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Reading and Study Habits among Secondary School Students during COVID-19 Lock-down in Ondo City

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Abstract

The study is on the reading and study habits of secondary students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City. The study employs survey research design and questionnaire instrument was used to elicit responses from 200 respondents. Five research questions were formulated and the answers were provided through statistical mean. Findings reveal that the reading habit of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city was good, but the study habit was poor, diverse materials were used for studying, home was used mostly for study and house chores and insufficient data were the major challenges. The study concludes that students of secondary schools had positive reading habit but the study habit was poor during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City. Students used diverse materials for studying and mostly study at home during Covid-19 lockdown. House chores and insufficient data were the major challenges confronting the students of secondary schools during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city. Recommendations: the positive reading habit of the secondary schools students at home during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City should be sustained, library should make adequate provisions for students to access the diverse information resources without undermining the Covid-19 protocol via remote services and parents should reduce house chores to allow for quality time for students to read and study at home.

Keywords: Reading and study habits, secondary school students, COVID-19 lock down, Ondo city

Introduction

Coronavirus, popularly called COVID-19 is a pandemic that caught the world unprepared as evidence in getting appropriate drugs for prevention and treatment of the infections. It has caused untold hardship and damages to many people that may take a long time and many years to recover. The disease has had far reaching effects on all spheres of life. These ranges from education, medical, religion, social life and economic activities. Nigeria, like other nations of the world was badly hit by the outbreak and the spread of coronavirus. The first case of COVID-19 disease in Nigeria was recorded on the 27th of February, 2020. The index case was reported in Ogun State which shares border with Lagos State. The rising cases continued in Lagos State, Ogun State and many other parts in Nigeria, Consequently, the Federal Government of Nigeria devised some measures to contain the spread of the virus. One of the measures is the 'national lockdown' which was binding on all the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria. The lockdown was a measure the federal government used to prevent the movement of people and vehicular movement all over the country for certain period of times which were review over and over in response to continued increase number of cases recorded daily. Compelling people to stay indoor/ at home for a long time could alter a lot of activities and practices. Reading and study is one of these activities. Reading and study studying are critical activities of students which may be affected by the lockdown.

Reading is the mental process of securing and reacting to an author's message represented by written or printed symbols. To read one must recognise words, know the meaning of words, understand the ideas expressed by authors, sense the mood and tone of selection, evaluate the accuracy of the ideas and learned to use or apply them (Pawar, 2007). Reading is not limited to the activity of reading as it is the process of learning and perceiving knowledge from written words. Reading develops the cognitive abilities. The cognitive means the intellectual powers of understanding. "Reading involves meta cognition. Meta cognition is a higher order of cognition, where an individual can use the constructed knowledge in mind to evaluate and categorize the new information because information enters the mind in random order. When reading becomes a habit is it referred to as reading habit. Reading habit is a behaviour which makes an individual to read a book or other information carrier for knowledge or entertainment or just to pass the time" (Sherly, 2011). Reading habit enhances the competencies of comprehension and increases

vocabulary. Reading habit increases intellectual skills helps in producing ideas and evokes them to think. Regular reading (reading habit) enhances creativity as it develops the imagination, increases interest and provides information from all around the world.

Study habit is the students' ability to manage time and other resources to accomplish an academic task. It refers to the amount and kind of studying routines which a student or learner used during regular period of studying especially in a conducive environment. It is a study routine, including but not limited to frequent of study session, review of material, self-testing rehearsal of learned information material and studying in an environment conducive to learning (Crede and Kuneel, 2008). It is a regular pattern in approaching a study task. Study habit is intended to elicit and guide learner's cognitive process during learning. Therefore, study habit is an essential element for the development of personality and intellectual capacities of students.

COVID-19 lockdown and education

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that range from the common cold to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recent coronavirus (sometimes referred to as the novel coronavirus) is called COVID-19, and was first detected in Wuhan, China in December of 2019. Since its first cases in China, COVID-19 has spread to almost every country of the world. According to the World Health Organization, 167,515 global cases were reported, including 6,606 deaths, as of March 16, 2020. There is currently little literature on COVID-19 in relation to educational studies. The majority of available literature were directly related to medical studies (Kraemer *et al.*, 2020; Wu & McGoogan, 2020; Zu *et al.*, 2020). This does not mean that education is not directly affected by the effect of the COVID-19 epidemic but rather because studies in education rarely incorporate effects of disease on the effective provision of education to learners across the globe.

