

# Influence of Study Skills Training in Reducing Poor Study Habits among School Students

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**Abstract:** This research looked at the outcome of Study Skill Training (SST) on senior secondary school students study habits. A Quasi-experimental design was employed for the study in form of pretest-posttest control group. The sample size were students identified with poor study habits students and were assigned to treatment and one control group. The treatment group was treated using Study Skills Training counselling technique. An instrument developed by Bakare was adapted and used in collecting the data from the respondents before and after treatment. The collected data was analyzed by simple frequency and percentage for answering the research question followed by t-test for independent samples for testing all the hypotheses. The findings revealed that the prevalence of study habit among secondary and senior secondary school students in Municipal Zonal Education Directorate, Kano State was poor at 85%, the finding also exposed that study skills training technique had significant effect in reducing poor study habits among the respondents ( $P 0.00 \leq 0.05$ ), the finding also revealed that there was insignificant difference in post-test mean score between male and female with school students ( $P .109 \geq .05$ ).

**Keywords:** high school students, poor study habits, quasi-experimental, study skills training.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Students at every level of education generally tend to exhibit different types of study habits, which may either be effective or ineffective. Many experiences have shown that learners perform badly academically because of factors other than low intelligence. One of such factors is poor study habit which often results in poor academic performance even among the naturally bright students. From all observations made by the researcher among senior secondary school students in Municipal zonal Education Directorate, it is certain that students are faced with poor study problems. The researcher's experience has shown that majority of them find it difficult to study after school hours, they lack time management skills and come to school at will, and they lack concentration during lessons, neglect assignments and are unaware of any study approaches. Looking at the present level of students with regards to study behavior, the researcher has observed that a lot need to be put in place in order to improve their study behavior.

Poor study habits or Study behavior problem constitute of constraints to learning and performance leading to failure as such many studies proved that students' academic performance is determined by their study skills. There are some aspects effecting the capacity of learners to nurture good study habits in Nigeria. Some of the secondary school students have bad study habits because after school hours students involve in playing games, watching movies, hanging out with friends without studying for better understanding. If a student fails to organize his time effectively and to study at home to understand course materials, then such student will not achieve his or her target as the incorrect attitude to study skills and habits.

Many high school students are engaged with many events apart from their studies. This clearly shows that the measures taken by schools had no impact on students with study habit problems hence there is crucial need to progress the study skills of students if the objective of learning is to enable the student achieves good academic performance. Students make very less effort to get new information since they not motivated to learn. Any students who use the study skills and have learned to develop self-governing are motivated to follow their studies at higher institutions and become possibly prepared to take up charge for learning and its results. Students positive outlook are strengthened, their inspirations to keep on developing will increase which will lead to higher self-esteem. It is in this direction therefore; this study tends to find out the consequence of study skills training in reducing bad study habits among students.

### 1.2 Objectives of the Study

The prevalence of study habits among high school students, the consequence of study skills training in reducing bad study habits among high school students and the variance in the post-test mean scores on poor study habit among high school students between two local government areas of the educational Zonal directorate and the variance in the post test mean scores based on gender.

### 1.3 Hypotheses

- HO1. There is no significant effect of SST in reducing poor study habits between the pre-test and post-test mean scores of high school students.
- HO2. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores of poor study habits between male and female high school students.
- HO3. There is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores on poor study habits between two local government areas in education directorate of high school students.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

The study will offer necessary framework to find the consequence of study skills training in reducing poor study habits among high school students. The findings and recommendations of the study will be beneficial and equally provide valuable sources of information to students. Students will be exposed the necessary aid on how to develop good study habits and that will help to progress their academic performance and shed more light on how study habits affect their academic performance. Since it has been observed that students with poor study habits have a higher chance of engaging in anti-social behavior and are prone to punishment in school, this study will expose students towards altering their behavior from negative attitudes to positive attitudes towards learning and towards achieving their goals. It will also acquaint students to understand the effect of their actions or behavior on their academic growth. It will also expose them to assumed responsibility for their academic outcomes, hence, avoid blaming their failure in examinations on the fault of their parents or teachers. This study will practically help students do away with low academic performance, avoid punishment, adopt suitable and effective study habits, self-assessment as well as striking a balance between biological and academic needs. The findings and recommendations of the study will also be instrumental and will equally provide priceless sources of information to teachers, parents, school counsellors, principals, and for future researchers, Education Zonal Directorates, Ministry of education, Policy makers and voluntary agencies undertaking educational ventures.

