

SCHOOL VARIABLES AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN URUEOFFONG/ ORUKO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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Abstract

This study investigates the Influence of School Variables on Students' Attitude towards Learning in Secondary Schools in Urueoffong/Oruko Local Government Area. The research aims to identify key school-related factors that affect students' attendance and their perceptions of school. The research design adopted for this study was correlational research design. The population of this study comprised all the 492 Junior Secondary Two (JS2) students in all the seven public secondary school in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA with a sample size of 13.3%. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analysed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The findings reveal that several school variables, including the quality of teaching, school facilities, teacher-student relationships. High-quality teaching and well-maintained facilities were associated with positive student attitudes and higher attendance rates. Conversely, poor teacher-student relationships and lack of parental encouragement were linked to negative attitudes and poor learning habit. The study concludes that teacher-students interpersonal relationship is of fundamental importance in effective teaching and learning. Lack of parental encouragement impedes students' attitude towards learning in secondary school whereas where parent guide, communicate and show interest in promoting the progress of their wards in school academic, performance increases. Recommendations include; teachers should be resourceful and use available learning facilities to make their lessons interesting, thereby providing some motivation to the learners. Parents should encourage and appreciate their children in order to help their children get motivated and to perform well in academics and face less anxiety.

Keywords: School Variables, Students' Attitude, Learning and Secondary Schools

Introduction

Secondary school is a critical phase in a student's academic journey, laying the foundations for future academic success and career prospects. However, many secondary school students in Akwa Ibom State exhibit a lack of enthusiasm and

motivation towards learning leading to poor academic performance and high dropout rates. It is noted that school variables play a significant role in shaping students' attitude towards learning. School variables refer to the physical, social and psychological environments that exist within the school setting. These variables can either facilitate or hinder students learning experiences, ultimately influencing their attitude towards learning. Student's attitude also refers to the knowledge attained and designated by marks, assigned by teachers. Lamprianou and Athanasou (2019). In educational context, school variables refer to the characteristics, factors, or influences within a school that can impact student learning outcomes, academic performance and overall educational experience. Academic performance is the educational goal to be achieved by a student, teacher or institution over a certain period and is measured either by examination or continuous assessment and the goal may differ from one individual or institution to another. On the other hand, according to Varma, (2017), students' attitude towards learning is the feelings, beliefs and dispositions that students hold towards the process of learning. A positive attitude towards learning can have a significant impact on academic achievement and overall educational experience. School variables and student's attitude towards learning involves the readiness to attend classes, partake in school activities, be attentive in class and have the zeal to attempt assignments and homework. Asking questions in class for clarity is also a mark of students craving for facts and more knowledge. Reading for more information from a diverse set of books attributes to students readiness to excel academically. By the time students reach the end of an academic year, a long list of assessments define their success. This success is measured by a bulk of teachers' observation and assessment (Binarba, 2016). Teachers need to provide a learning context that encourages students to be motivated and enable them to engage enthusiastically in the learning tasks (Cornelius, 2017).

The classroom is a social system in which the teacher and the students interact as organizational members. The quality of classroom relations is dependent on the activities of both the instructor and the students. Students who have positive relationship with their teachers may feel motivated and spurred up to learn. Students are more engaged when they have a supportive relationship with their teachers who are expected as role models to be friendly and approachable so that they can share their problems together. Such students tend to work harder in classroom, persevere, accept directives and criticisms, cope better with stress and pay more attention to the teachers. Since this supportive relationship can improve the learning process, offer students chances to be motivated and feel engaged in cultivating values and skills. Teachers should strive to maintain the relationship even though it may be challenging. The best teachers are capable of maximizing the learning potential of every [student](#) in their class. They understand that the key to unlocking students' potential is by developing positive, respectful relationship with their students beginning on the first day of the school year.

The next school variable which is learning facilities consist of all types of tools and resources like spacious classroom, science laboratory, print materials, audiovisual aids, display boards, projected materials, non-projected visuals, electronic media, graphic materials, community resources which play a vital role to smoothly run teaching and learning process (Meziobi, 2018). Learning facilities enable the teacher to accomplish his/her task as well and help the learner to learn and achieve effectively. The availability and proper use of learning facilities can affect the interest of the teacher to teach effectively and that in turn positively affects student's academic achievement. Therefore, the learning facilities in the school need proper attention as they have a great value in the support of teachers' and students' morale and play a significant role to improve the quality of education. The school library being one of the learning facilities

needs to be stocked with books, maps, globes, films, charts, slides and documentaries to enhance teaching and learning in Social Studies

Good teacher-students relationship can positively impact students' behaviour in the classroom (Maulana, Opdenakker, Stroet and Bosker, 2013). If the foundation for a good relationship is lacking, it will negatively impact students' behaviour. Students will resist rules and procedures, and they will neither trust teachers nor listen to what they have to say if they sense teachers do not value or respect them (Boynton and Boynton, 2015). To reiterate self-determination theory, students need to experience an emotional involvement from their teachers. Furthermore, students who have positive relationship with teachers are less likely to avoid school (Rimm-Kaufman and Sandilos, 2012). Experiencing a sense of belonging greatly contributes to developing positive relationship and positive behaviour.