Efforts by public and private organisation to stem the spread of COVID-19 through non-pharmaceutical interventions and preventive measures such as social-distancing and self-isolation have prompted the widespread closure of primary, secondary, and tertiary education over the world. Previous outbreaks of infectious diseases have prompted widespread school closures around the world, with varying levels of effectiveness (Simon, 2020; Barnum, 2020; Frieden, 2020). Mathematical modeling has shown that transmission of an outbreak may be delayed by closing schools in and outside of Nigeria. However, effectiveness of school closure depends on the contacts children maintain outside of school (Zumla, Yew and Hui, 2010).

School closures may be effective when enacted promptly. If school closure occurs late relative to an outbreak, it may have less effect and may not have any impact at all (Simon, 2020; Barnum, 2020). Additionally, in some cases, the reopening of schools after a period of closure may result in increased infection rates (Jackson et al., 2013). The authors stated that as the closures tend to occur concurrently with other interventions such as public gathering bans, it can be difficult to measure the specific impact of school closures.

Formal education and COVID-19

A 1974 report by the World Bank defined formal education as the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded 'education system', running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialised programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training. The majority of data collected on the number of students and learners impacted by COVID-19 have been calculated based on the closure of formal education systems. The UNESCO Institute for statistics provides figures on students impacted by COVID-19 corresponding to the number of learners enrolled at preprimary, primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary levels of education [ISCED levels 0 to 3], as well as at tertiary education levels [ISCED levels 5 to 8].

Early childhood educational programmes are usually designed for children below the age of 3 and may refer to preschools, nursery schools, kindergartens, and some day care programmes. While many primary and secondary schools have closed around the world due to COVID-19, measures impacting early childhood educational programmes have varied. In some countries and territories, preschools and day cares are considered necessary services and have not closed in tandem with broader school closure measures. In the United States, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families encouraged child care and early learning centres to stay open. Some school districts may offer alternative child care options, prioritising the children of first responders and healthcare workers. The governor of Maryland mandated that specific child care services remain open for the children of emergency personnel while Washington State and California have left it to the discretion of care providers (Oyefusi, 2020). California Governor Gavin Newsom explained his state's position, saying "We need our child care facilities, our daycare centers, to operate to absorb the impact of these school closures." Colorado has encouraged the development of "tool kits" for parents to use at home to emulate the lessons children would have received in their early learning programmes. In Japan, Prime

Minister Shinzo Abe closed all schools throughout the country until April 8, however, children's daycare facilities were excluded. In early March, five adults associated with a nursing facility for preschool children in Kobe tested positive for coronavirus. After testing over one hundred children at the facility, a preschool student was found to be carrying the virus (Harding and Inagaki, 2020).

Primary or elementary education typically consists of the first four to seven years of formal education. The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) canceled the examinations for its Diploma Programme and Career-related Programme candidates scheduled between 30 April and 22 May 2020, reportedly affecting more than 200,000 students worldwide. The IBO stated that it would award candidates their diplomas or certificates based on their coursework and the established assessment expertise, rigour, and quality control already built into the programme (Lee, 2020). Tertiary education, also known as higher education, refers to the non-compulsory educational levels that follow completion of secondary school or high school. Tertiary education is normally taken to include undergraduate and postgraduate education, as well as vocational education and training. Individuals who complete tertiary education generally receive certificates, diplomas, or academic degrees. Undergraduate education is education conducted after secondary education and prior to postgraduate education, for which the learner is typically awarded a bachelor's degree. Students enrolled in higher education programs at colleges, universities, and community colleges are often referred to as "college students" in countries such as United States. The closure of colleges and universities has widespread implications for students, faculty, administrators, and the institutions themselves. Colleges and universities across the United States have been called upon to issue refunds to students for the cost of tuition and room and board (Jesse, 2020; Korn and Belkin, 2020).

COVID-19 and reading and study habits of students

School closures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have shed a light on numerous issues affecting access to education. As of March 12, more than 370 million children and youth were not attending school because of temporary or indefinite country wide school closures mandated by governments in an attempt to slow the spread of COVID19 (Simon, 2020; Barnum, 2020). As of 29 March, nearly 90% of the world's learners were impacted by closures. Even when school closures are temporary, it carries high social and economic costs. The disruptions they cause affect people across communities, but their impact was more severe for disadvantaged

children and their families including interrupted learning, compromised nutrition, childcare problems and consequent economic cost to families who cannot work. Working parents are more likely to miss work when schools close in order to take care of their children, incurring wage loss in many instances and negatively impacting productivity. Localised school closures place burdens on schools as parents and officials redirect children to schools that are open.

