

Influence of Information Service and Teachers Gender on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students In Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of information services and teachers gender on the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. A research question and a research hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. It was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and was carried out in all the 45 public secondary schools in Agabni Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The population for the study consisted of all the 1462 teachers currently serving in the 45 public secondary schools in the study area. Proportional random sampling technique was used to select 146 teachers for the study. A self structured instrument called Information Service and Academic Performance Scale (ISAPS) with 16 items and a 4- point response scale was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was face validated by 3 experts and its internal consistency ascertained using Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. A coefficient of .65 was obtained. 146 copies of ISAPS was administered to the 146 respondents but the researcher and her assistants were able to retrieve 121 copies. Mean, Standard deviation and grand mean was used to answer the research the research question while t-test statistic was used to test the research hypothesis. It was found that that information services influence the academic performance of secondary school students to a great extent. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that information on educational, vocational and personal-social matters be made available to secondary school students.

Keywords: Information Service, Teacher Gender, Academic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Information service involves the collection, collation, analysis, synthesis and utilization of facts and information in assisting students to have valid and reliable knowledge of the educational, vocational and personal-social opportunities in their localities. It enables students to understand, accept and utilize their abilities, aptitudes, interest in relating to their aspiration. Information service contributes a lot to the academic performance of students in their academic pursuit if well channeled. Academic performance 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. According to Annie, [1], academic performance is the outcome/extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. [2], defined academic performance as student's success in meeting short or long term goals in education in the big picture according to the authors, academic performance means completing high school or earning a college degree. [3], looked at students' academic performance as referring to a students' strong performance in a given academic area. A student who earns good grades or awards in science has achieved in the academic field of science. He further stated that educational associations and schools monitor the overall level of student academic performance to decide what, if any challenges, need to be made in the educational system. To do this correctly, all stakeholders in the education industry must provide the school community with the much needed related, relevant and current information. This is rendered in schools as a guidance service. Information services have the aim of providing students with better knowledge of educational, vocational and social opportunities that can be used to make better and well informed decisions. In secondary schools, students need at all times to make and take decisions about their education, career, social life and how to improve academically. [4] and [5] observed that students need information related to how to pass their examination, make use of the library, develop and have good rapport with their teachers and their colleagues, knowledge of subjects and academic qualifications required to excel in life. Teachers must use appropriate and effective instructional methods so that students can easily transfer what is taught in school and apply it to solve problems in real life. The question is whether teachers and school counsellors inform their students about how to do their assignment, how to revise their note on time and reward or motivate the students' to learn?

[6] stated that information service is designed to help each student to adjust to his/her environment, develop the ability to set realistic goals for himself, and improve his/her

total educational programme. [7] held that students need proper information about the various educational opportunities (use of the library, doing their assignment, preparing for classes etc, and psychological conditions of the society for judicious and effective decision. When all this qualities as noted above are put into practice by individual students, it will definitely enhance their academic performance. He was of the view that lack of or inadequate information may lead the students to incoherent and unrealistic decision or choices. The resultant effect will lead to poor academic performance. He stressed that information service is a vital part of an organized school service for these three reasons: It is fundamental if students are to be equipped with the basic, knowledge needed to think through important personal issues with which they are confronted such as, extent of education, choice of occupation and maintenance of individuality. It is fundamental if students are to become or be self-regulatory. It is fundamental if students are to explore and become aware of the contingencies of stability and change that mark their development. For [8], information service is a vital aspect of administrative services especially now that the society is growing more complex than ever before. She maintained that the complexity of the society enlarges the scope of information needed by students; hence emphasis therefore should be on intensifying the amount of information made available to students on educational, occupational and personal-social information so as to determine the quality of decisions students make. Information service can be implemented according to [9] through the development of files on occupational, educational, personal-social and collection of relevant data.

On the issue of information services and teacher gender, [10], opined that a teacher must be a good listener, available, approachable and a viable source of information, paying adequate attention to student activities and trustworthy in performing their roles to yield a highly effective returns capable of igniting a spark in the classroom. [3], noted that most of the persistence problems and complications that bedeviled classroom management arises from either lack of information and poor capacity for information management. [3], held

that female teachers pay more attention to student activities and are capable of igniting a spark in the classroom because of their mothering and caring nature than their male colleagues who sometimes, their aggressive nature repels students. These no doubt influence secondary school student academic performance both in the short and long run. It is therefore expedient to ascertain the influence of information services and teachers gender on the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

This research question was raised to guide the study

- (i) To what extent does information services influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

This research hypothesis was formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

- (i) There is no significance difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the influence of information services on the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

