

STUDY HABITS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study looked into the connection between students' academic achievement and their study habits at the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. The study specifically investigated the association between students' academic success and a conducive study environment, as well as the relationship between students' academic performance, study groups and study time. The study was conducted using Victor Vroom's expectation theory (1964) as its theoretical foundation. The selection of 384 respondents involved the use of systematic sampling techniques in addition to primary and secondary sampling. To collect data, a 30-item survey called "Study habits and academic performance of students (SHAPS)" was employed. The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (PPMC) was used to do the statistical analysis. Three hypotheses with a degree of freedom of 382 were developed and tested at a significance threshold of 0.05. The results demonstrated a significant correlation between students' academic performance and a conducive study environment, significant correlations between students' academic performance and study groups, and significant correlations between students' academic performance and study time. Based on the results, it was suggested that the school administration create a conducive learning environment for students, such as an air-conditioned library, encourage them to form productive study groups with their peers to help them with their studies, and, lastly, educate students about the value of time management and instill time management skills.

KEYWORDS: Study Habits, Academic Performance, Conducive Study, Environment, Study Groups, Study Time.

Introduction

Education is a process or action that changes a person's innate behavior to more human-like behavior. Students acquire and cultivate the behaviors that determine success or failure through schooling. Around the world, learning has been found to be an extremely complex behavior. Although education as a learning process is still somewhat enigmatic, research has indicated that the most successful study methods entail extremely active behavior over a specified amount of time (Evans & Julius, 2015; Ghulam, 2013; Uyang, Abanbeshie, Uyang & Aniah, 2023). According to Ebele and Olofu (2017), learning is the process by which productive study habits are developed over time and are most likely to improve academic achievement. Furthermore, they contended that performance is related to how well or poorly something is done. According to Evans and Julius, effective performance in the classroom is demonstrated by high grades earned from assignments, exceptional or exceptional success on tests, and professional growth. Academic performance is thought to have predictive value and is used to close the gap or open doors between primary, secondary, and university education, as well as between the university and specific social professions. Students are under a lot of pressure to achieve high grades (Evans & Julius (2015).

Parents want their children to reach the top of the performance ladder as much as possible, according to Evans & Julius (2015), students, instructors, school administration, and the educational system as a whole are therefore under a lot of pressure to achieve and sustain high performance. Daily routines that involve how to conduct study sessions, review literature, evaluate oneself, practice materials, and study in a comfortable setting are examples of study habits, which are the elements that make studying easier. There are two types of study habits: efficient and inefficient, and systematic and unsystematic (Crede, 2008). Developing effective study habits will give pupils a purposeful and demanding educational experience. Good study habits are essential to

living a prosperous and successful life in the future. Students may receive poor grades, fail their subjects or courses, or even quit school if they are unable to establish and practice appropriate study habits (Ghulam, 2013). The degree of performance outcome is directly correlated with the quality of study habits. This study looked on the academic performance and study habits of students at the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Science Cross River State, Nigeria. Although the research adds to the body of knowledge on students' study habits and academic achievement, its main focus is on examining students' study habits, including study time, study groups, and a suitable study atmosphere.

Statement of the Problem

Students' academic performance may be significantly impacted by issues related to their study habits. Since every student learns differently, it is critical to choose the most effective study strategy for each individual. The extent to which students succeeds in their studies is largely determined by the type of study habits they adopt and employ. Compared to a student with a poor study habit, a student who cultivates and uses good study habits is likely to perform better academically.

Given the failure rate reported following each university exam, one starts to wonder how well students learn and apply their study habits. Ineffective or poor study habits is a common obstacle to students' performance at all levels. Both teachers and school administrations have noticed that today's students do not even bother to look at their notes they took from their lectures. This lowers their level of focus and interest in learning, which has a detrimental effect on their academic performance and diminishes the quality of their studies.

Numerous researches have examined the relationship between study habits and academic achievement among students in Nigerian higher institutions; however, these studies did not specifically look at the relationship between students' academic performance and study habits in a holistic way. This study therefore aimed to close this

information gap. The purpose of the study is to look into students' study habits and academic achievement through a supportive study environment, study groups and study time at the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main goal of the study is to examine the relationship between study habits and academic performance of students in Faculty of Social Sciences, university of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

The precise objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate how students' academic success in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Science relates to a suitable study environment.
2. To ascertain how study groups and students' academic achievement in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Science are related.
3. To determine how students' academic achievement and study time relate to one another in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences.

Statement of Hypotheses

1. Students' academic performance in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences is not significantly correlated with a favorable study environment.
2. The academic achievement of students in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences is not significantly correlated with their study groups.
3. Students' academic achievement in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Science is not significantly correlated with their study habits.

