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READING CULTURE AS A CORRELATE OF STUDENTS' DISCIPLINE IN IMO STATE JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

BY

UNEGBU LASBREY IKECHUKWU
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL EDUCATION, NINLN,
ABA, ABIA STATE
PHONE: 08030928004

AND

OYIRIARU STELLA NGOZI
COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE SECONDARY SCHOOL EGBEMA,
OWERRI, IMO STATE
PHONE: 08033411797

AND

NWOSU JULIANA NGOZI
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION,
FEDRAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (T) UMUNZE ANAMBARA
PHONE; 08169199106

Abstract

This study investigated reading culture as a correlate of students' discipline in Imo State Junior Secondary Schools. Three research questions were posed and answered. Correlation research design was adopted in this study. Population of this study was all the 397,975 Junior Secondary School students in Imo State. A sample of 400 JSS 3 students was drawn for the study. The sample was determined using the Taro Yamen formula. Other sampling techniques employed were multi-stage: purposive, clustered and simple random sampling techniques. In the case of purposive sampling technique, the researcher purposively selected the JSS 3 students. The JSS 3 students were used because of their long stay in the schools which gave them an advantage to be able to develop one form of reading culture or the other. The research instruments used for this study included two rating scales, titled: "Students' Reading Culture Rating Scale (SRCRS)" and "Students' Discipline Rating Scales (SDRS)". The instruments were developed by the researcher after a thorough review of literature. They covered the specific purpose of the study. The instruments were in two parts, A and B. Part A of the instrument sought information on Bio-data of students while B contained item statements on the various reading cultures of the students and another on students' discipline. The instruments were validated. The reliability of instruments was established. In order to analyze the collected data, the Pearson 'r' statistic was used to answer the research questions. Findings revealed among others that there is a low positive significant correlation coefficient of relationship between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline. Parents and guardians should be encouraged to create a supportive reading environment at home by providing reading materials such as textbooks, storybooks, and newspapers, as well as allocating specific time for reading activities.

Key Words: Reading Culture, Correlate, Students' Discipline, Imo State Junior Secondary Schools

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Introduction

Education undoubtedly, provides the platform for effective acquisition of knowledge, skills, habits and values for productive living in the society. According to Nwagwu (2021) education properly articulated starts from birth and continue unto death, is aspired by the cultural foundations of the people or group/nation it seeks to serve. Education is a vital tool, and indispensible in an individual's life due to the roles that it plays in human development. It is an important part of any society because it provides self-direction, social status, worldly knowledge as well as the ability to explore.

Education is essential because it provides one the opportunity to learn in order to excel in the real world. It provides scientific, technological, social and economic advancement. According to Gbadamosi (2024), education signifies the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of a society. It is equally an indispensable tool for human process and empowerment. There are stages of education such as primary, secondary and tertiary education. These are stages that the learner is expected to pass through. However, our concern here is the secondary stage.

Secondary education is a central, intermediary and good agent of transformation of a child. It is the education that comes after the primary education, where students prepare themselves for the life ahead, either to pursue a higher education in the tertiary institution or to enter into a trade. Those wishing to pursue a higher education need to read hard in order to get good marks that can enable them to get admitted into the tertiary institutions, while those wishing to enter into a trade need to read well to get the knowledge that will enable them to face the world of life, think critically and develop self concept needed to compete favourably with others. Those at the senior secondary are already at the verge of graduating from the school, thus, they need to put in their best and read in order to achieve their future life objectives. Reading is the process of recognizing, understanding, and interpreting written or printed symbols (letters, words, and sentences) to derive meaning. It is a fundamental skill that enables communication, learning, and knowledge acquisition. According to Ogbuehi (2018) reading can be classified as 'oral reading' which implies reading aloud, helping students with pronunciation and fluency, 'silent reading' which implies reading internally for comprehension and personal understanding, 'extensive reading' which implies reading for pleasure or general knowledge (e.g., novels, magazines), 'intensive reading' which entails close reading of texts for deep understanding and critical analysis (e.g., textbooks, research papers), 'skimming' which signifies quick reading to get the main idea of a text and 'scanning' which indicates searching for specific information in a text. In any case, there is the need for development of reading culture among the students (Suds A. and Sujata, 2016).