## 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Nneji (2011) explained that study habits are reading intention that empower students work on their own [1]. Homework should be done regularly and it has to be a habit. There are many students who do not know the effective way of studying. The Study habit states to learning and that lead to success of the students' target through demonstrated pattern of stable behavior [2]. Amuda (2006) stated that study habit is regular efforts to obtain exact knowledge [3]. Agba (2013) specified that Study habit is kind of study practices which students used throughout the period of study [4].

Poor study habits are improper attitude of students that developed towards their Studies. Abdullahi (2008) aptly argued that wrong study habits lead to a student's poor academic performance [5]. Emievil (2013) showed that some bad attitudes of school students lead to poor study habits [6]. When a student does not attend classes, his chances of understanding get lesser and gradually attendance will be low. The best way a student can acquire knowledge and skills is through practicing the subjects and considering attentively doing the assignments all on their own. Doing assignments regularly can affect ones understanding of the topic. Taking note is also an important factor, it refers that students are listening attentively. If a student doesn't take down proper notes, then he/she is not concentrating on the topic. Time management is essential aspect of study habit. There are some students who do not know how to manage their time properly.

If a student does not plan his time properly, it will overlap with their school calendars. Following teacher's Instructions is an aspect of good study habit in every learning process, however, some students develop attitude to ignore teacher instructions and that can lead to fail grade in a particular test. Negativity is the most destructive bad habit and that can ruin all other good habits. Procrastination is a bad time management, but it's not a practice that can be left on its own. Students have lots of distractions these days like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat online games, clubbing these distractions make procrastination and bad habit. Crede and Kuncel (2008) and Abdullahi (2008) found few important study behavior problems which obstruct academic achievement such as poor notetaking, poor attendance, Poor time management, depend on other, procrastination and failure to set goals [8][5].

### 2.1 Study Skill Training

Gettinger (2002) argued that study skills are educational enablers, and they work as crucial equipment for education [8]. Study skills include synchronized cognitive skills that improve the effectiveness of learners. Hoover & Patton, and Seibert (2002) specified that study skills are competencies linked with organizing obtaining, synthesizing recording, organizing, remembering, and utilizing information. Study skills help to organize, process information, and recall what students have studied. This training work effectively when students are aware of their educational processes. Schedule of study is the most effective way when they personalize their own plans for daily, weekly, and monthly [9]. Kerka (2007) expressed that study skills are education strategies that help learner establish process and use them efficiently [10]. Study skills are procedures as well as self-awareness of one's study habit. Learners who can observe their learning styles are capable of assigning a plan to enable them what method they should use. Some significant study skills have been discussed by Awabil [9] such as note-taking, planning, organizing time for study, use of library and concentration. Ebochukwu (2008) put forward the specific study skills such as SQ3R method, SQ5R method, PQR3 (P, Q, triple R) and ROSEMARY! (L) Method [11].

### 2.1.1 The SQ3R Method and The SQ5R

Awabil, (2013) observed that the SQ3R method is a result-oriented reading strategy [9]. This strategy works with Survey, Question, Read, Recite and Review. Students must survey the book properly like reading aim, purposes, title, table of contents and conclusion. After survey questioning about the book and material to understand and relevancy. Reading of study materials to identify the relevant points. Recite is repeat of the chapter to better understand and remember those chapters. Students should review all chapters and points regularly in order to remember what they learned. The SQ5R method is a more detailed format of the SQ3R strategy. Ipaye (2005) as described in Awabil (2013) put forward that SQ5R method, is the extension of SQ3R method with the addition of two more Rs and that are Record and Repeat [12][9]. Record what you read in your own word and repeat them to remember in a long period of time.

