

Effectiveness of Counselling for Study Skills and Utilization of Academic Library Resources for Academic Success among Students of Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated effectiveness of counselling for study habits and use of academic library resources on students' academic achievement among students of Federal University Lokoja. Using the simple random sampling technique, one hundred and ten students selected from eleven departments in Federal University Lokoja, participated as samples for the study. The survey research methodology was adopted for the study, while self-developed research instrument (questionnaire) was used for data collection. Test-re-test method was employed to establish the reliability of the research instrument (questionnaire), using Pearson test of reliability, $r = 0.83$, the questionnaire was thus judged appropriate for its administration. Results of findings from the study revealed that significant correlation exist among the variables (reading, time management and note taking and academic achievement) examined in this study. Results from the study implies that counselling for developing study skills/habits for use of academic library resources enhance students' academic success. The study concludes that counselling for study habits/ study skills and use of academic library resources is effective for students' academic achievement, and therefore recommended that counselling for study habits/ study skills be introduced to students during the initial entering /registration into tertiary institutions and be intensified to help students achieve academic success.

Keywords: Counselling; Library; Library resources; Study skills; Reading habits; Academic achievement.

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1. Introduction

In every institution of learning there are facilities other than classrooms that can contribute in no small measure to the teaching and learning process. For meaningful learning to take place, learners must have access to necessary materials, information and resources such as provided in academic resource library. Students have to interact with tangible and intangible resources within an institution to ensure some level of performance [1]. The academic environment is a place for teaching, learning, and research as well as knowledge creation. The library is a vital facility for enhancing learning, teaching, and research, and as the hub of all academic activities, it is established for provoking intellectual excellence. The library is an information resource centers that provides and enhances personal and academic development, so as to so influence students' overall academic achievement in one hand, and the study skills adopted by the students on the other hand. Effective utilization of information resources in the library is critical to students' overall academic achievement, the study/habit skill(s) that students adopted determine to a large extent how well students utilize information resources culminating in academic success. Reference [2] points out that academic library resource is essential to any educational development. Availability of adequate library facilities encourages passionate study behavior in students early in life. It also helps students inculcate the attitude of self-inquiry and self-development.

The Federal University Lokoja is a Federal Institution, established in the year 2012. The university has a library resources which include books, periodicals, newspapers, manuscripts, films, maps, prints, documents, microform, CDs, cassettes, videotapes, DVDs, e-books, audio-books, databases, and other formats such as nonfiction books, covering different subjects; novels, past examination questions, pamphlets, newsletters, including some reference materials such as dictionaries, encyclopedia, and biographies and others sources of information and similar resources, made accessible to the university community for reference or borrowing. It provides physical and digital access to material, for centuries libraries have served as repositories of information and knowledge that have provided the vital underpinnings for socio- economic, political and cultural development in any civilization.

According to [3] libraries and archives came into being to provide a central location for hard-to-find, scarce, expensive or unique material, and that the main functions are to provide support in research and resource linkage for students and faculty staff of the educational institution. Specific course-related resources are usually provided by the library, such as copies of textbooks. Academic libraries offer workshops and courses outside of formal, graded coursework, which are meant to provide students with the tools necessary to succeed in their programs [4]. The academic library provides a quiet study space for students on campus; it may also provide group study space, such as meeting rooms, academic libraries are becoming increasingly digitally oriented. The library provides a "gateway" for students and researchers to access various resources, both print/physical and digital.

Academic libraries are increasingly being redefined as places to get unrestricted access to information in many formats and from many sources. They are extending services beyond the physical walls of a building, by providing material accessible by electronic means, and by providing the assistance of librarians in navigating and analyzing very large amounts of information with a variety of digital tools.

1.1 Statement of the problem

For many people the word ‘library’ conjures up images of books and not much more. Although books remain a core feature and are beneficial in many more ways than commonly understood, libraries have a much wider and more significant reach than books alone. Claims as to why there is a decrease in the usage of library resources stems from the observation of the study habits of undergraduate students enrolled in tertiary institutions, and universities. There have been claims that undergraduates have become more used to retrieving information from the Internet than from academic resource library. As each generation becomes more in tune with the Internet, their desire to retrieve information as quickly and easily as possible has increased. Finding information by simply searching the Internet could be much easier and faster than reading an entire book. Students face a number of challenges in adapting to new ways of information seeking that may stress convenience over quality, potential decline in library usage, particularly reference services, since information is a vital and an indispensable component of any academic environment, it makes for effectiveness in any academic system; students need adequate guidance in study skills/ habits as well as use of academic library resources, the import of this research therefore is to investigate effectiveness of counselling for study habits/skills and use of academic library resources for academic success. Essentially, the main problem of this research paper is to bring to the fore:

- i) the need for counselling services for students to cultivate study habits/skills and increase awareness on use of academic resource library.
- ii) investigate effectiveness of counselling in helping students cultivate study skills/habits.
- iii) determine the relationship between students’ developing of study skills/habits and academic achievement.