Reading culture, however to a sociologist refers to configuration of learned and shared patterns of behavior and understanding concerning the meaning and value of things, ideas, emotions and actions. Linton as cited in Agada (2018) defines culture as the sum total of knowledge, attitude and habitual behavior pattern shared and transmitted by members of a particular society. Agada (2018) also defines reading culture as the art of inculcating reading cultures and interest in learners through conducive reading environments and copious activities. However, reading culture in this context entails the level of devotion of students towards the revision and perusal of their books in order to enhance facilitation of retention of their academic work. In this context therefore, reading culture entails the pattern and mode of a habitual manner in which the student reads his/her books. It is classified into home reading culture, group reading culture and use of library reading culture.

Home environment reading culture on the other hand, entails the structured pattern that the student follows to read his books at home. Some students prepare schedules on how to read their books at home while some ordinarily follow a particular format without drawing a written plan. In some cases, parents could urge their children to read their books at a particular period at night, during weekends or after attending to domestic chores. When this happens, the students can develop such patterns as their reading cultures at home.

Group reading culture is also another pattern in which some students indulge in reading. Sandars, (2020) maintains that some students find it more enjoyable, reading with their fellow students. This implies that such students assimilate better when reading in groups. Such students can therefore decide on patterns of indulging in reading groups in order to enjoy it more and also make optimal use of it.

Moreover, the library is a major environment utilized by many students to read. The library has been mapped out for reading and as such, many serious students tend to make use of it for their reading. Such students that have formed the habit of using the library can therefore, map out a schedule to follow in order to ensure that they use the library effectively for their reading. The use of library reading culture of the student therefore, can be explained as the mapped out schedule by the student on how to strictly ensure that they use the library effectively and discipline themselves in such ways.

Student discipline entails the rules, policies, and actions schools use to manage student behavior and maintain a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment. It includes measures to encourage positive behavior, prevent misconduct, and address violations of school rules. Student discipline equally means their conduct, level of compliance to rules and orders, their obedience, self-respect, orderliness and preparedness to be properly directed. As a matter of fact, student discipline in this context entails their conduct, level of adherence to orders as well as their comportment in the schools. The focal point of this study therefore lies basically on the influence of students reading culture on their discipline. Students have been variously reported and seen, indulging in many undisciplined behaviours. Many attributions have equally been made concerning this development. However, the most attributed is their reading culture. It has been reported that students no longer devote time for their studies through the development of good reading cultures. This therefore calls for an investigation to ascertain the relationship between the students' reading cultures and their disciplinary behaviours. The research was therefore instigated to carry out this study in order to ascertain how the reading cultures of students could influence their discipline in the secondary schools in Imo State.

Theoretically, this study is guided by self-determination theory. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a psychological framework developed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan in the year 1980. It focuses on human motivation and the conditions that enhance or undermine it. The theory suggests that people are naturally driven to grow and develop, but their environment plays a crucial role in fostering or hindering this process.

This theory is relevant to this study because it highlights that motivation can lead someone to engage in an action that can lead to his developing reading culture. It is equally relevant to this study because it emphasizes that people's environment can foster or hinder their development process. In this sense, the environment and/or pattern one chooses to read can assist or undermine his efforts. A well-developed reading culture might as well, enhance students' intrinsic motivation to learn, promoting -self-discipline and responsible behavior.

Empirically Onyenweokwu (2023) found that there is a high positive relationship between students who planned their home reading schedule and maintained it, and discipline unlike the ones that failed to plan their home reading schedule. Okoro (2023) revealed that group reading cultures of students have significant influence on students' discipline. According to Mbadire (2022), it was equally found that the majority of the students who have high discipline scored high in the use of library reading cultures inventory while most of the students without use of library reading cultures were in low cumulative average range.