### 2.1.2 The PQR3 (P, Q, Triple R)

This method is like the SQ5R method. Ipaye (2005) described the PQR3 method as P for Preview before reading the targeted chapters and books and design a question in your mind to as what you are going to learn then Read, Recite and Review [12].

### 2.1.3 The ROSEMARY (L)

Ogbodo (2010) described another reading method named as ROSEMARY! (L). This strategy is the most appropriate to the study of huge materials, the study of tough materials and preparation for tough examinations. It stands with Repetition(R). Study material has to be read many times frequently to make it familiar. With the repetition of material over and over again learners will reach an over-learning (O) Phase where students can decide which part is essential to remember and forget. Understanding the chapters', learners should make Summary(S) of the main points. After summary, enumerate (E) the main points, arrange them in such a manner that the most important points should come first and second accordingly. Mnemonics (M) is very important idea to memorize what you read. Whatever you learn apply daily basis to make it real and practical and this real-life Application (A). And Revision(R) will make learner remember the topic for a long period of time. And make sure learners say Yes(Y) that he knows it how to apply them to any situation and L stands for linkage, and it has to be practiced daily.

### 2.1.4 Concentration Strategies/Skills

Kagu (2004), describes that some students have trouble in focusing during their study [13]. To him concentration strategies are skills like starting class on time, study in a place where there is no distraction, maintaining proper sitting posture for long period of study, proper ventilation, light and break time that has to be taken during studying. Ipaye (2005) narrated that, to get proper concentration while studying make sure study materials are with learners [12]. Chair and table also help students concentrate properly and students should avoid lying down during studying because they may fall asleep.

## 2.2 Importance of Study Skills Training Technique

A single strategy used by scholars in enhancing study behavior is through counselling. For example, Bakare (1977) recommended counselling as one of the most effective methods of helping students to develop good study habits thereby enhancing study behavior [14]. Several researchers conducted in the area by Kagu (2004) has proven that the efficacy of counselling in treating defective study habit [13]. In research on the effectiveness of group counselling on reading and study habits of low achieving undergraduates, Crede & Kuncel (2008) found that counselling improves the student's study habits and their academic performance [7]. Counselling also help students to develop good study habits; to assist learners to fix emotional difficulties and to help them to take rational control over their feelings. Counselling can also help to alter bad behavior and direct them towards their goals. Study skills counselling provide students with knowledge which empower them to confront poor study habits. Study skills training counselling is a method of providing effective learning skills to be used in studying. Study skills counselling also includes teaching how to use extensive access materials to develop better study skills that will reduce bad study habits. Study skills training counselling teach students how to think and has concentration process. Study skills training counselling will help them to learn time management, formulate study timetable and habits of note taking and doing daily homework. Study skills training counselling will also help them to adapt library skills and avoid procrastination.

Awabil (2013) explained some proposals relating to time management which will help learners to set academic goals and make schedule to fulfill them, which is the three-tire time management, a. semester schedule, b. Weekly schedule, and making daily schedule [9]. Kerka (2007) suggested preparation for learning, planning to encompass both environmental and mental traits, organizing the work, keeping the agenda books, time management, tasks prioritizing, and following checklists will bring about less distraction [10]. This strategies for learner to discover which most suits to them are include the effective reading which is crucial to obtaining information.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

The population of this study involved (311) SSII, students in Municipal Zonal Education Directorate who exhibited symptoms of poor study habits which was determine by study Habits Inventory. The sample size for this study was sixty (60) senior secondary school SSII Students who exhibited the symptoms of poor study habits and met criteria for selection out of the identified students. Thirty (30) respondents were assigned to treatment group, the remaining thirty 30 were belong to control group giving the total number of 60 respondents. In the treatment group there are 20 males and 10 female respondents making the total number of thirty (30) respondents.

The sample size was distributed among four randomly selected schools in Municipal Zonal Education Directorate who has the high number of learners with poor study habits. The treatment group received an intervention of six weeks using Study Skills Training. To collected data for this study from students who exhibited the symptoms of poor study Habits for pre-test and post-test the researcher used Study Habits Inventory, developed by Bakare, and modified by the researcher which covered only six indices out of the eight indices that constituted the inventory. The instrument used in collecting data for this study was Study Habits inventory which contains 45 items, based on five (5) subscales that range from Almost Never = 5, Less than Half of the Time = 4, About Half of the Time = 3, More than half of the Time = 3 and Almost Always = 1.