1.2 Methodology

This study examined the effectiveness of counselling for study skills/habits and use of academic library resources and students’ academic achievement among students of Federal University Lokoja, Nigeria. The study was a descriptive research survey. A total of 110 students were randomly selected for the study. Four research questions and corresponding hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significant.

1.3 Rationale for the study

The Library is an organized collection of books and non-books materials available for retrieval and use by library patrons who seek for information, read, learn and research. Academic libraries have a sole responsibility of ensuring there are relevant academic resources available for all members of the academic. In line with the above points, students should be familiar with appropriate counselling services to help them cultivate study skills/habits for use of academic library resources. A situation of lack of study skills and information seeking strategies by library users is majorly due to absence of emphasis on study skills/habits and information seeking strategies to achieve academic success.

1.4 Objectives/Purpose

- 1) To determine the extent to which counselling for study skills/habits affect students' use of academic library resources;
- 2) To determine the extent to which counselling for study skills/habits affect students' academic achievement;
- 3) To investigate relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' use of academic library resources;
- 4) To investigate relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' academic achievement.

1.5 Research Questions

- 1) To what extent do counselling for study skills/habits influence students' use of academic library resources
- 2) To what extent do counselling for study skills/habits influence students' academic achievement
- 3) What is the relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' use of academic library resources.
- 4) What is the relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' academic achievement?

1.6 Hypotheses

1H₀ Hypotheses one: "counselling for study skills/habits do not significantly influence students' use of academic library resources"

2H₀ Hypothesis two: "counselling for study skills/habits and uses of academic library resources do not significantly influence students' academic achievement"

3H₀ Hypothesis three: "There is no significant relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' use of academic library resources".

4H₀ Hypothesis four "There is no significant relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' academic achievement".

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Concepts of study skills/habits

Study skills/ habits play a very important role in the life of students. Success or failure of each student depends upon his own study habits. Study is an art and as such it requires practice. Some students study more but they fail to achieve more. Others study less but achieve more. Success of each student definitely depends upon study skills/ habits, learning styles, intelligence ability and effort of students.

Study habits are an important aspect in the field of educational psychology and are ultimately related to learning style and academic achievement. Majority of the students face serious problem of how to study and lack of this awareness is a hindrance to become good academic performers. It is in the absence of proper study habits and techniques that they fail to achieve the maximum within the limited time schedule. Like any other habits, study habits are also acquired through learning. Students get habituated to read and write in certain fixed ways. Most of the educational crisis such as underachievement, absenteeism stagnation, and academic drop out are usually concerned with the improper utilization of the study programs with respect to study time [5]. Poor study habits not only retard school progress, leads to frustration and destroy initiative. It is the study habit which helps learners in obtaining meaningful and desirable knowledge. Good study habits act as a strong weapon for the students to excel in life.

The term 'achievement' refers to the degree or the level of success attained in some specific school tasks especially scholastic performance, in this sense academic achievement means the attained ability to perform school tasks, which can be general or specific to a given subject matter. Academic achievement could be defined as self-perception and self-evaluation of one's objective academic success. Academic achievement generally indicates the learning outcomes of students. Reference [6] noted that the quality of a library collection has tremendous impact on a student's academic performance such as higher test scores and even more with a higher usage of the school library resources. Study skills/ habits intended to equip students with study skills to enable them succeed academically in school. Counselling for effective study skills were modeled through students' counseling services in the Universities to teach students how to learn, since academic success of students depends largely on the learning platforms available to students including the library facility.

There is the need to introduce study skills in the early years of education and to continue throughout the student's educational experience. According to [7] study skills enhance students' academic achievements. To a very large extent a lack of good study skills/habits among other factors can contribute to students' poor achievement in schools.

2.2 Importance of Study Skills

Academic competence is the ability to apply effective study skills [8]. Study skills may be defined according to [9] as the ability to apply suitable strategies and methods for study while utilizing time and resources efficiently. There is no one-study method that works better for all persons. The secret lies in the ability to identify personal study methods that work for each individual in given environments, conditions and circumstances. This requires making good decisions on how and when to study, including knowing what study strategies to adopt. [10] found there is a relationship between academic success and study habit and reported a positive relationship between the two variables. It is important to reinforce study skills learned in from secondary school in the University.

