



SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SOCIAL STUDIES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SOUTH SOUTH EDUCATIONAL ZONE, NIGERIA

UKWETANG, JOHN OKPA, MARIA ENEMEBANGWU AND ABAM OYOBO-GLADYS TOM

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated school discipline and academic performance in social studies among secondary school students in South South Educational Zone, Nigeria. The study tested three null hypotheses, collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Purposive sampling technique was adopted to select a sample of 200 students, from a population of 4,320 junior secondary school students in the area. The instruments used for data collection was a questionnaire and social studies achievement test that were designed and administered by the researcher. The null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance using Independent t-test statistical technique. Findings from the study revealed that, time management, administration of punishment and administration of school rules and regulations significantly influence secondary school students' academic performance in social studies in South South Educational Zone respectively. It was thus concluded that time management, administration of punishment and administration of school rules and regulations significantly influence secondary students' academic performance in social studies. It was recommended that, secondary school students should endeavour to manage their time properly by developing a personal timetable that will incorporate all their domestic, school and leisure activities; and corporal punitive measures such as manual labour and use of cane should not be employed in administering punishment to students.

INTRODUCTION

Student motivation and engagement, plays an important role in learning and academic performance.

Closely related to motivation is self-discipline, the ability of students to monitor and control their own behaviour. Students who are highly self-disciplined may be able to better focus on long-term goals and make better choices related to

Ukwetang, John Okpa, Department of Curriculum and Teaching, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria.

Maria Enemeba Ngwu, Department of Guidance and Counselling, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria.

Abam Oyobo-Gladys Tom, Department of Curriculum and Teaching, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

academic engagement. Discipline itself is embedded in social studies as a subject. The concept of self-discipline focuses on students' own ability to refrain from engaging in a particular behaviour, rather than reliance on external motivations, rewards or punishments. Social studies teach more on moral standards of socialization pattern. A child who understands the concept of discipline may likely do well in social studies and the children who do not accept the concept of discipline may be found distracted or wanted.

Clearly, learners need order in the classroom if the activities which take place are to facilitate effective learning. The most important point to bear in mind in considering discipline is that creating the necessary order is more to do with the skills involved in effective teaching in general than it is to do with how one deals with learner behaviour itself. If the learning activities are well-planned and prepared; if the presentation elicits and maintains learners' attention, interest and involvement and if the activities are challenging and offer realistic opportunities for success, then the necessary order and discipline will be established.

Time management refers to the effective use of time in terms of allocation, performance of task, and doing the right thing at the right time (Owan, 2022). Efficient use of time on the part of students and school administrator is directly associated with academic performance.

Administration of punishment refers to a systematic process of identifying odd behaviours from students that contradicts set standards, and selecting the right stimuli to use in eliminating such behaviour from reoccurring in the future and to serve as deterrent to others observing the process (Owan, 2022). The use of punishment in school in to instil discipline and it is meted on students who violate the agreed rules and regulation.

According to Owan (2022), administration of rules and regulations refers to a process where rules are consciously formulated and enforced effectively to ensure adherence by those concerned. According to Offing (2017), administration of school rules and regulations have become a difficult task in recent times. Rules are postulated with no effort to control these rules making them vulnerable to be broken by students. Teaching methods are skills and techniques used by teachers to modify the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor attributes of the learners, with a view

making them lifelong learners and to contribute meaningfully to societal growth and development (Owan, 2022). Daud (2020), specified that teaching should not merely focus on dispensing rules, definitions and procedures for students to memorize, but should also actively engage students as primary participants.

It can be deduced from the foregoing that discipline is a key component of the school system for effective teaching and learning. It has the ability to improve the academic performance of students (Owan, 2018). According to Owan (2018), academic performance refers to the rate in which students are achieving academic objectives. Academic achievement or academic performance is the outcome of education and it extends to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals.

Academic achievement is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important-procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts. Also, academic achievement refers to a person's strong performance in a given academic field. Academic achievement generally refers to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies. The most well-known indicator of academic achievement is the students' 'score' for their classes and overall period of academic year (Baraneeswari & Pitchaimani, 2017).

Student performance tends to rise along with increases in academic learning time (Greenwood, Horton, & Utley, 2012; in Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2020), so to deprive students of such learning time is counterproductive. Second, when excluded from school, students "may become less bonded to school, less invested in school rules and course work, and subsequently, less motivated to achieve academic success" (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2020).

According to data gathered South South Educational Zone Authority, 54 percent of the students who sat for WAEC examination did not pass English and Mathematics. In social studies, there are also reports of poor academic performance of students in Junior Secondary Certificate Examinations (JSCE). Several measures have been used to cushion this problem of poor academic performance. For instance, Government have improved the regularity in the

payment of teachers' salaries, many school facilities are supplied to schools, many principals have adjusted their leadership style and so on, all in an attempt to improve students' academic performance especially in Social Studies.