The items of the instrument contain statement based on the six indices of Study Habits inventory which are Homework and Assignments, Time Allocation, Reading and Note taking, Study period Procedures and Consultations. The instrument was divided into two sections 'A' & 'B', section 'A' contains students; personal information, e.g. school, class subject area, Location of School and gender. The section 'B' of the instrument contains Twenty (20) items that constituted the students study habits. The Study Habits inventory was administered to the respondents for pre-test and post-test by the researcher. The Study Habits Inventory has construct validity by the Author Bakare. The reliability of the instrument was established by the developer at 0.64. The Instrument was administered to the students for test-re-test with an interval of two weeks in order to establish the reliability of the instrument, data collected were analyzed using Pearson Person Moment Correlation (P.P.M.C), with an index of 0.75 as the reliability overtime.

Pre-test Phase was the first stage of intervention where the researcher obtains baseline information on the status of study habits among the participants. The treatment phase is the intervention phase where there was an interaction with the identified students from the sample schools which involved the use of counselling technique for intervention whereby the researcher applied Study Skills Training on identified sample students, the treatment is for about 25-30 minutes in each session and it was conducted twice in a week for the period of six weeks. The Post- Test Phase is the last stage after the students receive the intervention with Study Skills Training. The researcher administered the instrument again to the students on the same procedure used in pre-test, to retest the respondents. Pre-test and post-test results were analyzed and compared for differences. The extent of the difference in the mean scores determine the significant effect of the treatment given during the period of intervention or otherwise. Procedures for data analyses include the use of descriptive statistics inform of simple frequency and percentage to answer the research question and inferential statistics inform of t-test for independent sample which as used for testing all the hypotheses.

#### 4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 presented the distribution of respondents by various groups in which Treatment and control had same respondents 30 each (50%), while the distribution of respondents by gender shows that there are 20 males representing 67% and 10 females representing 33%. Similarly, there are 17 respondents representing 57% from KMC and 13 respondents representing 43%, from TRN, the descriptive statistic also revealed that male students have the higher number of respondents than the female students' counterparts.

Table 1. Distributions of respondents by Group, Gender, and Location

| GROUPS    | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Treatment | 30        | 50         |
| Control   | 30        | 50         |
| Male      | 20        | 67         |
| Female    | 10        | 33         |
| KMC       | 17        | 57         |
| TRN       | 13        | 43         |

##### 4.1 Data Analysis

This section presents a statistical analysis of the data obtained which formed the basis of the results and findings of the study, to present a clear and logical data analysis. The research question was answered using descriptive statistics, in form of simple frequency and percentage. T-test for independent samples was used to test all hypotheses raised in chapter one at 0.05 level of significance. Table 2 showed the prevalence of poor study habits among Sr. secondary school learners in Municipal Zonal Education Directorate, Kano State. It showed that out of the total number of 370 instrument administered to senior secondary school students, 367 instruments were returned. Out of the 370 instruments, a total number three hundred and eleven (311) respondents representing 85% were identified with poor study habits while the remaining 56 respondents representing 15% have good study habits. Therefore, the above analysis revealed that, the prevalence of study habits among SSII students was poor at 85%.

Table 2. Prevalence of Poor Study Habits

| Level of Study Habits | Frequency  | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| Poor                  | 311        | 85         |
| Good                  | 56         | 15         |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>367</b> | <b>100</b> |

Table 3. T-test independent samples between treatment and control group

|           | Group     | N  | Mean  | SD    | t-cal  | Df | P-Value |
|-----------|-----------|----|-------|-------|--------|----|---------|
| Pre-test  | Treatment | 30 | 67.40 | 12.72 | -.574  | 58 | .568    |
|           | Control   | 30 | 69.20 | 11.54 |        |    |         |
| Post-test | Treatment | 30 | 42.63 | 7.86  | -8.785 | 58 | .000    |
|           | Control   | 30 | 64.07 | 10.81 |        |    |         |