Statement of the Problem

Education in Nigeria is widely acknowledged as the key instrument for national development, yet the attainment of its goals has been persistently hindered by a decline in students' reading culture and an increasing wave of indiscipline in schools. Reading culture, which refers to students' consistent habit of engaging with books and other intellectual materials, has been observed to be diminishing among junior secondary school students in Imo State. This decline is evident in students' poor performance in reading comprehension, inability to engage in independent study, and overdependence on "shortcut" methods of learning such as examination malpractice and reliance on teachers' dictations.

On the other hand, discipline, encompassing students' obedience to school rules, respect for authority, moral conduct, punctuality, and self-control—remains a critical determinant of academic success. However, cases of truancy, lateness, cult-related activities, noise-making, disobedience, and other antisocial behaviors are becoming more frequent in junior secondary schools within the state. This worrisome trend raises concerns about the overall quality of education and moral upbringing that students receive.

The situation presents an urgent need to interrogate the possible link between students' reading culture and their level of discipline. It is arguable that students who cultivate a strong reading culture may be more disciplined, as reading tends to promote patience, concentration, self-regulation, and positive value orientation. Conversely, a weak reading culture may correlate with poor discipline, as students lacking the habit of reading are more likely to indulge in distractions and deviant behaviors.

Despite the potential relationship between these two variables, little empirical attention has been paid to establishing how reading culture influences or correlates with students' discipline in the Imo State context. This gap has created uncertainty among educators, policymakers, and parents who seek practical solutions to the persistent problems of academic decline and indiscipline in secondary schools. It is against this background that this study investigates reading culture as a correlate of students' discipline in Imo State junior secondary schools, with the aim of providing insights that can contribute to improved academic and moral standards in the educational system.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate reading culture as a correlate of students' discipline in Imo State junior secondary schools. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the coefficient of correlation between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline.
2. find out the coefficient of correlation between students' group reading cultures and their discipline.
3. assess the coefficient of correlation between students' use-of-library reading cultures and their discipline.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study.

1. What is the correlation coefficient between students' home environment reading cultures and their discipline?
2. What is the correlation coefficient between students' group reading cultures and their discipline?
3. What is the correlation coefficient between students' use-of-library reading cultures and their discipline?

Method

The correlational research design was adopted in this study. The population of this study was all the 397,975 Junior Secondary School students in Imo State. The sample size for this study was 399. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yemen formula. Other sampling techniques employed were multi-stage: purposive, clustered and simple random sampling techniques. In the case of purposive sampling technique, the researcher purposively selected the JSS 3 students. The JSS 3 students were used because of their long stay in the schools which gave them an advantage to be able to develop one form of reading culture or the other. For the clustered sampling technique, the researcher selected the 400 students needed from the schools, who were already in clusters according to their classes, schools, LGAs and educational zones. The reason for this was that the research was focused on Imo State and could not be limited to a particular educational zone, LGA, school or class. In the case of random sampling technique, the students were selected in their classes through ballot boxing method. The reason for this was to give every one of them equal chance of being selected for the study. The students were therefore randomly selected from their classes. The sampled schools were presented in the Appendix. The research instruments used for this study included two rating scales. The instruments were developed by the researcher after a thorough review of literature. They covered the specific purpose of the study. The instruments were in two parts, A and B. Part A of the instrument sought information on Bio-data of students while B contained item statements on the various reading cultures of the students and another on students' discipline. The one on reading culture had three clusters, each containing ten item statements based on a particular reading culture such as: home reading culture, group reading culture and use of library reading culture. It was titled: "Students' Reading culture rating Scales (SRCRS)" The other rating scale bore item statements on the students' discipline and was titled: "Students' Discipline Rating Scales (SDRS)". The items on the rating scales were rated as follows: SA = (Strongly Agree, 4 points), A = (Agree, 3 points), D = (Disagree, 2 points), and SD = (Strongly Disagree, 1 point). The instruments were validated and their reliability determined through a trial testing. The researcher administered the instruments to twenty-five (25) other JSS 3 students of a school that was not included in the study. This school was precisely Government Secondary School, Okigwe Road, Owerri. Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient statistics was used to correlate the data and coefficients of 0.81 and 0.84 were raised. 0.81 was raised for the reliability of instrument on students' reading culture while 0.84 was raised for the one on students' discipline, indicating that the instruments were reliable. The research questions were answered with the use of Pearson 'r' statistics.