Despite all these measures in place, students' academic performance has not witnessed any improvement. It is based on this background that the researcher wonders whether discipline management contribute to students' academic performance in South South Educational Zone, Nigeria.

The term "time management" became familiar in the 1950's and 1960's as referring to a tool to help managers make better use of available time. The tool was based on practical experience, in the form of do's and don'ts. The term appears to indicate that time is managed but actually activities are managed over time. Time management is self-management with an explicit focus on time in deciding what to do; on how much time to allocate to activities; on how activities can be done more efficiently and on when the time is right for particular activities (Mercanlioglu, 2010).

Though the practice in most of the secondary schools is that school activities seems not to respect the designed time table. There is a need therefore to establish compliance on the part of the stakeholders in the management of school to ensure good " academic performance (Owan, 2012). Docking, (2000) argues that, a law-abiding student is the one expected to arrive on time for lectures and wait for the teacher, while law abiding teacher is expected to respect all the time allocated to him or her on the timetable. Kelly, (2004) argues that efficient use of time on the part of the students and school administrator directly associated with increased academic performance.

Some studies have been conducted empirically that examined the relationship between time management and students' academic performance. Oyuga, Raburu and Aloka (2016), investigated the relationship between time management and academic performance among orphaned secondary school students of Kenya. The Pearson Product- Moment correlation coefficient ($r = .906$) computed indicated that there was high positive correlation between time management and academic achievement among orphaned secondary school students. Ministry of Education in general should understand the plight of orphans and provide them with improved

services like trained counsellors who would be able to provide orphaned children with appropriate counselling services.

In another study, Adebayo, (2015), examined the impact of time management on students' academic performance in higher institutions Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Two instruments were used to carry out the investigation. A structured questionnaire developed by the researcher, administered on the students of the two higher institutions under study in order to collect information on how they manage their time for their academic activities. The instrument was validated using face and content validity. The study showed that there was significant relationship between time management and students' academic performance. It gives the impression that students need the proper use of time before they can be effective in their various assignments. All the activities being performed by students are done within the time hence time management cannot be separated from academic achievement.

Based on this result, it was concluded that lack of proper time management on the part of the students have some impacts on certain academic activities especially in the area of resumption for the new semester or session, registration of courses, attending lectures, doing the assignment, reading for test and preparation for examination to time. These are as a result of procrastination and not paying attention to issues like planning and prioritization.

Punishment is a term used in operant conditioning to refer to any change that occurs after a behaviour that reduces the likelihood that behaviour will occur again in the future. While positive and negative reinforcement are used to increase behaviours, punishment is focused on reducing or eliminating unwanted behaviours (Leach & Humphreys, 2007). The National Association of School Nurses, (2010), defines punishment as causing physical pain deliberately to change behaviour that could be in the form of hitting, slapping, spanking, punching and pinching using objects such as sticks, belts, and paddles. It also states that "the intentional infliction of physical pain as a method of changing behaviour, which may include methods such as hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, pinching, shaking, use of various objects (paddles, belts, sticks or

other), or painful body postures Nakpodia (2012).

Punishing means subjecting a penalty for an offense and usually includes inflicting some kind of hurt; in this regard, to Nakpodin (2012) sees corporal punishment as a practice of disciplining in which, something unpleasant is present or positive reinforces are removed following behaviour so that it happens less often in future. The use of punishment in schools is to instil discipline and is meted on student who violates the agreed rules and regulations in schools. It is administered to bring about a desirable change in behaviour and therefore, improve school discipline (Owan, 2018).

This opinion is also shared by Cotton, Gressworth, and Mullins (2000), who maintained that Punishments in a school system are expected to teach students the relationship between their behaviours and the outcome or accountability for their mistakes. Creswel, (2003), also argued that with a well-behaved class, teaching could be among the most wonderful jobs in the world. However, what really occurs on the ground is that unwanted behaviours are on the increase despite the presence of these punishments. Teachers are worried about the aggression directed to them by both students and their parents. This has resulted into some students being expelled, others suspended, forced to do hard labour at school, chased out of classes all of which seem to affect their academic performance (Ukwetang, 2021). It was added that some forms of punishments like corporal punishment could lead to physical injury if teachers are not careful in their administration. This would lead to absence from schools and consequently reducing the academic performance of the injured students.

