to create captivating, inviting and comfortable place for the students in order to help them cultivate good study habits. Library, more than any other place, provides ideal environment and vital information resources for students to develop and sustain good study habits necessary for excellent performance in academic works. Thus, it is imperative for the students to cultivate good study habits that will equip them for excellent performance in their academic work through the use of a school library. A habit is a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up. Alex

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(2011) described a habit as something that is done on scheduled, regular and planned basis that is not relegated to a second place or optional place in one's life. It was further stated that a habit is what is simply done, no reservation, no excuses and no exceptions. Thus, the habit formed can be improved upon by constant practice; and it is very hard to give up a habit once it is formed.

According to Alex (2011) … to study is to buy out the time and dedicate self to the application and task of study, and to become engrossed in a process of learning, practice, enlightenment and education of one's self. Therefore, study habit can be derived from the above as buying out a dedicated schedule and uninterrupted time to apply one's self to the task of learning. Study habit is an action such as reading, taking notes, holding study groups which the students perform regularly and habitually in order to accomplish the task of learning. Study habits can be described as effective or ineffective depending upon whether or not they serve the students well. Many of the issues concerning success in school revolve around developing good study habits. Reading habit refers to the behavior which expresses the likeness of reading of individual types of reading and taste of reading (Busayo, 2011 cited in Sangkaeo, 1999). It is a pattern with which an individual organizes his or her reading in order to cope with new knowledge in the ever changing world. African, and indeed Nigerians are not used to reading because the predominantly medium of communication is oral. Africans are not reading society, but chatting society; the background of learning through culture, the cultural habit of people… prefer listening and chatting to reading (Busayo, 2011, cited in Sangkaeo, 1999). In the light of this, creating good study habits is very germane to African children/students' success in schools. Traditionally, parents are often advised to have a particular study area in their home for their child's home work, stick to a specific schedule, and do one task at a time (Stephens, 2010). Parents can certainly play a major role in providing the encouragement, environment, and materials necessary for successful studying to take place at home. However, at school, library provides a quiet, well-lit study place and environment that is conducive to mental concentration. Adesoji (2007) cited Omoniwa (1995) to posit that libraries have been associated with the concept of life-long reading and learning. It was stated further that library especially school libraries are desirable in order to inculcate into the students very early in life the habit of reading for various purposes, education, pleasure, information, culture etc.

Students' academic performance is predicated on study and reading skills. There is a direct correlation between study habits and students' academic performance. Without good study and reading habits, students would not be able to perform excellently in their tests and examinations. According to Bakare (1994) as cited by Asikhia (2010) poor academic performance is any performance that falls below a desired standard. Poor academic performance of students in promotion examina-tion or terminal examination will hinder the students from being promoted to the next class or securing admission to higher institution of learning. Poor academic performance can make the students to become frustrated. It can also lead to students' drop out especially if the poor academic performance persists for a long

Statement of the problem

Secondary school education is supposed to be bedrock and foundation toward higher knowledge in tertiary institutions. The National Policy on Education {2004} stipulated that secondary school education is an instrument for national development that fosters the worth and development of the individual for further education and development, general development of the society and equality of educational opportunities to all Nigerian children, irrespective of any real or marginal disability. However, the above mentioned aim of secondary school education is being threatened by students' poor academic performance. Asikhia (2010) attested to this and affirmed that the poor performance of secondary school students in examinations hampers the realization of aims of secondary school education in Nigeria. Poor performance in test and examination is caused by poor and defective study habits employed by the students. De Escobar (2011) argued that students need to be familiar with the relation that good study habits and academic achievement have to accomplish great success. Moghadam and Cheraghia (2008) submitted that academic performance is affected by a lot of factors; study habits is one of them. Williamson (2010) contended that many students suffer low grade in schools because of bad study habits. Also, students' failure to use the school library and its' resources to expand their study habits has a negative effect on their academic performance. Dent (2006) reported a study conducted by Lance (2000) to show that students in middle school with libraries had 18 percent higher achievement test scores than their counterparts without a library. Therefore, this study examines study habits, use of school library and academic performance of senior secondary school students to show the current trend of these variables in the secondary schools.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are to find out:

1. Whether school libraries have professional staff
2. Whether the school libraries are connected to the internet
3. Find out the students' study habits.
4. Determine the pattern of students' use of school library.
5. Investigate the relationship between study habits, use

of school library and students' academic performance.