Results

Research Question One: What is the correlation coefficient between students' home environment reading cultures and their discipline?

Table 1: Summaries of Pearson "r" statistics used to explain the correlation coefficient between students' home environment reading cultures and their discipline, as responded by students

V	n	R	$\bar{x}$	r^2	DR	Remarks
STUDENTS' HOME ENVIRONMENT READING CULTURE(X)	399		32.55			Low
		0.41		16.81%	Positive	Positive
STUDENTS' DISCIPLINE(Y)	399		33.05			Relationship

V Variables, n Number of respondents, r Pearson (r), $\bar{x}$ mean, r^2 Proportion of Variance, DR Direction of Relationship and Remarks

Table 1 illustrated the summary of data used to explain the correlation coefficient between students' home environment reading cultures and their discipline. The analysis indicated a low positive relationship between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline. This proved that as the students' home environment reading culture increased, the likelihood of their discipline also increased, but to a low extent. The coefficient value of 0.41 suggested that approximately 16.81% ($r^2 = 0.1681$) of the variation in students' discipline can be attributed to their home environment reading culture, highlighting the low impact of students' home environment reading culture on their discipline. Hence, it is concluded that there is a low but positive correlation coefficient between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline.

Research Question Two: What is the correlation coefficient between students' group reading cultures and their discipline?

Table 2: Summaries of Pearson "r" statistics used to explain the correlation coefficient between students' group reading cultures and their discipline, as responded by students

V	N	r	$\bar{x}$	r^2	DR	Remarks
STUDENTS' GROUP READING CULTURE(X)			32.27			Moderate
	399	0.57		32.49%	Positive	Positive
STUDENTS' DISCIPLINE(Y)			33.05			Relationship

V Variables, n Number of respondents, r Pearson (r), $\bar{x}$ mean, r^2 Proportion of Variance, DR Direction of Relationship and Remarks

Table 2 illustrated the summary of data used to explain the correlation coefficient between students' group reading cultures and their discipline. The analysis indicated a moderate positive relationship between students' group reading culture and their discipline. This proved that as the students' group reading culture increased, the likelihood of their discipline also increased, but to a moderate extent. The coefficient value of 0.57 suggested that approximately 32.49% ($r^2 = 0.3249$) of the variation in students' discipline can be attributed

to their group reading culture, highlighting a moderate impact of students' group reading culture on their discipline. Hence, it is concluded that there is a moderate and positive correlation coefficient between students' group reading culture and their discipline.

Research Question Three: What is the correlation coefficient between students' use-of-library reading cultures and their discipline?

Table 3: Summaries of Pearson "r" statistics used to explain the correlation coefficient between students' use-of-library reading cultures and their discipline, as responded by students

V	N	r	$\bar{x}$	r^2	DR	Remarks
STUDENTS' USE-OF-LIBRARY READING CULTURE(X)	399		33.03			Very High
		0.96		92.16%	Positive	Positive
STUDENTS' DISCIPLINE(Y)	399		33.05			Relationship

V Variables, n Number of respondents, r Pearson (r), $\bar{x}$ mean, r^2 Proportion of Variance, DR Direction of Relationship and Remarks

Table 3, illustrated the summary of data used to explain the correlation coefficient between students' use-of-library reading cultures and their discipline. The analysis indicated a very high positive relationship between students' use-of-library reading culture and their discipline. This proved that as the students' use-of-library reading culture increased, the likelihood of their discipline also increased at a very high extent. The coefficient value of 0.96 suggested that approximately 92.16% (r^2 = 0.9216) of the variation in students' discipline can be attributed to their use-of-library reading culture, highlighting a very high impact of students' use-of-library reading culture on their discipline. hence, it is concluded that there is a very high and positive correlation coefficient between students' use-of-library reading culture and their discipline.

