

# **EFFECT OF STUDY HABIT INSTRUCTION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SOCIAL STUDIES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OBIO/AKPOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA**

**By**

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## **Abstract**

Some students achieve better than others even when most variables are controlled. The way the students go about their studies, the targets they set for themselves, motivation and the efforts invested in studies by individual students have influence on their academic achievement. Greatest contributors to academic achievement of the students are study skills and study habits. Hence, this quasi-experimental study investigated the effect of study habit instruction on the academic performance in social studies among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. A sample of 98 junior secondary school 11 (JSS II) students participated in the study. The students were grouped into two of which one group constituted the experimental group while the other constituted the control group. Treatment included given the experimental group instructions on study habits while the control group was not given study habit instructions. The pre-treatment data for the study were students' social studies results for the term preceding the term of study. The post-treatment data were the students' social studies results at the end of the term of the study. The data analysis was done using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) where the post-treatment data served as a dependent variable while the pre-treatment data served as a covariate. The results of the study revealed that there was a significant gain in mean achievement of experimental group compared to the control group. This implies that study habit instruction has enhancing effect on the academic achievement in social studies among secondary school students and that both male and female experimental groups achieved greater and significant academic feats than their counterparts in the control groups. It was therefore recommended that for students to achieve commendable academic feats, they should be given instruction on study habits.

**Keywords:** Study skills, study habits, study strategies, metacognitive skills, students' academic achievement.

## **Introduction**

Academic performance of junior secondary school students in social studies in Rivers State, Nigeria has attracted the attention of stakeholders in education. Commenting on the dwindling fortune in academic performance of secondary school students in social studies, Okam (2012) noted that there has been a steady decline in academic performance of junior secondary school students in social studies

at Junior Secondary School Certificate Examinations. It has also been observed that some junior secondary school students have developed poor and negative attitude towards social studies (Okam, 2012). A resultant effect of poor academic achievement and poor attitude of students towards social studies is that some students have developed phobia for the subject (Ezegbe, 2013).

Researchers have found some factors as militating against good academic performance among secondary school students (Thompson, 2006; Ramaswamy, 1990; Hart & Keller (2005)). Thompson (2006) affirmed that intellectual ability accounts for 35 to 45 percent of variation in students' grades while the difference cannot be explained by a single factor. Other factors often suspected to work in synergy with intellectual ability to impact on students' academic achievement include motivation, attitude and study habits (Ramaswamy, 1990). Hart and Keller (2005) reported that students were found to have placed the greatest responsibility for their low performance on their own lack of motivation, improper study habit patterns and inattention to school work.

Study skills are defined as peculiar strategies adopted by the students during learning tasks while study habits are defined as the manners and ways students go about their studies so as to achieve optimum learning (Banquiran, 2011). Study habits are systematic and consistent approach to study adopted by an individual student towards achieving a goal (Diseth, 2003). Study habits are also regarded as external factors that facilitate the study process such as sound study routines that include how often a student engages in study sessions, reviews the material, self-evaluates himself, rehearses, explaining the materials, and studying in a conducive environment (Crede, 2008). They are totality of all behavioural patterns, determined purposes and enforced practices that an individual adopts in order to learn and achieve academic competence (Okorodudu, 2000). Effective study habits require not only that the students should possess knowledge of appropriate study techniques and practices, but they should also have sustained and deliberate effort, self-regulation, ability to concentrate, self-monitoring and a sense of responsibility

for value in one's own learning (Diseth, 2003). A study habit may be effective or ineffective. Good study habits are assets to students as they assist students to attain mastery level in learning. A student with effective study habits must possess these qualities as outlined by Thompson(2006). He must adopt effective study procedures, skills, and efficiency in completing academic tasks. He must be self-confident and should possess ability to resist distractions and procrastinations. He must be focused, positive and should avoid anxiety. He must understand himself as a cognitive processor, identifying courses/subjects that are simple to him and those that are difficult to him with a view to devoting more time and energy to those that are difficult as he tries to reach mastery level. He should adopt efficient note-taking strategies during instructions. Furthermore, he must adopt on-line monitoring of comprehension as he reads using periodic questioning and provision of answers to improve on his understanding of the materials. Self-evaluation at the end of the study session is essential to deep assimilation of the information. Mnemonics and other memory enhancement strategies should be employed to improve on information retention. Efficient utilization of time is key to success.

Some students can develop good study habits for themselves while others do not have the capacity to develop good study habits for themselves. Students who cannot form good study habits on their own can be helped to acquire the study habits. Informing students of the techniques and procedures used by successful students has helped to improve grade point average the students (Thompson, 2006).