Cotton, Lambert, and Coleman (2000) also contends that uniform punishment can be an effective way of controlling students' behaviour if students, teachers and school administrators know and understand that punishment are firm, fair and consistent. Ideally, schools set discipline for the proper governing of the various lifestyles of students i.e. the dos and don'ts. Some empirical evidence suggests that the use of corporal punishment to instil discipline is not a good idea. For instance, Ekanem and Edet (2013), examined the effects of the use of corporal punishment on the disciplinary control of secondary education students in Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. A sample size of 250

was drawn from a population of 1,666 secondary school teachers using a stratified random sampling technique. Data were statistically analysed using percentage, mean and independent t- test statistics. Results obtained revealed that corporal punishment was most frequently used among varieties of school punishment but it was not effective in disciplinary control of students in secondary schools. There was a significant difference in the use of corporal punishment on disciplinary control between public and private secondary school students. Based on these findings, it was recommended that: corporal punishment should be discouraged as a means of disciplinary control in the secondary schools (Ekanem & Edet, 2013).

Kaiser, Aslam & Singh (2014), explored the effects of mild corporal punishment on the academic achievement of students at secondary school level. Fifty students from the 9th class were selected as sample through simple random sampling technique. The study was experimental in nature; mild corporal punishment was given to the students of experimental group on showing poor performance but students of control group were not subjected to any type of corporal punishment during the experiment. Data was collected through pre-test and post-test technique. The results indicated that there is significant positive effect of mild corporal punishment on the academic achievement of students. It is very effective and useful in strengthening students' academic achievement. The findings of the study revealed that mild corporal punishment has a significant positive effect on the academic achievement of student.

Administration of punishment refers to a situation where proper rules/regulations are formulated with the proper mechanism of enforcing such rules to promote adherence and good behaviour (Owan, 2018). Administration of school rules and regulations has become a difficult task in recent days. Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald and Schulz (2001), explored ways in which schools affected rules by inculcating in students' citizenship and education in twenty-eight countries, the aim was to obtain a picture of how students were made to follow rules and regulations including in- and out-of-school experience. They found that there were gaps between the concepts that schools were trying to foster and what students believed. It was

suggested that school rules and regulations must be as clear as possible so that schools produce quality citizens.

Thomberg (2009) investigated the hidden curriculum of school rules delimited to the moral construction of "the good pupil" embedded in the system of school rules in two primary schools. He found that, the rule system mediated two moral constructions of the good pupil, including: benevolent fellow buddy and the well-behaved pupil. Thomberg suggested that schools need to construct rules and regulations that inculcate critical thinking and the possibility of questioning, critically discussing. He further suggested that rules and regulations that cannot be enforce critical thinking should be abolished.

Kiggundu (2009) conducted a study on the influence of Discipline Management on student academic performance in Private secondary schools in Kenya and the findings of the study revealed that all schools have written rules and regulations but some require modifications, and others lack consistence In their implementation, which raises students' anger leading to violence, strikes and aggression. In case of Tanzania, Babyegeya (2002) observed that sometimes school administration encourages students to violate school rules and regulations

According to Adams (2003), students perceive that school rules and regulations are among strategies design to instil good conduct of students. This implies self-control, orderliness, good behaviour and obedience to school authority hence create a sense of cooperation and harmony in the school. Also, on admission to school especially at secondary level, students revealed that they are given prospectus which spell out some of the expectations (Okumbe,2008). These rules and regulations specify what school members should do and what they should not do (Machumu, 2011). It was concluded that this shapes positively students discipline hence stimulating good academic performances.

In a study conducted by Adilister (2014), the perception of secondary school students on school rules and regulations in promoting acceptable behaviour was examined. Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed to obtain 240 respondents. Data were collected through questionnaires.

The study findings revealed that most of students were aware that school rules and regulations can make them good citizens; many realize that offenders were punished to encourage them to obey the laws; most agreed that school regulations and rules encouraged co-operation and harmony In school and the nation. Based on the results a conclusion is that most respondents have the perception that school rules and regulations promote acceptable behaviour among secondary school students. The study recommends that school rules and regulations need to be emphasized and further studies are required to critically assess the content of school rules and recommend the best content that can produce quality citizenry.

Similarly, Ndeto (2013), studied the effectiveness of school rules in enhancing discipline in public secondary schools in Kangundo Division, Machakos County, Kenya. The study instruments were questionnaires for students, class teachers and Deputy Head Teachers and interview guides for Student leaders and Head Teachers. Data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive analysis such as frequencies and percentages were used in data presentation. The findings revealed that students were not adequately involved in the formulation of school rules and regulations though they were highly involved in the implementation of the same. The findings further revealed that students were positive about school rules and regulations. They were willing to embrace them and seemed to recognize their intrinsic value in day to day life and discipline enhancement.

Based on the findings, the researcher recommended affirmative policy formulation to provide/encourage use of student friendly disciplinary measures like guidance and counselling by expert. The ministry of Education should expand its spheres of coverage to incorporate school principals in addressing the challenges faced in enhancing student discipline. School management should organize seminars and forum for students on the importance of obeying rules and regulations. In such a workshop, teachers and other experts can share with students on real life experience on the obedience of rules and regulations (Ndeto, 2013).