METHODS

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. [11], held that using the descriptive surveys research design the researcher collects peoples vies, opinions, attitude and suggestions and uses them to describe the nature of existing conditions. He added that descriptive surveys are useful for educational fact-finding and provide a great deal of information that is accurate. The descriptive research design is most suitable for this study because it permits the collection of original data and describes the condition as they exist in their natural setting.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in all the 45 public secondary schools in Agbani Education Zone. Agbani Education Zone, Enugu State, Nigeria is one of the six (6) Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The other zones are Enugu, Awgu, Nsukka, Obollo-Afor and Udi. Agbani Education Zone covers the activities of secondary education in three (3) Local Government Areas- Enugu South, Nkanu East, and Nkanu West; out of the 17 Local Government Areas in the State. Agbani Education zone shares boundaries in the North with Enugu zone; in the East with Awgu zone; in the West with Udi Education Zone and in the South with Obollo-Affor.

Population for the Study

The population for the study consisted of the 1462 teachers currently serving in the 45 public secondary schools in Agbani Education Zone (Source: Planning, Research and Statistics Department, Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB), Enugu. 2015 Enugu State Annual Schools Census).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study is 146 teachers. The proportionate random sampling technique was adopted for the study. The three Local Government Areas that make up Agbani Education Zone-Enugu South, Nkanu East and Nkanu West were each regarded as a cluster. Through proportionate random sampling 15 secondary schools were drawn from Enugu South, while 19 were drawn from Nkanu East and finally 11 were drawn from Nkanu West Local Government Area. To ensure that a representative sample was chosen in accordance with [5], 10% of the population was drawn, thus, giving the sample of teachers 146 teachers. This, the researcher used to collect the much needed data for the study as respondents.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire developed by the researchers called 'Information Service and Academic Performance Scale' (ISAPS). The questionnaire is divided into two sections: Section A and B. Section A contains 2 items on the respondents bio data, while section B has 6- items which helped to raise data that was used to answer the research question raised to guide the study. The instrument has a 4-point response format of Very great extent (VGE), Great extent (GE), Little Extent (LE), and Very little extent (VLE). Each response option has a numeral value assigned to it as follows VGE -4, GE -3, LE -2, and VLE -1. The respondents were requested to tick the options that best match their options on each items. An introductory letter stating the reasons for the study was attached to the instrument for the respondents.

Validation of the Instrument

To ascertain the face validity, the researchers gave the instrument to 3 experts, one (1) in measurement and Evaluation and one (1) in Educational Management and one from guidance and counselling all from Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. The researchers requested the experts to review the items in terms of clarity, appropriateness of language used and appropriateness of instruction to the respondents. Their constructive criticisms were utilized in designing the final draft of the instrument. Finally 3 items were restructured, and modified, 1 new ones was introduced while 1item was discarded. See Appendix G

Reliability of the Instrument

In order to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument, the researcher used the Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate. The researcher conducted a trial test using 15 teachers from Udi Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. This served as a similar

population for the study. During the trial test, the researchers administered the instrument once to the respondents with an introductory letter acquitting them with the rationale for the study. The respondents were assured of complete confidentiality of all the information that they supplied. As a result of the nature of their academic load, they were given time to fill the copies of the instrument and so appointments were booked for collection at a later date. Finally, the researchers were able to collect 12 copies of the instrument signifying 80% return of the distributed copies of the questionnaire. As a result of the fact that the instrument has a cluster, a reliability coefficient of .65 was obtained. This the researcher considered high enough and so used it to collect the data for the main study.

Method of Data Collection

The instrument was administered directly to the 146 respondents with the help of three research assistants who are the three Supervising principals in Agbani Education zone in-charge of the 3 Local Government areas that make up Agbani Education Zone, of Enugu State, Nigeria. Their choice is informed by the fact that they have been working with the respondents and so know them well and so will be willing and ready to open up and give reliable information for the successful carrying out of the study. One research assistant covered each of the Local Government Area where he/she works. The research assistants were trained in a one- day consultative meeting during which the researchers acquainted them with the purpose of the study and explained to them how to administer and collect the questionnaire. Finally the researchers and their research assistants were able to retrieve 121 copies of the questionnaire, signifying 82.88% return of duly filled copies of the administered instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

The research questions were answered using mean, standard deviation and grand mean. Nominal values were assigned to different scaling statement as follows; Very great extent (VGE)-4 points, Great extent (GE)--3 points, Little Extent (LE)--2 points, Very little extent (VLE)—1 point

A cut-off was determined by finding the mean of nominal values assigned to the options in each questionnaire items using the formula;

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

Where \bar{x} = mean score

X = the Assigned Nominal Value

N=Number of items

Thus.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.50$$

The null hypothesis was tested using t-test statistic at .05 level of significance and a degree of freedom ($n_1 - n_2 - 2$). From this, the researcher made the required inferences based on the data that were analyzed for the study

Decision Rule

For the research question the decision rule is that any item with mean score of 2.50 and above was regarded as 'great extent' and item below 2.5 was regarded as 'little extent'.