Research questions

1. Are there professional staffs in the school libraries?
2. Are the school libraries connected on the internet?
3. What are the study habits employed by the students for their academic works?
4. What is the pattern of students' use of the school library?
5. In what ways do the study habits and students' use of library influence students' academic performance?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Studies have shown that there is strong connection between the students' use of school library and their academic performance. Students that use the school library often perform better in test and examination than students who fail to use the school library. For instance, Wikipedia the free encyclopedia (2010) stated that researchers have demonstrated that school libraries have positive impact on students' achievement. It contended that more than sixty (60) studies have been conducted in nineteen (19) U.S. States and one Canadian province. It maintained that the major finding of these studies is that students with access to well-supported school library media programme with a qualified school library media specialist scored higher on reading assessments regardless of their socio-economic statuses. Also, it observed that a study conducted in Ohio revealed that 99.4% of students surveyed believed that their school librarians and school media programmes helped them succeed in school. It cited Lonsdale (2003) who reported a similar conclusion in Australia.

In addition, eHow (2011) posited that extensive, modern research that controlled for confounding variables such as socioeconomic students shows a positive correlation between school libraries with qualified librarians and high students' performance. Moreover, Dent (2006) conducted a research on the observations of school library impact at two rural Ugandan schools and submitted that the purpose of the study is to explore connections between the presence of a library and certain students' academic engagement indicators, such as scholastic performance, reading and library use patterns.

Research findings have revealed that there is a strong connection between the students' study habits and their academic performance. Good study habits lead to good academic performance but bad and defective study habits result to poor academic performance. Moghadam and Cheraghian (2008) corroborated the assertion and posited that academic performance is affected by a lot of

factors; study habit is one of them. They claimed that considering the importance of study habits in academic performance, they embark on a research on study habits and their relationship with academic performance. De Escobar (2011) observed that students need to be familiar with the relation of good study habits and academic achievement to accomplish great success in any level of education. She contended that by learning good study habits students tend to perform better than struggling students. Also, Gettinger and Siebert (2002) asserted that effective study skills are necessary for a college student to excel academically. They further stated that student must develop these skills in order to retain information learned in the present for their future benefit. In addition, Igun and Adogbeji (2007) observed that study habits have been taken for granted, particularly in developing countries. According to them, in Africa, there is wide spread reading in all scholarly fields, but less is being achieved in writing and publication. They argued that efficient study habits can strengthen writing. They stated further that study habits and skills are particularly important for students, whose needs include time management, note taking, internet skill, the elimination of distractions, and assigning high priority to study. Moreover, they cited Fielden (2004) to state that good study habits help the student in critical reflection in skills outcomes such as selecting, analyzing, critiquing and synthesizing.

Good study habits are study techniques that enhance the students to realize their full potentials. There are tips for good study habits. The highlights of such tips as given by different researchers will be listed. Escobar (2011) listed good study habits among which are:

1. Do your home work at school
2. Prioritize your tasks
3. Involve yourself in sports/arts
4. Prepare for tests ahead of time
5. Clutter free study place

Fleming (2010) enumerated what she described as great study habits; the highlights of many of them include:

1. Write down every assignment
2. Communicate with your teacher
3. Establish a study zone at home
4. Know your dominant learning style
5. Take fabulous note

Many students suffer low grade in schools because of bad study habits. Williamson (2010) posited that some negative study habits are difficult to break and can seriously affect students grades. According to her, the followings are bad study habits that students should avoid in order to break up the bad study habits listed above; she suggested among others that students should:

1. Set a schedule
2. Get rid of distractions Get enough sleep
3. Study soon after class
4. Teach others

Other tips that can enhance good study habits are:

1.Students need to develop good time management
2.Students should acquire a vision
3.Students must choose best study schedule
4.Students must take note and rehearse them regularly

Students must not be afraid to ask for help (Wiki answer, 2011). Alegbeleye (2008) identified stages of reading skills and posited that at the secondary school level, both cognitive and affective development are unifying concepts that are considered in the reading of the secondary schools students. In addition, the following submissions were made among others:

1. Secondary school students must build a large repertoire of vocabulary and recognize tenses that are unique in specific subject area they learn at school.
2. Students develop the habit of extensive and intensive reading in content field areas and other interesting materials for greater cognitive and affective development.
3. Students learn and develop the ability to adjust reading speed according to the purpose for reading and the difficulty of materials read.
4. Students read silently and develop the habit of building more vocabulary, learning to concentrate and develop the idea of note taking.
5. Students take adventure to the library to read for pleasure in novels, comics, journals, newspapers and other materials of interest for recreation.

