

EFFECTS OF READING CULTURE ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND INTEREST IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN AFIJIO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the effects of reading culture on students' academic achievement and interest in senior secondary school English Language in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State. A stratified random sampling method was used to select the 5 secondary schools that participated in the study and Simple random sampling technique was used to select 400 students from the selected schools. The instrument used in gathering the data was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. Mean and Standard Deviation was used to answer the research questions. The findings revealed that students taught English Language using good and bad reading culture affects academic achievement of Senior Secondary School Students; also, gender has significant influence on the reading culture of Senior Secondary School Students and interest have significant influence on the reading culture of Senior Secondary School Students. Based on the above, the paper recommends that a compulsory course for all students on reading should be introduced in the schools.

Keywords: Reading Culture, Students' Academic Achievement, Interest and English Language

Introduction

The aptitude to read is one of the factors of students' success or failure. They must form the routine of reading to perform well in all subjects. A good reader has a better opportunity for more achievement. (Ajibola, 2006) submitted that "reading habit is cultivated by individuals who are ready to give their all to it". The ability required in reading can promote the acquisition of language and writing. Several Senior Secondary School one student finds it difficult to read and

understand despite the fact that reading is obligatory. Some show a carefree attitude towards reading. This problem is not strange to Senior Secondary School students alone but pertains to all groups of people. Lasisi, (2007) asked a fundamental question on what books Nigerian youths read. His question includes whether political office holders in the country read. It was clear from the tone of the question that he feels that reading is not part of the culture of the people that control Nigeria destiny.

Many English Language teachers are lagging behind in their approach to teaching reading comprehension which could result to poor performance of students in both the internal and external examinations. These teachers have poor methods of imparting reading skills to students. The situation is so bad that some students find it difficult to read and comprehend a simple sentence. Reading involves understanding the meaning or message conveyed through the written text. An efficient reader will understand what is irrelevant for him and what is relevant in the text that he/she should get at. Effective reading can be very helpful in learning English Language.

Poor level of academic achievement in many subject areas in Senior Secondary Level may be due to poor fundamentals in English Language (Ajibola, 2006). The ability to read is the foundation on which all other subjects are based. Failure to read will make students to become more and more lost academically. Hence they cannot perform well in any academic discipline without a good reading culture, since reading is a searchlight for knowledge. It is in this regard that, the study set out to investigate the effects of reading culture on Students' academic achievement and interest in English Language.

Achievement is a process that involves the adolescents developing a stable sense of them, graduating from being dependent on parents to depending on themselves. It involves integrating several aspects of their personality or role to a coherent whole-such as having sexual identity, vocational, directional or ideological world view. New social and academic pressure forces adolescents toward different roles, roles that often involve more responsibility. Achievement becomes a more serious business in adolescence and adolescents begin to sense that the game of life is now being played for real, and begin to perceive current successes and failures as predictors of future outcomes on the real world (Santrock, 2005). As demands on adolescents social interest may cut into the time they need to pursue academic matters, or ambitions in one

area may undermine the attainment of goals in another, as when academic achievement leads to social disappointment.

Academic achievement, according to Lavin theory propounded in 1965, refers to some methods of expressing a student's scholastic standing. This can be regarded as course or subject grade, an average for a group of courses/subjects in a programme of study (in this case, English Language Students is being referred to). There are two dimensions to academic achievement: good academic achievement that leads to success and poor academic achievement that result to failure. A number of motivational processes (intrinsic and extrinsic) are involved in achievement (Tella, 2007) Intrinsic motivation is based on internal factors such as self-determination, curiosity, challenge, and effort. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation involves external incentives such as rewards and punishments. The humanistic and cognitive approaches stress the importance of intrinsic motivation in achievement. According to (Santrock, 2005), some adolescents read hard because they are internally motivated to achieve high standards in their work (intrinsic motivation) while other adolescents read hard because they want to make good grades or avoid parental disapproval (extrinsic motivation). However, Reading Culture go a long way in academic achievement and interest of English Language students. For students to develop positive Reading Culture towards English Language there is need to get them interested. Interest is very paramount in the course of learning

Gender issues assume prominence in English Language discourse. Gender is the socio-cultural phenomenon of the division of people into various categories according to their biological sex, with each having associated roles, clothing, stereotypes, etc.; those with male sex characteristics are perceived as "boys" and "men", while those with female sex characteristics are perceived as "girls" and "women. According to Uwameiye, (2005) gender is regarded as a sense of awareness between male and female. Gender is a psychological term, which describes behaviours and attributes expected of individual on the basis of being a male or female. The males are said to use the right hemisphere more than the females for spatial reasoning. Hence they dominate in the sciences and science based courses. The females on the other hand make more use of the left hemisphere of their brains than the males. They, therefore, perform better than the males in verbal tasks (Eze, 2006). Identified with gender differences in academic achievement in languages in favour of the girls, (Eze, 2006) however attributed the superiority of

the females over males in languages to the amount and nature of contacts which girls had with mother, who are the principal models or sources of early language training for the children. From the discussions above, it appears that there are basically two schools of thought with respect to the existence of gender related differences in classroom behaviours. One group believes that the differences arise biologically between the gender groups. The other school of thought attributed the differences to the socialization processes in child up-bringing. Various researches on gender issues have shown that there are no genetically gender related differences among males and females. In fact, it has not been proved scientifically rather there is biological proof to show that females are inferior to males or vice versa.