Literature Review

Conducive Learning Environment and Academic Performance

Every person's environment, whether they are students, instructors, employers, or even employees, is extremely important. Academic performance and learning are

significantly influenced by the environment. Okwukwe (2016) asserts that there are other factors besides intellect that influence a student's academic achievement. According to him, a variety of elements of the learning environment are linked to students' academic achievement. The entirety of the elements and activities that make up the learning environment includes the method of instruction, the cultural background, or the actual environment in which learning takes place (Okwukwe, 2016).

According to Kitonyi (2013), a conducive learning environment is the social, psychological, and pedagogical setting in which learning takes place and influences students' attitudes and academic performance. Natural settings, social settings, physical settings, and school environments can all be considered as learning environments. The learning environment's temperature and humidity levels are examples of the natural environment. The institutional structure reflects some of the cultural needs and social expectations that are part of the social environment. It involves the relationships that students have with their teachers, parents, and peers (Kitonyi, 2013, Uyang, Eba, Abanbeshie, Omono & Oben (2024).

The physical environment includes, among other things, classrooms, social buildings, and equipment or facilities. It has to do with the cleanliness of the rooms, the desks' order and arrangement, etc. The entirety of the social, emotional, mental, and physical elements that contribute to the entire teaching and learning process in the classroom are included in the school environment, also known as the classroom environment. The temperature and humidity levels in the surroundings can have an impact on learning. High temperatures and humidity impair mental function. People who live in warmer climates are far less creative and productive. Kitonyi (2013). Physical factors at home, school, and in the neighborhood, such as inadequate ventilation, poor lighting, uncomfortable temperatures, electronic devices, generators, and car noise, all have an impact on learning (Kitonyi, 2013). The

classroom environment, the expectations of the community, and the academic success of the pupils can all be significantly impacted by the setting in which they learn or study. This is significant because, when students believe that their teacher believes they are intelligent and capable, they are more likely to meet expectations (Kitonyi, 2013; Uyang, Ejeje & Aniah, 2016).

A study on the connection between students' achievement and their familial and school environments was carried out by Kitonyi (2013). The study's conclusions showed that students' academic performance is more directly and strongly impacted by the family environment and the school atmosphere. The study also showed a unique correlation between the academic atmosphere and pupils' academic achievement. Poor learning environments in developing nations like Nigeria have consistently been found to be a major contributing factor to subpar academic performance in postsecondary institutions, according to the study's findings.

Study Groups and Academic Performance

Students at postsecondary schools are increasingly using study groups as a learning approach or study habit (Burrowes, 2023). Study groups can be viewed as a teaching method that makes use of small groups of students cooperating to accomplish a shared objective. This type of learning is distinct from the conventional approach, which entails pupils working independently (individualistic) or systematically competing with their classmates (competitive) (Burrowes, 2023). Students voluntarily create study groups with the goal of improving their academic performance; these organizations are typically regarded as informal. According to research, study groups help students do better academically and have a more positive attitude toward the material they are studying (Barkley, Cross & Major, 2005; Rabia, Mubarak, Tallat & Nasir, 2017).

Students at tertiary institutions typically collaborate in small groups to finish homework in class by imparting specific concepts to one another. Compared to the materials delivered in

a regular classroom lecture, students correctly answered a higher percentage of exam questions that covered peer-taught materials (Tessier, 2007). To guarantee that every member of the study group has a positive experience, students must be able to oversee various group dynamics, including size and makeup. For instance, it's widely acknowledged that study groups should be diverse and structured to keep students from becoming "freeloaders" and from becoming distracted by idle chatter, phone calls, excessive sleep, and other activities (Barkley, 2005). Students who studied in groups outperformed those who studied alone in a research involving more than 500 Harvard undergraduates (Light, 2001). Study groups are said to have the ability to boost students' academic achievement as well as their self-esteem, interpersonal communication abilities, and understanding of diversity (Petress, 2004).

Study Time and Academic Performance

According to Talib and Sansgiry (2012), time management is a behavioral ability that is crucial for planning, prioritizing tasks, and preparing for tests. Dixon, Stansal, Gelb, and Pheri (2008) concurred that effective time management can lower stress and improve academic achievement. A student who can effectively organize their study time will not experience stress from last-minute pressures and will undoubtedly achieve academic success. Effective time management can play a major role in academic achievement, and methods for making better use of study time are frequently suggested as ways to help students perform better academically (Mizar & Mckear, 2000).