Learning facilities are the human and physical resources that are needed in the school in order to aid learning and teaching. Human resources are the greatest and most useful facilities a school can ever have, the reason being that no matter how a school is physically facilitated, if there are no human resources there can be no learning (Bakkenes, Vermut and Wubbells, 2011). On the other hand, the physical facilities include spacious classrooms and offices, furniture for the buildings, laboratories, libraries, workshops and other instructional materials. Inadequate facilities will surely affect the smooth teaching and learning process in schools. The students will likely not concentrate during lessons if they have to share chairs in the classroom with their mates, this would easily distract them and reduce academic performance at the long run. Laboratories are built in most schools, but these laboratories lack reagents and equipment. This makes students learn in abstract which will automatically affect academic performance of such students (Adeyemi, 2018).

According to Abolade (2021), learning facilities and materials are essential and significant tools needed for teaching and learning of school subjects to

promote teachers' efficiency and improve students' performance. They make learning more interesting, practical, realistic and appealing. They also enable both the teachers and students to participate actively and effectively in lesson sessions. They give room for acquisition of skills and knowledge and development of self-confidence and self-actualization. Nseabasi (2021) defined teaching aids as those materials used for practical demonstration in the class situation by students and teachers. Ikerionwu (2011) saw instructional materials as objects or devices that assist the teacher to present a lesson to the learners in a logical manner.

In his own perspective, Fadeiye (2015) saw instructional materials as visual and audio-visual aids, concrete or non-concrete, used by teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning activities. Agina-Obu (2015) submitted that instructional materials of all kinds appeal to the sense organs during teaching and learning. Isola (2011) also described instructional materials as objects or devices that assist the teachers to present their lessons logically and sequentially to the learners. Oluwagbohunmi and Abdu-Raheem (2014) acknowledged that instructional materials are used by teachers to aid explanations and make learning of subject matter understandable to students during teaching learning process.

Ogbondah (2018) alerted on the gross inadequacy and underutilization of instructional materials necessary to compensate for the inadequacies of sense organs and to reinforce the capacity of dominant organs. He noted that school teachers should try their possible best in the provision of locally made materials to substitute for the standard ones to promote their lessons.

Social Learning Theory: Albert Bandura (1977)

Social learning theory by Albert Bandura (1977) focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context. It considers how people learn from one another, encompassing such concepts as observational learning, imitation and modelling. Social learning have behaviourist roots, like cognition, but social learning rejects both behaviourism and cognitive for not taking the environment

into consideration. Social learning theory has the following principles: people can learn by observing the behaviour of others and the outcome of those behaviour, learning can occur without a change in behaviour, the consequences of behaviour play a role in learning, and cognition also play a role in learning.

The educational implications of social learning theory for this study is that students often learn a great deal simply by observing other people. Teachers and parents must model appropriate behaviour and take care that they do not model inappropriate ones. Teachers should expose students to a variety of other models (Rijavec and Miljkovic, 2011). This technique is especially important to break down traditional stereotypes and improve academic performance. It is very important for teachers to develop a sense of self-efficacy by having students receive confidence-building messages, watch others being successful and experience success on their own. Observational learning helps in increasing learners' knowledge, retention of facts and life skills. Besides, vicarious reinforcement models can be used by teachers to increase and focus learners' attention towards improved academic performance. Modeling provides alternative to shaping for teaching new behaviours. According to Self-regulation techniques provides effective methods for improving behaviour and academic performance. Social learning theory introduces other variables (e.g., peer behaviour, teacher responses to peer behaviour, and teacher-students relationship) to consider when examining differences in student-teachers' relationship quality. The internal working model and the principles from social learning theory provide complementary perspectives for understanding the dynamics of student-teachers relationship. On the one hand, teachers bring particular relationship models and sets of social behaviour to the relationship. On the other hand, children's social behaviour reflects not only their relationship model, but also peer group influences and classroom reinforcement patterns.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, education is considered an important instrument for change and national development. However, of all the problems facing the educational system in Nigeria, none is more agonizing and persistent as student's attitude towards learning. For instance, negative attitude towards learning is not only frustrating to students and parents, but its effect in terms of dearth of manpower to the respective arms of society is felt in all spheres of economy and polity. Students' low performance has also been noticed at both internal and external examination which is used to determine excellence in teachers and teaching. According to Mezieobi and Fubara,(2018) high levels of students' academic performance may not be guaranteed where learning facilities such as classrooms, libraries, technical workshops, laboratories, museum, field trips, excursion, qualified teachers are structurally defective. Observation in schools show that facilities are generally lacking, teachers feel discouraged in teaching owing to a number of factors including students' non-challant attitude to studies and government's low level of providing instructional facilities, conducive environment and fringe benefits. The social environment now is replete with social vices and peer groups tend to transfer social vices at alarming rate. Some students are very disrespectful and violent, posing challenges to teacher-students relationship. These scenarios may not be enough to engender better schools and student's attitude towards learning in secondary schools. The study therefore sought to provide empirical evidence on the relationship between the School variables and student's attitude towards learning. It sought to determine whether the selected motivational variables – teacher-students interpersonal relationship, learning facilities, peer group interaction, teacher effectiveness and parental encouragement are associated with students' performance in Social Studies.