2.3 Study Skills Strategies and Academic Achievement

The importance of understanding study skills related factors such as time management, procrastination, concentration, memory, study aid/note taking, test strategies/test anxiety, organizing/processing of information,

motivation/attitude, reading/selecting the main ideas and materials/methods to achievement in academics of students cannot be over emphasized. Study skills are necessary for an excellent academic experience. An effective learner requires good thinking skill for a productive study. Reference [11] asserts that Knowledge of the processes or thinking associated with bits of knowledge, adds a meta-cognitive component to it, increasing the network of connections made in the brain. The ability to ask questions, synthesize the new information with previous knowledge to provide answers is inevitable for a successful study. Academic competence is associated with the knowledge and application of study skills in the learning process [12]. While those experiencing academic difficulty are said to be lacking in effective study skills, students who have learnt to effectively imply the knowledge of study skills to their learning experience are regarded as academically competent [13]. Reference [14] writes that note making (writing) is the outcome of a study process that is laden with high level of concentration and culminating in sound comprehension, and that if concentration is related to attention, it implies that concentration is achievable by cultivating good study habits/skills, and that study skills encompass a wide range of abilities, which facilitates academic achievement in diverse subject areas. Reference [15] identifies common study skills strategies such as: motivational techniques, time management, and note taking, and test taking, organizational skills. Reference [16] asserts that study skills are competences associated with acquiring, organizing, remembering, recording, synthesizing and using ideas and information found in school.

Study skills include the following set of skills: reading, writing, note-taking, time-management, working with others, engaging in critical and analytical thinking, revising and remembering, in addition to information [17]. An effective learner requires good thinking skill for a productive study. Reference [18] asserts that knowledge of the processes or thinking associated with bits of knowledge adds a meta-cognitive component to it, increasing the network of connections made in the brain. The ability to ask questions, synthesize the new information with previous knowledge to provide answers is inevitable for a successful study. Academic competence is associated with the knowledge and application of study skills in the learning process [19]. While those experiencing academic difficulty are said to be lacking in effective study skills, students who have learnt to effectively imply the knowledge of study skills to their learning experience are regarded as academically competent [20]. Reference [21] wrote that note making (writing) is the outcome of a study process that is laden with high level of concentration and culminating in sound comprehension. He asserts that if concentration is related to attention then it means that concentration is achievable by becoming more attentive.

2.4 Study Skills and use of Library Resources

Studying is a skill that requires training and practice, it involves the utilization of specific techniques to help a learner acquire, organize, retain, and use information, [22] Students who are not armed with effective study strategies will have difficulty carrying out school or home assignments and even perform poorly in class test. Reference [23] observed from their findings that students with weak study skills often experience problems. This implies that the better equipped students do well by using study skills, and therefore experience lesser problems.

Students, who are unequipped with good study skills, lack the capacity to utilize available school learning resources especially the library resources. For example lack of concentration skills will make it impossible for a

student to engage in any meaningful study and utilization of library resources at any given time. The skill of concentration demands that a student is able to focused on a given activity per time. Mastery of the skill of goal setting (short term goals and long term goals) is enhanced by effective time management skill. For instance, lack of time management will make it practically impossible for students to visit the library much less use the library facilities. For students, good time management involves the ability to spread course work over a semester/session for those in higher institution or over a term/session for those in primary and secondary schools and avoid stressful workload at a time. Time management is the ability to plan ahead and strategically prioritize all tasks to be done. In prioritizing, a good student must set aside time to utilize library resources as no individual student has all the required resources (print materials, electronic materials and resources in other formats). To successfully prioritize a student must develop weekly and long term time management plans. Many students have long, medium and short term plans for their study. Planning ahead actually saves time, energy and reduces stress, as well as ability to effectively use library materials is a function of the skills students possess. Informed library users know that academic libraries hold research resources that are more comprehensive and it is also very essential that they understand that they can achieve more or do better by acquiring the skills that enable them effectively utilize library resources available in the school, the ability to effectively utilize these resources heavily depends on students' ability to deploy all the study skills acquired in their educational journey. The skill of scanning through books and other publications in the library is critical to discovering useful and relevant materials without wasting precious time on irrelevant document. The note taking skill is so important during the process of reading or studying a material and cannot be over emphasized. It is helpful in jotting down key points and summaries of the topic/subject being read while there is plenty of time to go through the bulky document, thus saving the time students would spend going back to the material. The goal setting skill helps a student know how to plan, strategize and apportion time for the courses and subjects to be covered both for the semester and for the entire session. The skill of concentration is mostly needed at point a student is under studying a specific material.