A study by Plant, Ericsson, Hill, and Asberg (2005) looked into how students' academic performance was affected by the quality of their time. 88 Florida State University undergraduates participated in the study as respondents, and they were given questionnaires about their academic achievement and time management. When the study environment and effective time management were taken into account, the results showed that the amount of study time

emerged as a significant predictor of cumulative GPA. This indicates that academic achievement was significantly influenced by effective time management. A study by George, Jones, and Sharbrough (2008) looked into the variables related to academic success. 231 undergraduate students from a Canadian university participated in the study. A 5-day time diary and questionnaire measuring the impact of cognitive, attitudinal, and personal aspects on achievement were given to the respondents. Developing abilities was the most powerful indicator that was substantially linked to success.

A study by Gortner and Zulauf (2000) sought to ascertain how effective time management affected academic achievement. Over the course of a week, 93 students enrolled in three subjects at Ohio State University completed a time diary. Along with the time diary, students had to finish a 34-item survey meant to gauge their own time management practices. The results demonstrated a positive correlation between academic achievement and study time and time management abilities. A study by Mercenlioglu (2010) investigated if study habits could predict master's level students' academic achievement. The study time management attitudes of master's level students were evaluated by comparing their answers to time management questionnaires with the Grade Point Average (GPA), a measure of academic performance derived from university records. Study time is a significant predictor of academic achievement, according to the empirical analysis of the research.

Theoretical Framework

Victor Vroom's expectancy theory

This theory was first put forth by Victor Vroom in 1964. It is a theory of motivation based on cognitive processes. The fundamental premise of the theory is that people will be inspired to put forth a great deal of effort. They think there is a connection between their performance, the results they get, and the effort they put forth. The theory states that motivation is the mechanism that controls our decisions

among various voluntary behavior options. According to the notion, motivation arises from the conviction that choices will result in the consequences that are intended. Three criteria are evaluated in order to determine the motive behind an activity or behavior:

Expectancy: The conviction that one's efforts will be successful. You will perform better if you put forth more effort.

Instrumentality: The conviction that there is a link between an activity and its objective and that, if you do well, you will be rewarded.

Valence: The extent to which an individual values the performance's outcomes and reward. This hypothesis is relevant to the study because it posits that students are driven to adopt particular study habits in order to get high test scores. They have an innate belief that when their effort meets their expectations, they will be rewarded with high grades. As a result, individuals constantly practice effective study techniques since they think it will help them achieve their objectives and perform well.

Material and method

This is a survey, and the main tool used to gather data was the questionnaire. A systematic questionnaire comprising both closed-ended and open-ended items was used in the study. The closed-ended questions were thoughtfully constructed to provide data that would facilitate the simple collection and testing of hypotheses. The purpose of the few open-ended questions was to allow respondents to openly discuss their study habits and academic achievement. The study was conducted at the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences in Calabar, Cross River State. 400 respondents, both male and female, made up the study's simple size, and simple random sampling was used to choose the sample. The balloting method was used to choose 100 students from the different departments within the Faculty of Social Sciences in order to guarantee randomization. The several departments within the Faculty of Social

Sciences were listed on a ballot paper using this manner. A total of four hundred (400) respondents were chosen for the study after one hundred were methodically chosen from the various departments. The formula created by Taro Yamane (1967) was used to determine the sample size.

Only 384 questionnaires were collected at the conclusion of the fieldwork; these figures made up the sample size. The study combined information from primary and secondary sources. Structured questionnaires served as the primary source of data, while information from textbooks, journals, the internet, and other sources were used as the secondary source. The

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) statistical tool was used to analyze the data collected from the questionnaires at the 0.05 level of significance. Responses were edited, coded, and analyzed using the proper statistical techniques after the gathered data were carefully examined to make sure that every question in each questionnaire was answered.

Discussion of results

Data Presentation

The findings from the field were presented and discussed below.

Table 1
Respondents' Socio-Demographical Data

Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Sex		
Male	207	53.9
Female	177	46.1
Total	384	100
Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age		
Under 20 years	30	7.81
20-30	255	66.41
31-40	96	25
41 and above	3	0.78
Total	384	100
Year of study		
1	70	18.2
2	109	28.4
3	120	31.3
4	85	22.1
Total	384	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2020

According to the results in Table 1, 207 (53.90%) of the total responders were men, and 177 (46.1%) were women. This indicates that there were more men in the sample than women. This is because there were more men accessible than women to complete the questionnaires. According to the data, 30 respondents (7.81%) were under 20, 255 respondents (66.41%) were

in the 20–30 age range, and 96 respondents (25%) were 41 years of age or older. This indicates that a larger proportion of the sample and research participants were in the 20–30 age range. The table also shows that 70 respondents (18.2%) were in year 1, 109 respondents (28.4%) were year 2, 120 respondents (31.3%) were in year 3 and 85 respondents (22.1%) were in year

4. This means that year 3 were more in the sample and readily available to fill out the questionnaire.

correlated with a conducive study environment.