Abdullahi, Atsua, Amuda and Ago (2013) conducted a study on study habit counselling and academic performance using a sample of 100 senior secondary

(11) students. The findings of the study revealed that study habit counselling technique had a significant effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students and that there was significant difference in academic performance of students in post-tests compared with the pre-test. A study conducted by Egbo (2015) using a sample of 255 probating National Certificate of Education (11) students on the effect of study habit counselling on the academic achievement of probated students of Enugu State College of Education (Technical) showed that there was no significant relationship between students' study habits and academic performance and that gender significantly affected academic performance. A study by Turvy (2014) on the effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement of secondary school students using a sample of 109 Johannesburg students showed that study habit instruction had a significant effect on the academic achievement of students as experimental group obtained a greater academic feats than the control group and both male and female experimental groups obtained a greater academic achievement than their counterparts in the control groups.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Under the same conditions of socio-economic factors, innate abilities, teachers, classrooms, entry qualifications and educational levels, students do not achieve the same academic feat. In other words, some students achieve better than others even when most variables are controlled. The way the students go about their studies, the targets they set for themselves, motivation and the efforts invested in studies by individual students vary. It has been suggested the greatest contributors to academic achievement of the students are study skills and study habits. Hence, this study is geared towards investigating the

effect of study habit instruction on the academic performance in social studies among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. What is the effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among male students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?
3. What is the effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among female students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. Study habit instruction has no significant effect on the academic achievement in social studies among male secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.
3. There is no significant effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### **Method**

The study adopted quasi-experimental research design. This study was conducted in two secondary schools situated in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of

Rivers State selected through purposive sampling technique. It took place in third term of 2018//2019 academic session. A total of 98 junior secondary school 11 (JSS11) students drawn through proportionate stratified random sampling technique participated in the study (56 students from school A and 42 from school B). The students from each school were grouped into two with each group having equal number of students. One group constituted the experimental group while the other constituted the control group. Hence, there were 49 students in the experimental group and 49 students in the control group. Prior to treatment, the social studies results of these students in the preceding second term examination were obtained with the assistance of the subject teachers. These pretreatment results of the students served as covariates in the data analysis. The students in the experimental group were given instructions on effective study habits while the students in the control group were not given any instructions on effective study habits. The instruction for the experimental group involved information on time management

and general metacognitive strategies. These strategies dealt with ideal places to study, formation of study groups, understanding oneself as a student and a cognitive processor, understanding one's learning strengths and weaknesses, and using the knowledge of one's learning strengths and weaknesses to direct future studies. Emphasis was placed on effort rather than innate ability as an influential factor of students' achievement. Information was also provided on memory enhancement strategies highlighting the roles of mnemonics as a process of relating existing information with the new information. This also dealt with forgetfulness and remembrance, information coding and retrieval. Emphasis was also placed on revision as another means of reducing forgetfulness or information recall strategy. The treatment lasted for one term of nine weeks mostly during the break period, though the teaching days were alternated for the two schools. Finally, end of the term results of the students in social studies were obtained which served as post-treatment data for this study.

## Results

The pre-treatment and post-treatment data obtained from students' results were subjected to analysis using SPSS (version 21). The results are presented below.

**R<sub>Q1</sub>:** What is the effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research question one. The means and standard deviations for control and experimental groups for pre-treatment and post-treatment scores are shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores for control and experimental groups**

Group	Before treatment			After treatment		
	N	$\bar{x}$	Std	N	$\bar{x}$	Std.
Control group	49	51.65	7.87	49	54.43	6.38
Experimental group	49	52.20	6.41	49	63.14	6.06

Table 1 shows that the pre-treatment mean and standard deviation for control group

are 51.65 and 7.87 respectively. The pre-treatment mean and standard deviation for

experimental group are 52.20 and 6.41 respectively. Similarly, the post-treatment mean for control group is 54.43 while the standard deviation is 6.38. The post-treatment mean for experimental group is 63.14 and the standard deviation is 6.06. When the post-treatment means for control and experimental groups are compared, it

can be seen that the difference in mean between the two groups is 8.71 in favour of the experimental group. This implies that study habit instruction enhanced the mean academic achievement in social studies of 8.71 among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

This hypothesis was tested using analysis of covariance and the results obtained are presented in table 2.

**Table 2: ANCOVA results for the effect of study habit instruction on academic achievement**

	Df	Mean square	F-cal	F-crit
Covariate	1	38.785	1.001	
Group	1	1836.952	47.431	3.95
Error	95	38.729		
Total	97			

Table 2 shows that the group mean square is 1836.952. The calculated F-value is 47.431 and the critical F-value at 1 and 95 degrees of freedom and alpha value of 0.05 is 3.95. Since the calculated F-value is greater than the critical F-value, the null

hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**R<sub>Q2</sub>:** What is the effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among male students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

The mean was used to answer research question two and the results are shown in table 3.