The interest in a particular thing is a feeling manifested in an activity. Interest is a tendency to become absorbed in an experience and to continue it. It is a zeal or willingness of participating in activity from which one derives some pleasure (Musa, 2006). Studies on interest have a growing concern to identify various approaches that may be used to arouse and sustain students' interest in various careers for a greater achievement. Many studies according (Ezech, 2006) citing (Russell, 1970), (Burke, 1987) shows that interest plays a major role in any undertaking, as it influences devotion to study, fairness, hard work, endurance, discipline, etc. (Ogbonna, 2003) laid emphasis on the need for teachers to stimulate students' interest in learning without which students' achievement will be minimal. Interest is a persisting tendency to pay attention and enjoy some activities (Jimoh, 2010) However, it is pertinent that English Language teachers should use teaching strategy which ensures gender active involvement in learning and provide suitable learning environment to improve achievement and stimulate the interest of high and low ability of English Language Students in Secondary Schools (Udoekoriko, 2006).

Statementnt of the Problem

English Language acquisition is a stepping stone for proficiency in all subjects in Senior Secondary Schools. The knowledge of English Language is important both for educational, economical and national development of a country. Ever since the inception of poor performance of students in the final examination at the Senior Secondary School level parents and teachers alike have pointed out to so many reasons for these dull performance and one amongst them is poor reading culture among students. The effect of this particular factor if not properly checked, students will continue to bring out miserable results. It is therefore, the desire of the researcher to

bring to limelight strategies that when applied in this noble sector, will help curb the menace of poor reading culture and at a long run help end the poor performance of our students at the Senior Secondary School examinations.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose is to examine the **effects of reading culture on students' academic achievement** and interest in senior secondary school English language in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State. Specifically, the study is to;

1. determine the academic achievement mean scores of students taught English language using good and bad reading culture
2. determine the academic achievement mean scores of male and female students taught English Language using good and bad reading culture.
3. examine the Interest mean scores of Students taught English Language using good and bad reading culture.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the academic achievement mean score of students taught English Language using good and bad reading culture?
2. What is the gender mean score of reading culture in English Language?
3. What is the interest mean score of Students taught English Language using reading culture?

Methodology

The quantitative descriptive research design is an Expos-Facto design used in this study to assess the reading culture among secondary school students and its effect on their academic achievement level in English Language in Oyo State. This study is relevant to researches of describing a phenomenon that is happening this way. The teachers and students in the Local Government Area is the population from which sample of 400 Senior Secondary School Students and teachers in Afijio Local Government of Oyo State. The rationale of choosing secondary schools is that this is the level at which students' face the challenges of academic work as it is a

foundation stage in students' academic life. The schools were selected using stratified sampling technique while the students were selected using simple random sampling technique.

Out of several secondary schools in Afijio Local Government, Oyo State, five (5) secondary schools are randomly selected for the purpose of the study. These are:

Akinmorin Grammar School	- 80
Fiditi Grammar School	- 80
Ilora Grammar School	- 80
Jobele Community Grammar School	- 80
Iware Grammar School	- 80

The five schools were selected based on location, and nature of students. The researcher used the random sampling techniques whereby in each of the classes in the schools the researchers conducted this research study; papers were wrapped into the number of students in the class with each number assigned to the student written on a piece of paper. Each paper will be folded and shuffled in a small box without replacement.

The survey instrument used for this research was developed based on established procedures in literature. The researcher made use of the Likert response questionnaire mode of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), No Opinion (NO), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) given the weight of: 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The survey instrument contained four sections. Section A: included questions that focused on demographic information of students such as: name, class, and gender, school etc., Section B: focused on what extent good and bad reading culture affects academic achievement in English Language? Section C: focused on what is the extent to which a student's gender can affect his or her reading culture in English Language? Section D: focused on what extent do interest affect Reading culture?

Data analysis involved the breaking down of data into representative constituents in order to find answers to the research questions. The data was analysed using the descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions.

Results

Data Presentation and interpretation were done considering all the research questions as follows.

Research Question 1: What are the academic achievement mean scores of students taught English Language using good and bad reading culture?

The answer to research question one is contained in table one below.

Table 1: Analysis to determine academic achievement mean scores of students taught English Language using good and bad reading culture.