For the null hypotheses, the decision rule is that if the critical t-value is greater than or equal to the t-table value at a given degree of freedom ($n_1 + n_2 - 2$), the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected, if on the other hand the calculated t-value is less than the value of the t-critical from the table, then the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Research Question 1

To what extent does information service influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria

Table 2: Mean Rating of the Extent to which Information Services Influence the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

s/n	To what extent does Decision Information service influence the academic performance of secondary school students	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	\bar{x}	SD	
1	Listening Skills	99	10	7	5	3.67	0.76	GE
2	Develop the ability to set realistic goals for himself	87	19	9	6	3.54	0.83	GE
3	Decision Skills	12	27	39	43	2.06	0.98	LE
4	They Informed the students of the benefit for doing their assignment on time	73	31	13	4	3.42	0.81	GE
5	Inform the students on the need to revise their note on time and reward or motivate the students' to learn	57	39	21	4	3.23	0.85	GE
6	They provide Information on the need for students to prepare for classes	61	47	11	2	3.38	0.72	GE
N= 121		Grand Mean				3.21		GE

Table 1 shows that of the 6 items on the extent to which information service influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The respondents agreed with 5 items 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 as they recorded mean scores of (3.67, 3.54, 3.42, 3.23 and 3.38) which are above the cut-off point of 2.50. They however disagreed with 1 of the items (3) with a mean score of (2.06). The standard deviation for all the items are small signifying that there is homogeneity in the responses of the respondents. The table also shows that the respondents grand mean score is 3.21. From the foregoing, the data raised indicated that listening skills, ability to set realistic goals, information on the ability of students to benefit for doing their assignment on time, by informing the students on the need to revise their note on time and reward or motivate the students' to learn and providing information on the need for students to prepare for classes influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent. Based on the decision rule for the interpretation of the respondents data, the answer to research question 1 is that information service influences the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent.

Research Hypothesis 2

There is no significance difference between the mean ratings the male and female teachers on the influence of information services on the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Table 2: t-test Result of the Mean Rating of Male and Female Teachers on the Influence of Information Services on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Female Teachers	15	3.21	0.21	119	0.93	NS ± 1.96	Do not reject H_{01}
Male Teachers	46	2.59	0.37				

Significant at $P < .05$, $df = 119$, critical t-value = ± 1.96

The t-test analysis in table 2 above indicates that the calculated t- value is 0.93 while the critical t-value is ± 1.96 at .05 level of significance. This implies that the calculated t-value is less than the critical t- value. Thus, there is no significance difference between the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the influence of information services on the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Discussions of Findings

The research question sought to influence of information service on the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The result in Table 1 showed information services influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria to a great extent. The research hypothesis tried to ascertain if there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the influence of information service on the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria. The analysis of the t-test comparison according to Table 2 showed that the computed t (0.93) is less than the critical t-value (± 1.96) at .05 level of significance. Thus, going by the decision rule, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female teachers on the influence of information service on the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu

State, Nigeria. The findings is in line with the findings of [6], [7] who opined that students need information related to how to pass their examination, make use of library, have good rapport with their teachers and their colleagues and academic qualifications requirement to excel in life. In the same line of thought [4], stated that information service is designed to help each student to adjust to his/her environment, develop the ability to set realistic goals for himself, and improve his/her total educational programme. [3] held that students need proper information about the various educational opportunities (use of library, doing their assignment, preparing for classes etc, and psychological conditions of the society for judicious and effective decision. On the issue of information services and teacher genders on the academic performance of secondary school students, [6], held that female teachers pay more attention to student activities and are capable of igniting a spark in the classroom because of their mothering and caring nature than the male colleagues who sometimes their aggressive nature repels students.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, listening skills, ability to set realistic goals, information on the ability of students to benefit for doing their assignment on time, by informing the students on the need to revise their note on time and reward or motivate the students' to learn and providing information on the need for students to prepare for classes are informational services that influences the academic performance of secondary school students in Agbani Education Zone of Enugu State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommended that

- (i) information on educational, vocational and personal-social matters be made available to secondary school students

- (ii) seminars should be organized for school counsellors to acquaint them with up-to-date information that will assist students in their educational pursuits

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