However, students use and process information better with the help from a school librarian. School librarians guide students through their reading and research process as well as helping them to choose books that fit their interests.

School library according to Busayo (2011) is an integral part of educational system that cannot be ignored without jeopardizing the quality of education in schools. The school library is an important part of elementary, middle and high school progammes without which students would not thrive academically and invariably find it most difficult to conduct academic research before they reach college level. Adefarati (2002) highlighted the following as the aims of a school library:

1. To encourage the development of skill in reading
2. To prompt the readers to some literacy appreciation
3. To be a source of subject information centre and support the school curriculum
4. To be a clinic for intellectual development

According to International Federation of Library Association (2009) the followings are essential to the development of literacy, information literacy, learning and culture; and are core school library services:

1. Supporting and enhancing educational goals as outlined in the school mission and curriculum.
2. Developing and sustaining in children the habit and enjoyment of reading and learning, and the use of libraries throughout their lives.
3. Offering opportunity for experiences in creating and using information for knowledge, understanding, imagination and enjoyment.
4. Supporting all students in learning and practicing skills for evaluating and using information, regardless of form, format or medium, including sensitivity to the mode of communication within the community.
5. Providing access to local, regional, national and global resources and opportunities that expose learners to diverse ideas, experiences and opinions.
6. Organizing activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity.
7. Working with students, teacher, administration and parents to achieve the mission of the school.
8. Proclaiming the concept that intellectual freedom and access to information are essential to effective and responsible citizenship and participation in a democracy
9. Promoting reading and resources and services of the school library to the whole school community and beyond.

School library is very important in shaping students' habit as regard reading for leisure, to pass examinations and to obtain information on different aspects of life (George, 2011). It is an inexhaustible store house of unrestricted information resources in diverse formats systematically organized for users. Thus, a school library cannot be separated from the school – parent institution and expect all round development of the students. Library users make use of library for different purposes. While some users use it for reading their notes and personal books, others use library to do assignments. Yet, others visit library to prepare for examination, recreation and relaxation. Ogunbote and Odunewu (2008) cited Kumar (1991) and stated that the performance of students could be improved considerably if they use the library regularly. Students should therefore maximize the use of school libraries to their advantage since school libraries provide favourable environment where the students can discover and develop their abilities and talents as well as improving their reading and study skills.

RESEARCH METHOD

Descriptive survey research was adopted for this study. The researchers used questionnaire instrument for data collection. The

Table 1. Availability of a professional staff.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	206	72.54
No	78	27.46
Total	284	100

Table 2. Library access to internet.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	67	23.59
No	217	76.41
Total	284	100

Table 3. Students' pattern of library use.

No. of library use	Frequency	Percentage
Once	98	34.51
Twice	31	10.92
Thrice	62	21.83
More than 3 times	35	12.32
Not at all	58	20.42
Total	284	100

Table 4. Students' reason for visiting library.

Reasons for using the library	Frequency	Percentage
To read notebook	84	29.58
To relax	46	12.20
To read library books	124	43.66
To read newspapers	18	6.34
To do assignment	12	4.22
Total	284	100

population of this study consists of students from four secondary schools. The target population comprises senior secondary students, one to three (SSS 1-3). These levels of secondary school students were able to respond appropriately to the questionnaire of the researchers because they had spent three years in the school system. There were twenty seven arms out which nine were randomly selected. The total population of the nine classes was two hundred and nine eight. Complete enumeration was the sampling technique employed for this study. The researchers used all the students in the nine classes selected because the academic records of the students were done on class basis. The academic records of the sample students were one of the data needed for this research; and they were obtained from the school authorities of the respondents. The instrument for data collection for this research work is a slightly modified standardized study habits inventory devised by Muskingum College-Centre for Advancement and Learning and Cook Counseling Centre. The administration of the questionnaire took place in the classroom of the students.

Data presentation and analysis

The data collected were presented in table form with columns for frequency and percentage. Analysis was done in simple percentage The researcher retrieved all the two hundred and ninety eight (298) copies of the questionnaire they administered on the students (respondents) used for the study. Fourteen (14) of the retrieved copies of the questionnaire were invalid. Thus, two hundred and eighty four (284) copies were valid for analysis. This represents approximately ninety five percent (95%) of the respondents.