Items	SA	A	NO	D	SD	Total	W. Total	W. Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	20	18	2	25	30	95	258	2.72	1.57	Rejected
2.	30	22	3	8	2	65	265	4.08	1.13	Accepted
3.	20	10	5	10	13	58	188	3.24	1.60	Accepted
4.	10	24	4	15	12	65	200	3.08	1.40	Accepted
5.	20	16	1	15	15	67	212	3.16	1.59	Accepted
Total	100	90	15	73	72	350		3.26	1.46	Accepted

The data presented in Table 1, above shows the mean score of 3.26 and standard deviation of 1.46 and with a cut off mean of 3.00 has accepted that students taught English Language using good and bad reading culture affects academic achievement of Senior Secondary School Students

Research question 2: What is the gender mean score of reading culture in English Language?

Table 2: Analysis to answer the questions on the gender mean scores of reading culture in English Language?

Items	SA	A	NO	D	SD	Total	W.Total	W.Mean	SD	Remarks
6.	30	40	4	28	10	112	388	3.46	1.35	Accepted
7.	30	15	6	15	13	79	271	3.43	1.54	Accepted
8.	20	5	5	14	13	57	176	3.09	1.63	Accepted
9.	4	10	10	10	14	48	124	2.58	1.32	Rejected
10.	6	10	5	13	20	54	125	2.31	1.24	Rejected
Total	90	80	30	80	70	350		2.97	1.19	Rejected

The data presented in Table 2, above shows the mean score of 2.97 and standard deviation of 1.19 and with a cut off mean of 3.00 has rejected that gender has significant influence on the reading culture of Senior Secondary School Students.

Research question 3: What is the interest mean score of Students taught English Language using reading culture?

Table 3: Analysis to answer the question on the interest mean scores of Students taught English Language using reading culture

Items	SA	A	NO	D	SD	Total	W.Total	W.Mean	SD	Remarks
11.	50	30	5	15	15	115	430	3.74	1.45	Accepted
12.	18	10	5	50	15	98	260	2.65	1.36	Rejected
13.	15	8	3	15	9	50	155	3.10	1.54	Accepted
14.	4	15	1	22	15	57	142	2.49	1.31	Rejected
15.	3	7	2	10	8	30	77	2.57	1.36	Rejected
Total	90	70	16	112	62	350		3.00	1.40	Accepted

The data presented in Table 3, above shows the mean score of 3.00 and standard deviation of 1.40 and with a cut off mean of 3.00 has accepted that interest have significant influence on the reading culture of Senior Secondary School Students.

Discussion of Results

The data presented in Table 1, provided answer to research question one. The findings revealed that the mean score of 3.26 accepted good and bad reading culture affects achievement level in English Language in Senior Secondary Schools in Oyo State. The data presented in Table 2, provided answer to research question two. The findings showed that male students had a higher mean achievement score 4.08 than the female students. However, the findings conformed to (Obioma, 1988)(Nworgu, 1990) and (Obodo, 1990). Obioma and Ohuche (1984) identified gender as a relevant factor in academic achievement. Their findings showed that male students performed significantly better than the female students. In another vein, Nworgu (1990) and Obodo (1990) findings indicated that female students performed significantly better than their male counterpart in academic achievement.

data presented in table 3, provided answer to research question three. The findings showed that interest had a higher mean achievement score 3.00 which showed that interest have significant influence on the reading culture of Senior Secondary School Students. This is supported by the work of (Nworgu, 1990).

Summary

This study dealt with the effects of reading culture on students' academic achievement and interest in Senior Secondary School English Language in Afijio Local Government Area of Oyo State. It is not a misconception that the recent and past performance of students has suffered a great decline in all subjects and especially the very pre-requisite one like English Language. Therefore, for the purpose of bringing back and maintaining a standard educational system devoid of this poor performance by students in our stronghold of learning it becomes pertinent for the researcher to strategize means with which to curb this vice of poor Reading Culture among Senior secondary School Students so as to bring about a good achievement level in English Language which is the objective of this research.

In a bid to achieve this objective the researcher setup research questions which guided the study, in as much as the population is was unspecific, the research has sampled the population within the ambient of Oyo State Environs, sampling randomly among schools in Oyo State. The technique for the data collection was questionnaire.

The population for the study comprised five secondary schools in Oyo State. The target population comprised all the Senior Secondary School Students. The sample consisted of 350 students. A simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the schools that were used in the research. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions

Conclusion

The study found out that Reading Culture is more effective in improving the interest and academic achievement English Language students in the Senior Secondary Schools. The study as well found out that there was significant between the effort of parents and teachers influence on the achievement level of Students in English. The study also found out that there was a significant difference in the Reading Culture of Students and their gender. However, the results showed teaching method is a viable strategy for English subjects in Senior Secondary School.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- Government should make available various cutting edge materials for effective teaching and learning in the classroom.
- Regular workshop should be organized to train English teachers on cutting edge teaching aids.
- Teachers should inculcate the idea of using various teaching methods whenever English subjects are being taught in the classroom.
- Parents should always encourage their children to read at home.

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