Discussion of Findings

Correlation coefficient between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline

The finding on the correlation coefficient between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline revealed that there is a low positive significant correlation coefficient of relationship between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline. This has equally shown that students' home environment reading culture lowly influences their development of discipline. In other words, it can be understood that most homes may not be conducive for students to develop constant reading culture, or to grant them the opportunity to read as they would wish.

Moreover, many students may not get enough support from parents due to their parents' busy life-style. House chores might equally distract them. Some homes might also be so noisy to distract any form of reading. Even when a home is not noisy, the noise emanating from neighbouring homes might equally distract effective reading. All these factors might therefore cause a low influence of students' home environment reading culture on their discipline. This finding is not in line with that of Onyenweokwu (2023)

which found that there is a high positive relationship between students who planned their home reading schedule and maintained it, and their discipline unlike the ones that failed to plan their home reading schedule. There could be other factors influencing this result. This could include parental support and self-determination. However, based on the finding of this study, it can be concluded that there is a low positive significant correlation coefficient of relationship between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline.

Correlation coefficient between students' group reading culture and their discipline

The finding on the correlation coefficient between students' group reading culture and their discipline revealed that there is a moderate and positive correlation coefficient between students' group reading culture and their discipline.

This has signified that students' group reading culture moderately influences their development of discipline. In other words, it has shown that most reading in group can enhance students' discipline. It can therefore be understood to mean that associating with serious minded people influences the behavior of students. It means that when students form group of readers it is most likely that they are associating with goal-driven peers. From this association, it is equally likely that such students might develop disciplined behavioiurs. This finding has corroborated that of Okoro (2023), which revealed that group reading cultures of students have significant influence on students' discipline. however, based on the finding of this study, it can be concluded that there is a moderate and positive correlation coefficient between students' group reading culture and their discipline.

Correlation coefficient between students' use of library reading culture and their discipline

The finding on the correlation coefficient between students' home environment reading culture and their discipline revealed that there is a very high and positive correlation coefficient between students' use-of-library reading culture and their discipline. This has equally shown that students' use of library reading culture influences their development of discipline very highly. In other words, it can be understood that making use of library for reading influences the disciplined behavior of students. It can be understood to mean that as the students use the library, they are learning new ways of behaving. This study is in agreement with that of Mbadire (2022) which stated that the majority of students who have high discipline scored high in the use of library reading cultures inventory while most of the students without use of library reading cultures were in low cumulative average range. In any case, it can be concluded based on the finding of this study that there is a very high and positive correlation coefficient between students' use-of-library reading culture and their discipline.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents and guardians should be encouraged to create a supportive reading environment at home by providing reading materials such as textbooks, storybooks, and newspapers, as well as allocating specific time for reading activities.

2. School administrators and teachers should promote group reading activities such as reading clubs, peer reading sessions, and literature discussion groups in junior secondary schools. These collaborative reading practices can strengthen students' interest in reading while also fostering discipline through peer interaction, cooperation, and shared academic responsibility.

3. Government, school authorities, and educational stakeholders should strengthen and adequately equip school libraries with current and diverse reading materials and ensure that students regularly use them.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is hereby concluded that home environment reading culture of students has low positive relationship with students' discipline, group reading culture of students has moderate positive relationship with students' discipline while students use of library reading culture has very high positive relationship with students' discipline.

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