Purpose of the Study

The study examined the relationship between school variables and student's attitude towards learning in secondary schools in Urueoffong/Oruko

LGA of Akwa Ibom State. Specifically, the study aimed at the following objectives:

1. To determine the relationship between teacher-students interpersonal relationship and students' attitude towards learning.
2. To ascertain the relationship between learning facilities and students' attitude towards learning.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between teacher-students interpersonal relationship and student's attitude towards learning?
2. What is the relationship between learning facilities and student's attitude towards learning.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between teacher-students interpersonal relationship and student's attitude towards learning.
2. There is no significant relationship between learning facilities and student's attitude towards learning.

Methods

The research design adopted for this study was correlational research design. The area of study is Urueoffong/Oruko LGA in Akwa Ibom State. The population of this study comprised all the 492 Junior Secondary Two (JS2) students in all the seven public secondary school in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. The sample size of the study was 13.3% of Junior Secondary Two (JS2) students drawn from the seven public secondary school in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. The sample size of 13.3% respondents was based on Krejcie and Morgan sample size table. The percentage of the sample over the whole population was used in selecting the respondents from each secondary school. The percentage arrived at

was 13.3% and this percentage was used in calculating the number of respondents for each college. 13.3% of the population for each college was used to determine the respondents to make the distribution proportionate for each college.

The researcher used two instruments to gather relevant information for this study namely “School Variables and students; attitude towards learning Questionnaire (SVSATLQ)”. The instrument contains items on school variables with two items for each of the two variables variables (teacher-students interpersonal relationship, learning facilities) and also contains 25 questions drawn from JS2 question bank in the secondary school during the 2012/2013 to 2016/2017 academic sessions. Concerning attitude of towards learning using achievement tests.

For the questionnaire, a four point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD) was used. Respondents were required to indicate their degree of agreement/disagreement with the statements. The scale was weighted as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) - 4 point. Agree (A) - 3 Point. Disagree (D) - 2 point. Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1 point. For the reversed wordings the scale was weighted backward as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) - 1 point. Agree (A) - 2 Point. Disagree (D) - 3 point. Strongly Disagree (SD) - 4 point.

To establish the face validity of the instruments used, the researcher presented the research instrument to two experts, one in Social Studies and one in Measurement and Evaluation all in University of Uyo. All comments and suggestions were followed and integrated into the final draft of the instruments before pre testing was carried out. To determine the reliability of the instruments, the researcher administered the instruments to 30 Junior Secondary Two (JS2) students drawn from the population who did not take part in the main study. The Cronbach alpha procedure was used and a reliability index of .80 was realized. The reliability coefficient for the Achievement Test was determined using the PPMC and an index of 0.95 was realized. The reliability coefficient according to

Cornelius, (2017) was found to be highly reliable. The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the National Teachers' Institute, Kaduna, soliciting for the cooperation of the respondents. The instruments were administered to the sampled JS2 students in the seven secondary school in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA, by the researcher with the help of subject teachers from the difference school. Out of 331 copies of the questionnaire administered to the respondents, a total of 312 copies were correctly completed, returned and used for the study. Data generated were analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) in answering the research questions. The r-value was used to determine the extent of the relationship between variables. The same statistical tool (PPMC) was used for testing the hypotheses by comparing the r-value with the critical value, so as to determine the significance of the relationship between variables all at .05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

This is done based on the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between teacher-students interpersonal relationship and students' academic performance in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA?

Table 4.1: The Relationship between Teacher-Students Interpersonal Relationship and Students' Attitude towards Learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA (N = 312).

Variables		$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal
Teacher-Students Interpersonal Relationship (X)		8131	243087		
Students' Attitude Towards Learning (Y)		8361	252967	236921	.63

Table 4.1 shows the correlation coefficient of the relationship between teacher-students interpersonal relationship and students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. The analysis indicates that the correlation coefficient is 0.63, indicating a positive high relationship

between teacher-students interpersonal relationship and students' attitude towards learning.