Table 1 reveals that the majority of the respondents' schools libraries had professionally qualified librarian (72.54%). 78 respondents (27.46%) indicated that their school libraries had no professionally qualified librarian. School libraries of most respondents had professional librarian who systematically organizes the resources of the school libraries for ease of access and use. The finding is in tandem with the recommendation of Ogunniyi et al., (2011) that school library should be manned by professional librarian

It could be observed from Table 2 that the school libraries of the majority of the respondents were not connected to the internet (76.41%). Only 67(23.59) respondents indicated that their libraries were connected to the internet. Majority of the school library of the respondents did not have access to the wealth of the information resources on the net. Ogunniyi et al. (2011) found out that most school libraries were not hook on the internet, and therefore recommended that school libraries should be connected to the internet.

Table 3 shows that 98 (34.51%) respondents used the library once in a week. 31 (10.92%), 62 (21.83%) and 35 (12.32%) respondents used the library twice, thrice and more than three times respectively in a week. 58 (20.42%) respondents did not use the library at all in a week. Majority of the respondents did not use the library regularly. The researchers observed that there was no library period on the school time table. The schools opened 8:00 am and closed at 2:00 pm.

Table 4 reveals that 124 (43.66%) respondents visited library to read library books and 84 (29.58%) visited the library to read notebooks. Only 12 (4.22%) visited the library to do assignment. Majority of the respondents visited the library to read library books and notebooks. .

Table 5 shows that 94 (33.10%) respondents never study outside of class each day but 90 (31.69%) respondents always study outside of class each day. While 194 (68.31%) respondents always keep up to date in assignments, 20 (7.04%) respondents never keep up to date in assignments. Majority of the respondents (203 or 71.48%) made specific preparations for exams. Only 24 (8.45%) respondents indicated that they never made specific preparations for exams. 123 (43.30%) respondents never knew what was covered in each exam but 79(27.82%) respondents knew.

Table 6 reveals that 159 (55.99%) respondents indicated that there were few distractions in the places they study, but 125 (44.01%) respondents admitted that there were no distractions in the places they study. The temperature of the places of study of the majority of the respondents (174 or 61.27%) was very comfortable for studying. The chairs and tables in the places of study of most of the respondents were suitable for studying, 187 (65.85%) and 197 (69.37%) respondents respectively. 185 or 65.14% of the respondents indicated that the lighting in the places of study was conducive to studying but 99 or 34.86% of the respondents had the contrary opinion.

Table 7 reveals that 46.48% of the respondents scored less than 40 marks in English Language. 7.37% of the respondents scored between 60-69 and only 3.17% of the respondents scored between 70 and above.

In Mathematics, 50.70% of the respondents scored less than 40 marks and only 13.38% respondents scored between 70 and above. 47.54% of the respondents scored less than 40 marks in

Table 5. Students' amount of time spent on study activity.

| Study activity | Scale | | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | |
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Studying outside of class each day	94	33.10	35	12.32	65	22.89	90	31.69	284	100
Keeping up to date in assignments	20	7.04	28	9.86	42	14.19	194	63.31	284	100
Reviewing regularly each subject covered	19	6.69	36	12.68	58	20.42	171	60.21	284	100
Surveying a chapter before reading in detail	36	12.68	34	11.97	42	14.79	172	60.56	284	100
Reading assignment to answer questions	30	10.56	32	11.27	51	17.96	171	60.21	284	100
Trying to get meaning of important new items while reading the chapter	20	7.04	28	9.86	70	24.65	166	58.45	284	100
Reciting each section of the chapter at the end	29	10.21	33	11.62	66	23.24	156	54.93	284	100
Knowing what will be covered on each exam	123	43.30	31	10.92	51	17.96	79	27.82	284	100
Making specific preparations for exams	24	8.45	16	5.63	41	14.44	203	71.48	284	100
Studying what you got wrongly on a test	35	12.32	16	5.63	45	15.85	188	66.20	284	100

Note: 1 stands for almost never, 2 for less than half the time, 3 for more half the time and 4 for almost always.

