

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF POOR READING HABIT ON PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS IN ENUGU URBAN

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Abstract:

The aim of this research work was to find out the causes and consequences of poor reading habit on primary school pupils in Enugu urban. Out of the whole population, 200 (two hundred) teachers and five primary schools were selected. The method of data collection was thro questionnaire while collected data collected were analyzed using frequency table and percentages. The researchers found out that poor libraries or unavailability of librarian in our primary schools, unconducive environment, lack of teaching resources and teachers' method of guiding pupils to learn how to read were the causes of poor reading habit among primary school pupils. Moreover, they noticed that poor reading habit negatively affect pupils' educational achievement. The researchers also found out that learning in a conducive environment, establishment of libraries, etc can reduce the increase of poor reading habit on primary school pupils. Recommendations were made which the researchers believe is appropriate implemented would go a wider range to develop and improve the reading habit of primary school pupils.

Keywords: *Reading, Reading habit, Poor reading habit.*

Introduction

Reading is the interpretation of printed or written symbols, which serves as stimuli for the recall of meanings built up through the reader's past experience. It has also been described as a process of translating alphabetical symbols into a form or language from which the native speaker has already derived the meaning. Igiligi, and Abanobi (2007) asserted that reading habit is a second nature. It is a situation where one get accustomed or mastered with a particular act. The ability to read is one determinant of pupils' success or failure. A good reader has a better opportunity for greater achievement. The skill acquired in, reading can promote the acquisition of language skill like listening, speaking and writing.

According to Tracy (2008), reading is the only form of entertainment that is also an essential life skill. Reading is a skill that, must be nurtured from a child's earliest years. Reading is the foundation of much enjoyment in life and is closely related to vocational efficiency. The acquisition of reading skills has a beneficial effect on all school subjects, including social studies, science, mathematics and so on. Pupils in every field must read to keep abreast of what is happening in the society.

However, it is informative that some primary school pupils find it difficult read and understand despite that fact that reading is indispensable. Poor reading habit contributes a problem on the education of primary school pupils yet primary level of education is regarded as the foundation of the educational systems as noted in the minimum standard for N.C.E teacher of NCCE (1996) as cited by Ini (2002). The reading foundation laid at the primary school level is considered very poor pupils moved out from there into secondary schools with nothing to fall back on.

It has often been said that reading as a habit. It is an acquired habit that can be developed and sustained through the provision of the necessary infrastructure like a good functional library, school, education system and parental support. Developing reading habit involves motivating pupils. It is very important to recognize that, parents, teachers, and librarians have vital roles to play among primary school pupils to enable them embark on voracious reading and developing good reading habits. Habit is a fundamental part of living (Ibrahim, 2014) it is that activity which is done effortlessly. Habits are routine and repetitive behavior. They are not instructive like hunger or thirsty. Therefore, good habit towards a task may lead students in the direction, as the saying goes "habit die hard".

It has been observed that there are different reason for loss of interest in reading: inadequate related material, if the school environment is not helpful, the school library is not conducive , pupils attraction or addiction to extra-curriculum activities (sport, movies, music, games and friends), and lack of attention may contribute to the loss of interest in general reading. However, if pupils can cross the hurdles and are assisted by their teacher and librarians to cross these hurdles, reading habits can be cultivated or developed and sustained. It is necessary to motivate pupils to read. Pupils may have a long term interest in developing the reading ; books and also provide a variety of reading material of many kinds and time spent reading, both inside and outside of school may improve pupils' reading habit.

Therefore, the researchers deemed it very important to find out the causes and consequences of poor reading habit among the primary school pupils and suggest appropriate measure to be adopted to reduce the increase rate of poor reading habit.

Statement of Problem

Poor reading habit is one of the problems that is facing pupils and the society at large. This has been on rapid increase over the years especially among primary and post primary school children. This is made known through series of report s from individuals on causes of examination malpractice, indiscipline, dropout rate in the school. This leads to the study to find out the causes and consequences of poor reading habit among the primary school pupils especially in Enugu urban area.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study is to identify the causes and consequence of poor reading habit on primary school pupils in Enugu urban area this study specifically is concerned with:

1. Finding out the causes of poor reading habit among primary school pupils
2. Ascertaining different ways poor reading habit affect the education development of a child.