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviations for scores of males in the control and experimental groups**

Group	Before treatment			After treatment		
	Male (n)	$\bar{x}$	Std	N	$\bar{x}$	Std.
Control group	25	53.64	8.22	22	53.73	5.38
Experimental group	25	52.38	6.36	26	63.50	6.96

Table 3 shows that the mean and standard deviation before treatment for control group are 53.64 and 8.22 respectively while the mean and standard deviation before treatment for experimental group are 52.38 and 6.36 respectively. Similarly,

the mean and standard deviation after treatment for control group are 53.73 and 5.38 respectively. The mean and standard deviation after treatment for experimental group are 63.50 and 6.96 respectively. This implies that the difference between

the control and experimental groups in mean academic achievement for male students due to instruction on study habits

is 9.77 in favour of the experimental group.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Study habit instruction has no significant effect on the academic achievement in social studies among male secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

To test for significant effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among male secondary school students, analysis of covariance was used as a statistical tool and the results are as presented in table 4.

**Table 4: ANCOVA results for the effect of study habit instruction on male academic achievement**

	Df	Mean square	F-cal	F-crit
Covariate	1	2.086	0.052	
Group	1	1120.972	27.766	4.06
Error	46	40.373		
Total	49			

From table 4, it can be seen that the calculated f-value for male students is 27.766 while the critical F-value obtained at 1 and 45 degrees of freedom and 0.05 alpha level is 4.06. As the calculated F-value is greater than the critical F-value,

the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that study habit instruction has a significant effect on the academic achievement in social studies among male secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

**R<sub>Q3</sub>:** What is the effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among female students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

The mean was used to answer research question three and the results are shown in table five.

**Table 5: Mean and standard deviations scores of females in the control and experimental groups**

Group	Before treatment			After treatment		
	Female (n)	$\bar{x}$	Std	N	$\bar{x}$	Std.
Control group	24	49.77	6.65	22	55.59	5.38
Experimental group	24	51.27	7.09	26	60.85	6.96

Table 5 shows that female students in the control group obtained a mean of 49.77 and a standard deviation of 6.65 before treatment while the female students in the experimental group obtained a mean of 51.27 and a standard deviation of 7.09 before treatment. After treatment, the female students in the control group obtained a mean of 55.59 and a standard

deviation of 5.38 while their counterparts in the experimental group obtained a mean of 60.85 and a standard deviation of 6.96. A comparison of the means shows that there is a difference in after-treatment mean between the control group and experimental group which has a value of 5.26 in favour of the experimental group.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Hypothesis three was tested using analysis of covariance. The results are as presented in table 6.

**Table 6: ANCOVA results for the effect of study habit instruction on female academic achievement**

	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean square</b>	<b>F-cal</b>	<b>F-crit</b>
Covariate	1	133.642	3.612	
Group	1	643.627	17.397	4.05
Error	49	36.996		
Total	50			

From table 6, it can be seen that calculated f-value for female students is 17.397. The critical f-value obtained at 1 and 47 degrees of freedom and 0.05 alpha level is 4.05. Since the calculated f-value is greater than the critical f-value, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant effect of study habit instruction on the academic achievement in social studies among female secondary school students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### **Discussion of findings**

It was found that there was a significant gain in mean achievement of experimental

group compared to the control group which confirms that study habit instruction has effects on the academic achievement in social studies among secondary school students. This finding agrees with that of Abdullahi, Atsua, Amuda and Ago (2012) which showed that study habit counselling technique had a significant effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students and that there was significant difference in academic performance of students in post-tests compared with the pre-tests. It also agrees with the finding of Turvy (2014) which showed that study habit instruction had a significant effect on the academic achievement of students. The finding of

superior academic gains of the experimental group compared to the control group in the present study did not come as a surprise because study habit instruction is expected to equip the students with the effective study skills including note-taking, the using of study guide during studies, the use of questioning, formation of study group, motivation, ideal places to study, avoidance of distraction during studies, procrastination of studies/assignments, etc.

It was also found that both male and female experimental groups achieved greater and significant academic feats than their counterparts in the control groups. This finding is in line with the finding of Turvy (2014) which showed that male and female experimental groups obtained a greater academic achievement than their counterparts in the control groups. The finding of greater and significant academic feat for male and female experimental groups compared with those in the control groups in the present study can be explained from the fact that irrespective of gender, when students are provided with instruction on study habits, they are better prepared to face academic challenges than those who did not have the privilege of study habit instruction

### Conclusion and Recommendations

A conclusion that can be drawn based on the findings of this study is that study habit instruction has a significant effect of on the academic achievement in social studies among secondary school students. This also applies for both male and female students. It is then recommended that if learning is to achieve the desired results, students should be given instruction on study habits.

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