The positive correlation between interpersonal relationship and attitude towards learning shows that attitude towards learning (Y) increases with equal increase in teacher-students interpersonal relationship (X). The finding demonstrates a positive high relationship between the variables.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between learning facilities and students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA?

Table 4.2: The Relationship between Learning Facilities and Students' Attitude Towards Learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA.

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal
Learning Facilities (X)	7682	220582		
Students' Attitude Toward School Attendance (Y)	8361	252967	220687	.49

Table 4.2 shows the correlation coefficient of the relationship between learning facilities and students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. The analysis indicates that the correlation coefficient is 0.49, indicating a positive moderate relationship between learning facilities and students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. The positive correlation between learning facilities and students attitude in Secondary School (Y) increases with equal increase in the use of learning facilities (X). The finding demonstrates that a positive moderate relationship occurs between the variables.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between peer group interaction and students' attitude towards academic performance in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA?

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between teacher-students interpersonal relationship and students' academic performance in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA?

Table 4.3: Correlation Analysis of Teacher-Students Interpersonal Relationship and Students' Attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA?

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal
Teacher-Students Interpersonal Relationship (X)	8131	243087		
students' attitude towards learning (Y)	8361	252967	236921	.63

Significance at .05, df = 310; critical r = 0.113; calculated r = 0.63

The data in Table 4.3 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between teacher-students relationship and students' academic attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. Since the calculated r-value of 0.63 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.113 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is not accepted. The result reveals that students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA has significant relationship with their interpersonal relationship with the teachers.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between learning facilities and students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA?

Table 4.4: Correlation Analysis of Learning Facilities and Students' Attitude Towards Learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA?

Variables	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r-cal
Learning Facilities (X)	7682	220582		
Students' attitude towards Learning (Y)	8361	252967	220687	.49

Significance at .05, df = 310; critical r = 0.113; calculated r = 0.49

The data in Table 4.4 shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between learning facilities and students' attitude towards learning in

Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. Since the calculated r-value of 0.49 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.113 at 0.05 level of significance the null hypothesis is not accepted. The result reveals that students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA has significant relationship with learning facilities.

Discussion of Findings

Result from research question 1 and hypothesis 1 revealed the existence of a high positive and significant relationship between teacher-students interpersonal relationship and students' attitude towards in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. The findings of the study conducted by Hussain, Nawaz, Nasir and Kiani (2023) supports this current study by looking at a teacher's perspective regarding creating and maintaining a positive teacher-student relationship. The study conducted by Meagan (2021) supports the present study by examining an overview of teacher-student relationships and factors that contribute to these interactions. The results showed that teacher expectations, attitude, familiarity, and communication all play a role in cultivating relationships in the classroom environment. The findings of Manral (2024) who conducted a study to investigate the effect of interpersonal relation on teaching and learning process also collaborate with the present study. The likely reason for this result is that students often see the need to relate with teachers and vice versa whose responsibility it is to transfer knowledge of subject matter from one generation to another and help students achieve higher levels of academic success.

Result from research question 2 and hypothesis 2 revealed the existence of a positive moderate relationship with students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in Urueoffong/Oruko LGA. The findings of the study conducted by Abdu-Raheem (2021) which highlighted the contribution of instructional materials as a learning facility to the academic achievement of secondary school students in supports to the present study. The study concluded that students who were taught with instructional materials performed better than

those taught without them. The study conducted by Effiong, Oji and Igiri (2020) whose study determined the impact of instructional materials in teaching and students' attitude towards learning in Secondary School in also supports the present study. The study conducted by Akungu (2024) to examine the influence of teaching and learning resources on students' performance in secondary school, Kenya also supports the present study. The reasons for this result could be that learning facilities affect learning and growth. But the fact remains that in some in Secondary School are not often exposed to these facilities since schools are not adequately equipped as expected.

Conclusion

The findings reveal that several school variables, including the quality of teaching, school facilities, teacher-student relationships. High-quality teaching and well-maintained facilities were associated with positive student attitudes and higher attendance rates. Conversely, poor teacher-student relationships and lack of parental encouragement were linked to negative attitudes and poor learning habit. The study concludes that teacher-students interpersonal relationship is of fundamental importance in effective teaching and learning. Lack of good teacher-students relationship impedes students' attitude towards learning in secondary school whereas proper encouragement from teachers increases student good attitude towards learning.

Recommendations

The study recommended among other things that;

1. Teachers should be resourceful, relate with students well and also use available learning facilities to make their lessons interesting.
2. Government should organize periodic conferences, seminars and workshops to enable teachers update themselves on knowledge of subject matter and development of teacher characteristics that engender good teacher interpersonal relationship with students.

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