Significance of the Study

This study would be useful to the following group of people: the primary school teachers; curriculum designers; and other stakeholders in education. For the fact that poor reading habit has been on rapid increase year after year, this study would tremendously help in exposing some of the factors responsible for the rise in poor reading habit among the pupils. If the poor reading habit is corrected, the present poor standard of education would actually be improved. Again, the pupils reading abilities would improve their academic performance.

Scope of the Study

The study was limited to Enugu urban area due to the large number of primary school available in it is location . The investigation concentrated on causes of poor reading habit effects and measures to minimize the consequences among the pupils.

Research Questions

What are the causes of poor reading habit among primary school pupils ?
In what ways do poor reading habit affect the education of the child?

Literature Review

Concept of poor reading habit

Poor reading habit means the decline in reading among pupils. It is inability to read and interact with a printed material. Most children with learning disabilities have problem with reading and related languages skills. Poor reading habits occurs in children and young people because reading is not considered a relevant leisure activity as it does not form part of children's social interaction and reading is considered a societal pursuit and is not attractive compared with interactive activity on the internet (Tracy, 2008). Children enjoy television and films as a way of enjoying their leisure instead of reading (Oke, 1996). Some primary school pupils show a carefree attitude towards reading. According to Lasis, (2007) this problem is not peculiar to primary schools pupils but pertains to all categories of readers. He asked a fundamental question on what books Nigeria read? His questions included whether political office holder in the country read? It was clear from the tone of the question that he feels that readings is not part of the culture of the people that control Nigerian density.

Causes of poor reading habit on primary school pupils

A reading nation is an informed nation (Fosudo, 2010). Nigeria cannot be regarded as a reading nation because the younger generation of Nigerians does not consider reading a leisure activity. This poor reading habit of primary school pupils according to Okebukola (2004) is caused by the factors such as dearth of libraries

home background and lack of adult readers as model and uncondusive learning environment.

Libraries play an important role in the promotion of reading habits since they provide access to reading materials through which school children and youths can gain and improve their reading skills. Libraries also help introduce the use of reading for information, pleasure, passing examinations, and personal growth through lifelong learning. Just as they provide materials that offer more extensive and varied information materials for other purposes than for classroom study alone. However these libraries (school and pubic) are either non-existent or not playing their expected role. Public libraries are not being established where they are needed while the few existing public libraries are neither adequately funded nor stocked with reading resources that can affect the lifes of young ones. According to Adigu and oyelude(2003) absence of libraries in our schools is a major factors responsible for the deficiency in reading skill among school pupils.

Moreover a learning environment that is conducive is a sine qua-non for minoring reading habit of pupils requires places for quiet study. Akinbabe (2007) states that a good environment is necessary to promote effective learning in primary school. Most schools are in densely populated areas, where distractions prevent the smooth flow of learning. Moreover, the illiteracy syndrome has an adverse effect on the psyche of many Nigeria citizens. Most people perceive noise to be an integral part of their culture.

Consequences of poor reading habit on primary school pupils:

Pupils with poor reading habit are likely receive poor grades at school, get easily distracted and frustrated, have behavioural problems, and seems to dislike school. According to Rubin (2002) children with poor reading habits have a higher chance of anti-social behaviour. Delinquency, school violence, bullying of hacking computers and even examination malpractice have a correlation with poor reading. This does not means that those with poor reading habits display such behavioural, while good reading habit help develop a steady and constructive mind. The degree of seriousness of delinquent act would be directly correlated to the degree of severity of reading problems. Poor reading habits bring about poor performance among primary school pupils and ultimately illiterate citizens. These could also bring about corruption in our society education system. which is drastically affecting Nigerian reading culture. In schools, for instance, many students prefer to indulge in immoral acts and examination malpractice rather than face their studies diligently. Situations like using money to buy examination grades and cheating in examination abounds. All these are due to poor reading habit among Nigeria children. Finally, poor reading habits bring about fall in standard of educational system and production of half -baked and uneducated people.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. The population consists of 5 primary schools and 200 teachers from the five selected primary school. The techniques used was random sampling and the sample consists of 2004 (two hundred) teachers from

five selected primary schools in Enugu urban. A set of questionnaire titled “Causes and Consequences of Poor Reading Habit on Primary School Pupils in Enugu