Table 6. Statement about place of study.

| Place of study | Option | | | | | |
| | MT | | MF | | Total | |
	F	%	F	%	F	%
There are few distractions	159	55.99	125	44.01	284	100
The temperature is very comfortable for studying most of the time	174	61.27	110	38.73	284	100
The chair is very conducive to studying	187	65.85	97	34.15	284	100
The desk/table is very suitable for studying	197	69.37	87	30.63	284	100
The lighting is very conducive to studying	185	65.14	99	34.86	284	100

Note: MT stands for Mostly True and MF stands for mostly false

Table 7. Students' academic performance.

| Subject | Score | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Less than 40 | | 40-49 | | 50-59 | | 60-69 | | 70 & above | | Total | |
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
English Lang.	132	46.48	66	23.24	56	19.72	21	7.39	9	3.17	284	100
Mathematic	144	50.70	41	14.44	31	10.92	30	10.56	38	13.38	284	100
Biology	135	47.54	35	12.32	45	15.85	34	11.97	35	12.32	284	100
Economics	119	41.90	16	5.63	41	14.44	39	13.73	69	24.30	284	100
Yoruba	95	33.45	47	16.55	52	18.31	70	24.65	20	7.04	284	100

Biology and 12.32% of the respondents scored between 70 and above. In Economics, 41.90% of the respondents scored less than 40 marks and only 5.63% scored between 40-49 marks. 33.45% of the respondents scored less than 40 marks in Yoruba and only 7.04% of the respondents scored 70 and above.

The academic performance of the respondents as shown above was poor. Awosiyan and Opki (2012) cited West African Examination Council analysis of candidates' performance for 2008, 2009 and 2010; and only 23, 21 and 20% respectively passed. The poor academic performance of the students could be attributed to the

failure of the students to study outside of the class each day (Table 5). Another reason is that students studied in places where there were distractions (Table 6). In addition, students did not use the school library regularly nor spent quality time in the library (Tables 3 and 5). Demola (2012) reported that 'Facebook, Yahoo, Twitter, MySpace, English Premier League, European Football Leagues among other things have taken over the time students could have used for reading and studying.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Professional staffs were employed to manage most school libraries; and this would ensure the systematic organization of the resources and efficient services to the users. The finding is in tandem with the recommendation of Ogunniyi et al. (2011) that school library should be manned by professional librarian There was no internet access in most school libraries, and thus denied the students' access to vast information resources on the net. There was no library hour on the school time table; the school opened by 8:00 am and closed at 2:00 pm; and the school library opening hours is the same with that of the school.

The irregular use of the school libraries by the students of secondary schools could lead to poor scores in test and examination. Dent (2006) reported that a study conducted by Lance (2000) showed that middle level class that used school library regularly had 18 percent higher achievement tests scores than their counterparts without a school library. The findings of Acido (2010) also revealed that two students who scored above average in reasoning skills studied regularly. The academic perfor-mance of the students was poor, especially in English Language and Mathematics. The implication of this is that many students would not have the basic requirement for tertiary education. The result supports the findings of Asikhia (2010) that showed that the poor academic performance of secondary school students in examina-tion and test hampers the realization of aims of secondary school in Nigeria which is the provision of basic qualification for further education at tertiary level.

Conclusion

The school library opening hours was tied to school opening hours- 8:00am - 2:00pm besides the non inclusion of library period in the school time table; these arrangements did not afford the students ample opportunity to study in the library. The absence of internet access in most school libraries poses a grave danger to students' access to unrestricted resources around the world in this digital age. The responses of the respon-dents have shown that majority of secondary school students did not use the school libraries regularly and many others did not use the school libraries at all. Students use the school libraries to read notes and library textbooks. Many students never study outside of the

class each day, and never know what was covered in exam. The study habits of the students were bad and the academic performances of the students were also poor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. There should be a library study hour on the school time table to enable the students to have a specific time to use the school library regularly
2. The inclusion of library study hour on the school time table would afford the students the opportunity to study more than thirty (30) min in the library on regular basis.
3. The library opening hours should be extended beyond school hours- 2:00 pm to give students the opportunity to study in the library after school hours
4. School libraries should compulsorily connect to the internet to enable the students to explore the wealth of information resources worldwide.
5. Students should find suitable and comfortable places to study outside the class each day, especially at home to compliment the study at school.
6. There is need for the students to study and cover the syllabus on each subject in order to know what will be covered in each exam.
7. The amount of time used in studying must increase in order to devote more time to quality study both at school library and at home to prevent poor academic performance currently being experienced in the secondary schools.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests

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