RESEARCH METHODS

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The researcher used descriptive survey **because the study** documents the present status of adolescents' attitude towards sex **education in** South South Educational Zone, Nigeria. This study was carried out in South South Educational Zone of Nigeria.

The population of this study comprised 4,320 junior secondary school students. This population was distributed across 16 public secondary

schools in the study area. The simple random sampling technique was adopted to select eight (8) public secondary schools in South South Educational Zone of Nigeria. The sample of the study comprised 200 junior secondary school students selected from eight public secondary schools in the study area.

RESULTS

Hypothesis one states that time management has no significant influence on secondary students' academic performance in social studies. The result of the analysis of data using independent t-test analysis is presented on table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Independent t-test analysis of the influence of time management on secondary students academic performance in Social Studies (n=200).

Variables	Mean	S ²	t-cal.	p-value
Time management	14.45	20.78	5.614	.0000*
Students' academic performance	11.8	23.78		

* Significant at $P < 0.05$; $df = 398$, $t\text{-Crit.} = 1.9659$

The results presented in Table 1 indicates that $p < .05$ level of significance. Also, the calculated t-value of 5.614 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.9659 at 398 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is rejected, implying that, time management has a significant influence on secondary students' academic performance in social studies. This finding supports the findings of Oyuga, Raburu and Aloba (2016), who investigated the relationship between time management and academic performance among orphaned secondary school students of Kenya. The study revealed a correlation coefficient ($r = .906$) indicating that there was high positive

correlation between time management and academic achievement among orphaned secondary school students; and recommended that Ministry of Education in general should understand the plight of orphans and provide them with improved services like trained counsellors who would be able to provide orphaned children with appropriate counselling services.

Hypothesis two states that administration of punishment has no significant influence on secondary students' academic performance in social studies. The result of the analysis of data using independent t-test analysis is presented on table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Independent t-test analysis of the influence of administration of punishment on secondary students academic performance in Social Studies (n=200).

Variables	Mean	S ²	t-cal.	p-value
Administration of punishment	13.88	18.89	4.492	.0000*
Students' academic performance	11.80	23.78		

* Significant at P<0.05; df = 398, t-Crit. = 1.9659

Results presented in Table 2 revealed that the p-value .0000 is less than .05 level of significance. The calculated t-value of 4.492 is also greater than the critical t-value of 1.9659 at 398 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected indicating that, administration of punishment has a significant influence on secondary students' academic performance in social studies. This finding supports the finding of Qaiser, Aslam & Singh (2014), who explored the effects of mild corporal punishment on the academic achievement of students at secondary school level. The results of the study indicated that independent t-test analysis is presented on table 3.

there is significant positive effect of mild corporal punishment on the academic achievement of students. It is very effective and useful in strengthening students' academic achievement. The findings of the study revealed that mild corporal punishment has a significant positive effect on the academic achievement of students. Hypothesis three states that administration of school rules and regulations has no significant influence on secondary students' academic performance in social studies. The result of the analysis of data using

Table 3: Summary of Independent t-test analysis of the influence of administration of school rules and regulations on secondary students academic performance in Social Studies (n=200).

Variables	Mean	S ²	t-cal.	p-value
Administration of school rules and regulation	13.505	18.36	3.714	.0002*
Students' academic performance	11.8	23.78		

* Significant at P<0.05; df = 398, t-Crit. = 1.9659

The results from Table 3 indicates that the p-value of .0002 is less than .05 level of significance. The calculated t-value of 3.714 is also greater than the critical t-value of 1.9659 at 398 degrees of freedom. Based on this result, the null hypothesis is rejected implying that administration of school rules and regulations significantly influence secondary students' academic performance in social studies. This finding may be used to explain why Thomberg (2009) suggested that schools need to construct rules and regulations that inculcate critical thinking and the possibility of questioning, and critical discussions.

He further suggested that rules and regulations that cannot be enforce critical thinking should be abolished.

CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded through the findings of this study that, time management has a significant influence on secondary students' academic performance in social studies; administration of punishment has a significant influence on secondary students' academic performance in social studies and administration of school rules and regulations significantly influence secondary students' academic performance in social studies in South South Educational Zone, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Secondary school students should endeavour to manage their time properly by developing a personal timetable that will incorporate all their domestic, school and leisure activities.
2. Corporal punitive measures such as manual labour and use of cane should not be employed in administering punishment to students. School prefects or senior students should be sensitized on the need to avoid brutalising their junior colleagues.
3. School rules and regulations should be formulated, communicated to students and enforced in order to ensure that the behaviour of everyone within the school is appropriately guided.

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