Hypothesis one

H₀: The academic achievement of students in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences is not significantly

H₁: The academic achievement of students in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences is significantly correlated with a conducive study environment.

Table 2
Pearson product moment correlation conducive study environment and academic performance among university of Calabar, Faculty of Social Sciences (N=384)

Variables	N	Mean	STD	r-value	Critical Value
Conductive study environment	384	15.75	2.63	0.191	0.139
Academic Performance	384	15.9			

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level, df = 382, critical value < 0.05

The null hypothesis, which holds that there is no significant relationship between academic performance and a conducive study environment, was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted based on the results above, which show that the calculated r-value is greater than the critical r-value of 0.139 at the 0.05 level of significance with 382 degrees of freedom. This suggests that students in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences do benefit academically from a

conductive study environment.

Hypothesis two

H₀: The academic achievement of students in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences is not significantly correlated with their study group.

H₁: The academic achievement of students in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences is significantly correlated with their study group.

Table 3
Pearson Product Moment Correlation Study group and academic performance among University of Calabar, Faculty of Social Sciences students (N=384)

Variables	N	Mean	STD	r-value	Critical Value
Study group	384	15.76	3.34	0.159	0.139
Academic Performance	384	15.59			

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level, df = 382; critical value < 0.05

According to the analysis, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis—that there is no significant relationship between study group and students' academic performance in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences—is rejected because the computed r-value of 0.159

is higher than the critical r-value of 0.139 at the 0.05 level of significance with 382 degrees of freedom. This suggests that the outcome is statistically significant, indicating a strong correlation between academic achievement and study among University of Calabar faculty of social sciences students.

Hypothesis three

H_0 : Students' academic achievement in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences is not significantly correlated with their study time.

H_1 : Students' academic achievement in the University of Calabar's Faculty of Social Sciences is significantly correlated with their study time.

Table 4
Pearson Product Moment Correlation Study time and academic achievement among University of Calabar, Faculty of Social Sciences students (N=384)

Variables	N	Mean	STD	r-value	Critical Value
Study time	384	15.74	1.64	0.157	0.139
Academic Performance	384				

Correlation is significant at 0.05 level, $df = 382$; critical value < 0.05

A statistically significant alternative hypothesis indicates that there is a significant relationship between study time and students' academic performance in the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Calabar, while the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between study time and students' academic performance in the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Calabar, is rejected. The analysis revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.157 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.139 at the 0.05 level of significance with 382 degrees of freedom.

Discussion of findings

Conducive Learning Environment and Academic Performance

The study's findings, which are displayed in table 2, indicate a strong correlation between students' academic achievement and a supportive learning environment. Okwukwe (2016) supports this viewpoint by arguing that a conducive learning environment is one of the numerous elements of learning that are linked to students' academic achievement. As a result, Kitonyi (2013) argued that a conducive learning environment is defined as the social, psychological, and pedagogical context in which learning takes place and influences students' attitudes and academic performance.

Study groups and academic performance

There is a significant relationship between study groups and students' academic performance, according to the results in Table 3, which rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative hypothesis. These findings are in line with Barkley Cross & Major (2005) and Kabia, Mubarak, Tallate, and Nasir (2017), who said that study groups are formed voluntarily by students with the goal of achieving academic performance and are typically regarded as informal. They also said that study groups have been shown to improve students' academic performance and foster a more positive attitude toward the subject they are studying. The results corroborated Tessier (2007) who suggested that on examination, students correctly answered a greater proportion of questions covering peer-taught concepts compared with the materials offered in regular classroom lecture.

Study time and academic performance

The alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected, as shown by the results in Table 4. The outcome shows that study time and academic achievement are significantly correlated. The findings support Dixon, Stangal, Gelb, and Pheri's (2008) assertion that effective time management lowers stress and improves academic achievement. They also concur that students who can effectively manage their study time would

experience less stress from last-minute pressure and will undoubtedly achieve academic success. The results corroborate those of Plant, Ericsson, Hill, and Asberg (2005), who found that when study quality which includes a conducive study environment and effective time management was taken into account, the length of study time emerged as a major predictor of cumulative grade point average (GPA). This indicates that academic achievement was significantly influenced by effective time management.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study closes by demonstrating that study time, study groups, and a supportive study environment are critical elements that greatly influenced students' academic achievement. The study came to the following recommendations:

1. The administration of the school should create a conducive environment for pupils to read and study, such as an air-conditioned library.
2. To help them study, teachers should encourage their students to organize productive study groups with their peers.
3. Teachers should educate their students about the value of time management and instill time management skills in them.

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