Distance Learning: In response to the pandemic, many schools resorted to online distance learning via platforms like Zoom. The zooming platform did not completely solve the problems the pandemic posed on education. For instance, there is unequal access to technology.

Unequal access to technology or fast, reliable internet access can prevent students in rural areas and from disadvantaged families. Lack of access to technology or good internet connectivity is an obstacle to continued learning, especially for students from disadvantaged families. In response to school closures caused by COVID-19, UNESCO recommends the use of distance learning programmes and open educational applications and platforms that schools and teachers can use to reach learners remotely and limit the disruption of education. To aid in slowing the transmission of COVID-19, hundreds of libraries have temporarily closed. The wealth of information resources and conducive reading space provided in the library were put to halt. In the United States, numerous major cities announced public library closures, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, and New York City, 221 libraries were affected by the closure. For students without internet at home, this increases the difficulty of keeping up with distance learning (UNESCO, 2020; Hauck and Stanglin, 2020). Another factor is access to educational resources

Access to educational resources and exceptions to copyright can also have an impact on the ability of students to access the textbooks and materials they need to read and study. Several initiatives were taken to grant that students and teachers can have access to open educational resources, or understand copyright limitations. The International Council for Open and Distance Education issued a special website to provide webinars, tips for online teaching and resources for teachers. In New Zealand, a group of publishers agreed to allow for virtual public readings of their materials from libraries and classrooms. A similar agreement took place in Australia, where the Australian Publishers Association, the Australian Library and Information Association and the Australian Society of Authors agreed on a set of exceptional measures to allow libraries to

provide educational content. The Australian organization AMCOS agreed to give a gratis license for all their music sheets to all schools across Australia.

An advocacy organization in Netherlands launched a website to allow teachers use free-licensed music and video for their classes. The Maricopa Millions OER Project launched a special emergency fund for building open educational resources. A coalition of over 500 civil society organizations and individuals issued a letter to Francis Gurry, Director of the World Intellectual Property Organization, asking, among other things, a special set of limitations and exceptions to copyright for the duration of the pandemic.

It is vital to know that staying at home for a long time as a result of pandemic could alter activities like reading and study habits of students. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the reading and studying habits of secondary school students during lockdown in Ondo City.

Statement of the problem

COVID-19 has caused anxiety, depression and panic disorder. All of these couple with the restriction movement occasioned by the lockdown, may influence reading and study habits of secondary school students in Ondo city. Literature has shown that the psychological state of learners during the lockdown is not balance; hence there may be possibility that it would have an influence on the reading and study habits of Secondary School students in Ondo city. Moreover, reading can serve as a source of entertainment and information. Nevertheless, it requires a psychologically balanced person to read and study. The anxiety during the lockdown is understood but how it influences reading and study habits of Secondary School students in Ondo city is unknown. This makes it important to investigate the influence of COVID -19 on reading and study habits Secondary School students in Ondo city. Extant literature has shown that students with poor reading and study habits get poor scores in examinations, get effortlessly distracted and eventually drop out from school. While poor reading and study habits can be instrumental to failure of students in academic endeavour, good reading and study habits could lead to students' academic success. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the influence of COVID-19 lockdown on reading and study habits of Secondary School students in Ondo city.

Objective of the study

The objective of the study is to find out the influence of COVID-19 lockdown on reading and study habits of Secondary School students in Ondo city. The specific objectives are to find out:

- i. reading habit of secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city.
- ii. study habit of secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city.
- iii. reading materials of secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city.
- iv. place of study of secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city.
- v. challenges confronting reading and study habits of students of secondary schools during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city.

Research questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the reading habit of secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city?
2. What is the study habit of secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city?
3. What are the reading materials used by the secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city?
4. Where do the secondary school students study during the COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city?
5. What are the challenges confronting the reading and study habits of secondary school students during the COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city?

Research methodology

The study employed survey research design. This is because a survey research design enables the researcher to gather relatively limited data from relatively large cases. A survey research design is one in which group of people or items are studied by collecting and analysing data from people or items considered being representative of the entire group. The choice of survey research design is informed by the fact that the study has wide scope and which allows a great deal of information to be obtained from large population that is geographically dispersed.