S/N	Items	SA	A	TP	%	SD	D	TN	%
A	Poor library or none at all in our primary school can cause poor reading habit	114	68	182	91.0%	10	8	18	9.0%
B	Can teachers’ method of guiding pupils to learn how to read cause poor reading	70	44	114	57.0%	46	40	86	43.0%
C	Lack of teaching resource is a major cause of poor reading habits on primary school	122	62	184	92.0%	4	12	16	8.0%
D	Unconducive learning environment is major factors that hinders proper teaching / learning of reading skills among primary pupils	138	48	184	92.0%	10	6	16	8.0%
E	Lack of adult reader as a model as model contributed poor reading habit in pupils total frequency percentage	44	74	118	59.0%	36	46	82	41.0%

In analysis of data from the table 1 above, the researchers grouped the four points; (SA)strongly agree (A)agree, (D) disagree (SD)strongly disagree into two major groups, SA and A to be agreed and D and SD to disagreed.

From the table 1 above in item A 91.0% or 182 of the respondents agreed that poor library or none at all in our primary schools can cause poor reading habit on primary school pupils. While only 9.0% or 8 disagreed. In item B of the same table, 57.0% or 114 of the respondents agreed that teachers' method of guiding to learn how to read can cause poor reading habit on pupils. While 43.0% or 86 disagreed. In item C of table 1, 92.0% or 184 of the respondent agreed that lack of teaching resources is a major cause of poor reading habit on primary school pupils while 8.0% or 16 of the respondents disagreed. In item D of the table 1, 92.0% or 184 agreed that unconducive learning environment is a major factor that hinders proper teaching/ learning of reading skills among primary school pupils while 8.0% or 16 of respondents disagreed. In item E of the same table 1, 59.0% or 118 of the respondents agreed that lack of adult reader as model contributed to poor reading habit among pupils while 41.0% or 82 of the respondent disagreed.

In summary, from the table 1 above, the respondents that responded positively have greater percentage than those that have negative responses. Therefore, from the researchers point of view, poor library or none at all in our primary school, teachers' method of guiding pupils to learn how to read, lack of teaching resources, unconducive learning environment, and lack of adult reader as a model are the major causes of poor reading habit on primary school pupils

Research question 2: How can poor reading habit affect pupils' educational achievement?

To find answer to this question, items A-E of research question 2 were analyzed on table 2

S/N	Items	SA	A	TP	%	SD	D	TN	%
A	Pupils with poor reading habit receive poor grade	120	48	168	84.0%	18	14	32	61.0%
B	Pupils with poor reading habit enjoys reading	22	12	34	17.0%	126	40	166	83.0%
C	Pupils with poor reading are easily distracted, frustrated and finally dropped out of school	40	80	120	60.0%	24	56	80	40.0%
D	Pupils with poor reading habit dislike reading and later become illiterate citizens	114	54	168	84.0%	22	10	32	16.0%
E	Pupils with poor reading habit have a higher chance of anti-social behavior such as delinquency, examination malpractice, etc	44	86	130	65.0%	48	22	70	33.0%