3. Data Analysis, Results and Findings from the study

Null Hypotheses one (H_0): "There is no significant effect of counselling for study skills/habits on students' use of academic library resources"

Table 1: Independent sample t-test on: significant effect of counselling for study skills/habits on students' use of academic library resources"

Item	Response	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	t-crit	df	Remark*
Effect of counselling for study skills/habits on students' use of academic library resources.	Agreed	86	1.21	0.41	30.79	1.984	109	
	Disagreed	24						
Total		110						

* P = Significant ($p < 0.05$)

Results of analysis show that t-cal (30.79) and t -cri (1.98) at degree of freedom 109 is greater. This shows that the calculated t-value of 30.79 is significant at p-value 0.05, this implies that significant relationship exists between counselling for study skills/habits for use of academic library resources, as shown in the table. Thus, the higher the students’ use of academic library resources, the higher the study habit, the higher the academic achievement. Hypothesis two: “There is no significant effect of counselling for study skills/habits and use of academic library resources on students’ academic achievement”

Table 2: Independent sample t-test on: significant effect of counselling for study skills/habits and use of academic library resources on students’ academic achievement”

Item	Response	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	t-cri	df	Remark*
Effect counselling for study skills/habits and use of academic library resources on students’ academic achievement	Agreed	78	1.29	0.45	29.67	1.984	109	
	Disagreed	32						
Total		110						

* P = Significant (p<0.05)

Results of analysis show that t-cal (29.67) and t-cri (1.98) at degree of freedom 109 is greater. This shows that the calculated t-value of 29.67 is significant at p-value 0.05, this implies that significant relationship exists between counselling for study skills/ habits and use of academic library resources on students’ academic achievement. Thus, the higher the students’ use of Library, the higher the study habit, the higher the academic achievement. Hypothesis three: “There is no significant relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students’ use of academic library resources”.

Table 3: Independent sample t-test on: significant relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students’ use of academic library resources.

Item	Response	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	t-cri	df	Remark*
Relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students’ use of academic library resources	Agreed	82	1.24	0.43	30.20	109		
	Disagreed	28						
Total		110						

* P = Significant (p<0.05)

Results of analysis show that t-cal (30.20) and t-cris at degree of freedom 109 is greater. This shows that the calculated t-value of 30.20 is significant at p-value 0.05, this implies that there is a significant relationship between counselling for study skills/habits students' use of academic library resources. Thus, counselling for study skills/habits and students' use of Library, results into higher the academic achievement.

Hypothesis four "There is no significant relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' academic achievement"

Table 4: Independent sample t-test on: significant relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' academic achievement

Item	Response	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-cal	t-cris	df	Remark*
Relationship between counselling for study skills/habits and students' academic achievement	Agreed	73	1.33	0.47	29.50	109		
	Disagreed	37						

* P = Significant (p<0.05)

Results of analysis show that t-cal (29.50) and t-cris (1.984) at degree of freedom 109 is greater. This shows that the calculated t-value of 29.67 is significant at p-value 0.05, this implies that there is a significant relationship between counselling for study skills/habits use of academic library resources. Thus, provision of counselling for study skills/habits brings about better academic achievement.

The findings from this study revealed that there exists a significant effect of counselling for study habits/ study skills and use of academic resource library and students' academic achievement this, implies that cultivating good study skills significantly affected students' use of academic resource library as well as academic achievement.

Similarly [24] noted that study skills courses that focus on reading, writing, and note-taking skills benefited secondary school students and students at higher levels of education. Study skills such as reading, writing, note-taking, time-management, and working with others, engaging in critical and analytical thinking, revising and remembering, in addition to information gathering are essential for academic success

4. Recommendations

Library scholars should make library resources materials accessible to students to pursue their academics. It also

includes promoting the information literacy skills, training that are considered vital across the library profession. [25] reported that improving study skills techniques can enhance academic achievement for students with poor study skills, and that study skills should be taught at high school level, this confirms the need to provide counseling for study skills/ habits for students at tertiary level of education. Students need to know that sometimes libraries are important partners for academic success realizing the potential of such projects and have received reciprocal benefits in cases where they have negotiated effectively.

5. Suggestions

- Adequate academic library resources should be provided, are meant to supports the students in their studies.
- The library environment should be free of any disturbances, so as to allow for studies and mental development.
- Every student can develop his/her literary skills by reading, writing, time management, developing communication skills.
- Library resources should open a world of wisdom for the students; student can build his confidence by going through the books of his interest.
- University library resources should promote building a knowledge-driven community for the future.
- Professional counselling psychologists should provide needed counselling to students for them to cultivate good study habits/skills.

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