The population of the study consisted of 200 students of selected secondary school students in Ondo City. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 200 students from 2000 students of the selected secondary schools in Ondo City. The instrument used for this study was questionnaire. It has sub-scales that covered the research questions. The subscales were validated and the total validity is 0.83

Research Question 1: What is the reading habit of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City?

Table 1. Reading habit of secondary school students during covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (\bar{x}) A	Mean (\bar{x}) D
1	I read at home every day before break fast	79	91	18	12	3.4	0.6
2	I read at home after break fast	25	56	71	48	1.62	2.38
3	I read at home at night	29	38	69	64	1.34	2.66
4	I read occasionally	45	59	43	53	2.08	1.92
5	I do not read at all	33	47	60	60	1.6	2.4

Key: 4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Strongly Disagree, 1= Disagree

Table 1 reveals the reading habit of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City. It can be deduced that the reading habit of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city is good.

Research Question 2: What is the study habit of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City?

Table 2: Study habit of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (\bar{x}) A	Mean (\bar{x}) D
1	I study without access to textbooks.	51	52	41	56	2.06	1.94

2	I do not have access to study materials while studying at home.	38	33	54	75	1.42	2.58
3	I study without access to study aids.	44	62	45	49	2.12	1.88
4	I prefer to memorize study materials.	55	71	37	37	2.52	1.48
5	I do not take notes while studying.	21	28	85	66	0.98	3.02

Key: 4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Strongly Disagree, 1 = Disagree

Table 2 shows the study habit of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City. It can be inferred that the study habit of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City is poor.

Research Question 3: What are the Materials used for studying by secondary school student during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo City?

Table 3: Materials used for studying by secondary school student during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo City

S/N	Items.	VO	O	R	N	Mean (\bar{x})	Mean (\bar{x})
1	Textbooks.	67	57	34	42	2.48	1.52
2	Internet sources.	111	40	33	16	3.02	0.98
3	Library resources.	47	56	63	24	2.06	1.94
4	Audio visual resources.	62	57	33	48	2.38	1.26
5	E-books.	55	72	30	43	2.54	1.46

Key: Rarely (R) = 1, Never (N) = 2, Often (O) = 3, Very Often (VO) = 4

Table 3 indicates the materials used for studying by secondary school student during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo City. The table reveals that secondary school students used diverse materials for studying during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city.

Research Question 4: What are the places of study by secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city?

Table 4: Place of study by secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city

S/N	Statements	VO	O	R	N	Mean (\bar{x})	Mean (\bar{x})
1	At home.	130	53	8	9	3.66	0.34
2	Library.	17	33	60	90	1	3

3	My friend home.	41	47	46	66	1.76	2.24
4	My uncle's house.	59	40	72	29	1.98	2.02
5	Anywhere I find my self	52	53	30	65	2.1	1.9

Key: Rarely (R) = 1, Never (N) = 2, Often (O) = 3, Very Often (VO) = 4

Table 4 shows the place of study by secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city. The table reveals that secondary school students mostly study at home during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city.

Research Question 5: What are the Challenges confronting reading and studying habit of secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo City?

Table 5: Challenges confronting reading and study habits of secondary school students during COVID-19 lockdown in Ondo city

S/N	Statements.	SA	A	D	SD	Mean (\bar{x})	Mean (\bar{x})
1.	My parents are not educated.	14	34	48	104	0.96	3.04
2.	House chores.	60	63	37	40	2.46	1.54
3.	There is no money to buy data.	47	29	65	59	1.52	2.48
4.	Erratic power supply hindered my reading and studying habit.	57	40	59	44	1.94	2.06
5.	I do not have an android phone to connect to the internet.	37	41	53	69	1.56	2.44

Table 5 indicates the challenges confronting reading and study habits of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city. The table shows that there were few challenges confronting reading and studying habits of secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City.

Conclusion

Students of secondary schools had positive reading habit but the study habit was poor during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City. Secondary school students used diverse materials for studying and mostly study at home during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city. House chores and insufficient data were the major challenge confronting the secondary school students during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo city.

Recommendations

1. Students of secondary schools read at home during Covid-19 lockdown in Ondo City; this should be sustained.
2. Students have access to textbook to study at home, this should be sustained.
3. Students do not have access to library resources. The library should make adequate provisions for students to access the diverse information resources without undermining the Covid-19 protocol via remote services.
4. Parents should reduce the house chores for their children to allow for quality time for reading and study at home.
5. Parents should buy android phones and data for their children to enable them access the internet for wealth of information resources available for reading and study.

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