For the first item of table 2 above, 84.0% or 168 of the respondents agreed that pupils with poor reading habit receive poor grades at school while 16.0% or 32 of the respondents disagreed. In item B of the same table 2, 17.0% or 34 of the respondents agreed that pupils with poor reading habit enjoy reading while 83.0% or 166 of the respondents disagreed. In item C of the table 2, 60.0% or 120 firmly agreed that pupils with poor reading are easily distracted, frustrated and finally dropped out of school while 40.0% or 80 of the respondents firmly disagreed. In item D of the same table 2, 84.0% or 168 of total respondents agreed that pupils with poor reading habit dislike reading and later become illiterate citizens while 16.0% or 32 of total respondents disagreed. In item E of the same 2, 65.0% or 130 of total respondents agreed that pupils with poor reading habit have a higher chance of anti-social behavior such as delinquency, school violence, examination malpractice, while 35.0% or 70 respondent firmly disagreed. The implication to be drawn from this is that poor reading habits negatively affect the educational achievement of primary school pupils.

Discussions of Findings

Finding from the study revealed that there are many causes of poor reading habit on primary schools, which include teacher method of guiding pupils to learn how to read, lack of teaching resources, unconducive learning environment and lack of adult reader as a model. The finding is in line with Adigun and Oyelude (2003) who stated that absence of libraries in school is a factor in the deficiency in reading skills among primary school pupils. Also Odo and Ume (1975) affirmed teachers' method of guiding pupils on how to read as one of the causes of poor reading habit by stating that the use of only one method in teaching reading can not generate interest in reading, hence many pupils will grow to dislike reading. Ogbonnaya (2007) also stated that some teachers present reading lesson in boring and uninteresting manner some turn reading lessons to vocabulary lesson thereby making reading to appear difficult and frustrating. All of these affect the learners' disposition to reading and learning to read.

The study further revealed that lack of teaching resources as a major of cause of poor reading habit among primary school pupils. This was support by Ojo (1993) who asserted that inadequate use of teaching aids to large extent hinders the effective teaching and learning of reading in school. Unconducive learning environment is not left out as one of causes of poor reading habit among primary school pupils from the result gathered as the respondents were of view that teaching and learning cannot take place in unconducive environment, especially innoisy and dirty places. It is also pointed out that unconducive environment can retard the progress of pupils, teachers and the entire school. Lack of adult reader as model was also found to contribute majorly to poor reading habit on pupils. This was also supported by Henry (2004) who reported 40.0% of adult Nigerians never read a non-fiction book from cover to cover after they finish school. He also asserted that 30 million Nigerians have graduated from high school with poor reading skills.

Finally, from the observation and the analysis, all these causes listed here hinder effective development of reading skills among primary school pupils. Therefore,

the teacher, government, parents and school should come together and find a way of eradicating these causes so that proper reading skills will be developed in the pupil for sustainable development.

Conclusion

The study has shown that poor library or none at all in our primary school, teachers' method of guiding pupils to learn how to read, lack of teaching resources, unconducive learning environment and lack of adult reader as a model were the major causes of poor reading habit among primary school pupils education achievement, that receive poor grades at school, poor reading habit makes pupils in Nigeria. The study identified some measure to be adopted to reduce the increasing poor reading habit among school pupils which include equipping already existing ones, use of adequate and necessary teaching resources when teaching reading, using different strategies and methods as well as teaching and learning of reading in a conducive environment.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were made based on finding from the study

1. Government at the federal, state and local levels should provide appropriate materials for teaching reading skills
2. Government should provide libraries for our primary schools and they should resuscitate the mobile library in primary schools and make it compulsory for all pupils to register with a token provided by this mobile library
3. Government should make sure that primary schools are located in a conducive environment
4. Teachers must acknowledge the importance of reading skills and must plan an effective programme of reading instruction with a focus on promoting reading culture among pupils in their school.
5. Teacher should encourage maximum use of library and its resources by giving pupils assignment that would necessitate frequent visit to the library.
6. Teacher in primary should be encouraged to attend seminars and workshops.
7. School authorities should introduce informal education on readiness for reading non-structured reading instruction should be introduced and the child's ability to respond to the reading materials be observed.
8. School should provide the teacher with adequate teaching resources.
9. Pupils in schools where there are no libraries can be taken on excursion to libraries in other schools or in their locality

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