Level of Sig at  $P 0.00 \leq 0.05$

Table 3 showed that, the mean scores of pre-tests 67.40 and standard deviation of 12.72 is greater than the mean scores of post-tests 42.63 and standard deviation of 7.86. It also showed that the t-calculated value for post-test -8.785 with p-value .000, tested at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom 58, since the p-value .000 of post-test is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis stated that ‘There is no significant effect of study skill training in reducing poor study habits among school students in Municipal Zonal Education, Directorate, Kano State between treatment and control group, so the null hypothesis is not accepted, meaning that Study Skills Training Counselling technique is effective in reducing poor study habits among high school students.

Table 4. T-test for independent samples between male and female respondents

|           | Gender | N  | Mean  | SD   | t-cal  | Df | P-Value (2tailed) |
|-----------|--------|----|-------|------|--------|----|-------------------|
| Posttests | Male   | 20 | 41.00 | 7.28 | -1.658 | 28 | .109              |
|           | Female | 10 | 45.90 | 8.33 |        |    |                   |

NS at  $.109 \geq 0.05$

Table 4 showed the post test results between male and female respondents exposed to study skill training. The result showed that the calculated t-value -1.658 and p-value .109 tested at 0.05 level of significant with degree of freedom 28, since the P-value .109 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference in the posttest mean scores between male and female on poor study habits among school students, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. Meaning, that no significant difference was found between male and female respondents exposed to study skill training, this indicate that the technique is not gender sensitive.

Table 5. T-test for independent samples between Municipal and Tarauni respondents

|           | LGA | N  | Mean  | SD   | t-cal | Df | P-Value (2tailed) |
|-----------|-----|----|-------|------|-------|----|-------------------|
| Posttests | KMC | 17 | 43.35 | 7.86 | .567  | 28 | .575              |
|           | TRN | 13 | 41.69 | 8.08 |       |    |                   |

NS at  $.575 \geq 0.05$



Table 5 above showed the post test results between Municipal and Tarauni respondents exposed to study skills training. The result showed the calculated t-value .567 and p-value .575 tested at 0.05 level of significant with degree of freedom 28, since the P-value .575 is greater than 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference in the post-test mean scores between Municipal and Tarauni LGA on poor study habits among senior secondary school students in Municipal Zonal Education, Directorate Kano State, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. Meaning, that no significant difference was found between Municipal and Tarauni respondents exposed to study skill training.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded that study skills training counselling technique is significantly effective in the reduction of poor study habits among Sr. secondary school learners of Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate therefore the technique could be used for the improvement of positive study habit among secondary school students. It was also concluded that study skills training counselling is significantly effective in the reduction of poor study habits among male and female students, therefore the technique could be used for the improvement of positive study habit among senior secondary school students irrespective of gender. Finally, it was concluded that study skills training counselling technique is significantly effective in the reduction of poor study habits among school students of Kano Municipal LGA and Tarauni LGA of Municipal Zonal Education Directorate, therefore the technique could be used for the improvement of positive study habit among secondary school students irrespective of Zonal Education Directorate as well as Local government areas in Kano State.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Since there is significant effect of study skills training counselling technique on poor study habits among senior secondary school students of Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate, the school counselling unit should collaborate with the other academic teachers to design and use Study Skills Training Counselling technique specifically for the reduction of poor study habits among secondary school students for effective academic performance. Since there is no significant difference in the effect of SST counselling technique on poor study habit between Municipal LGA and Tarauni LGA senior secondary school students in Municipal Zonal Education Directorate, as a result differences in LGAs within Zonal Education Directorate, as such Location difference within Zonal Education Directorate shouldn't be considered in designing and implementing the Study Skills Training because there were no peculiarities in handling students with poor study habits. This study only covered specific components of Study Skills Training in the reduction of poor study habit among senior secondary schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate, the effectiveness of other SST components in the reduction of poor study habits needs to be explored in other studies in other States and countries.

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