

## Comparative Study of the Reading Habit of Boarding and Day Secondary School Students in Osogbo, Osun State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The study was carried out in some secondary schools in Osogbo, Osun state, Nigeria. The secondary schools were chosen using multi stage random sampling method, 5 of the schools were day school while the remaining 5 were boarding schools. A total number of 120 questionnaires were administered to 60 boarding students and 60 day students. Among many of the information collected were personal characteristics of the students, assessment of students' reading habit and the influence of student reading on their academic performance. Results and discussion were presented using frequency counts, percentages. Pearson correlation analysis and T-test were used to test the hypothesis. The study revealed almost equal percentages of male and female students in all the secondary schools selected and they were mostly between the ages of 11-15 years. Most of the boarding students read regularly because they have scheduled time for reading in their curriculum, they sometimes use library and library books. Day students read occasionally especially during examination. In their academic performances, boarders are above average while day students are below average. The students affirmed that reading has positive influence on academic performance. Environmental influence, parental influence, peer pressure, school curriculum and teachers influence are some of the factors militating against better reading habits. Parents and teachers alike are encouraged to train the mind of our youth towards reading and reduce their home and school chores.

**Key words:** Secondary school, boarding, day, students, reading habits, academic performance

### INTRODUCTION

The National Policy on Education that was revised in 1981, identified library as one of most important aspect of education services in Nigeria and that the ratio of books per student/pupils should be minimum of 4:1 and a minimum of 5 books per subject (Federal Ministry of Education and Youth Development, 1992).

Reading skills no doubt is the most essential tool to function successfully in information and knowledge-based society, it equips student with life-long learning and developing the imagination that enables them live a responsible life. Studies have shown that reading and writing abilities grow as they are experienced at a level where success through practice is insured (Sanacore, 1990). Adams *et al.* (1998) stated that reading and writing need to be learned and practiced early in life and repeatedly, so that they become authentic and useful for life. Without any doubt, reading activity requires strong and efficient skill and the only way to acquire this important skill is through extensive reading.

Reading habits is a culture that must be developed early through a well planned library collection. Also Anderson (1982) affirmed that apart from sitting down to read regularly, student still need a role model that is very competent, effective and efficient in the teaching of reading. Fayose (1978) hinted that the value of book as a medium of learning in terms of understanding depends on the reading skills employed in the use of the books.

However in Nigeria, there are so many factors influencing the ability to cultivate the skill of reading. Ozmert *et al.* (2005) emphasized the importance of environmental influence as a major factor in the development of students' reading potentials. The environment of most children is not conducive for reading; it is in the light of this that some prefer their children to go to boarding school for proper discipline and to inculcate better reading habit (Greaney, 1986). Kaufman (2007) opined that watching home video have negative influence on student reading habit. In his own opinion, Otong (2002) affirmed that lack of adequate library materials hinder the reading habit of student and

that the most pathetic part is that even teachers that are to be role model to student have limited ideas about how to develop a good reading habits.

Since reading and general literacy skill are strongly related to economic success and educational achievement (Laitsc, 2005) the study therefore compare the reading habit of day and boarding secondary students in Osogbo metropolis and their academic performance.

Therefore the objectives of the study are to:

- Describe the personal characteristics of day and boarding students.
- Assess the reading habit of day and boarding students.
- Compare the academic performance of day and boarding students.
- Examine factors affecting the reading habit of the respondents.

**Hypothesis:** There is no significance difference between the academic performance of day student and boarding students.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study was carried out in some secondary schools in Osogbo, Osun state, Nigeria. The 10 secondary schools were chosen using multi stage random sampling method, 5 of the schools were day school while the remaining five were boarding schools and two students were selected from each class i.e., from JSS 1-SSS 3. A total number of 120 questionnaires were administered to 60 boarding students and 60 day students. Among many of the information collected were personal characteristics of the students, assessment of students' reading habit and the influence of student reading on their academic performance. After collation, sorting and consideration for error of omission and non-response, the data from the survey were analyzed and discussed. Results and discussion were presented using frequency counts, percentages. Pearson correlation analysis and T-test were used to test hypothesis one.

Pearson correlation coefficient (r) formula hypothesis two:

$$r = \frac{n\sum XY - \sum X \sum Y}{\sqrt{n\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2} \sqrt{n\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2}}$$

Where

X = Academic performance of day (secondary school) students.

Y = Academic performance of boarding (secondary school) students.

n = Number of respondents.

Σ = Summation sign.

T -test was also used to test the significance of r

With the formular

$$t_c = r \frac{\sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$$

Where:

r = Correlation between the variables

n = Number of respondents

t<sub>c</sub> = t-calculated

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In Table 1, the study identified equal percentages of male and female students in all the secondary schools selected and they were mostly between the ages of 11-15 years, for instance 50 and 67% of day and boarding students respectively were within the age range. Larger percentage of the students were in the lower classes, therefore they did all the subjects, this situation applied to 42% of the day students and 50% of the boarding students.

Table 1: Percentage distribution of the students by their personal characteristics

Variable	Day students		Boarding students	
	No.	%	No.	%
Sex				
Male	30	50.0	32	53.3
Female	30	50.0	28	46.7
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0
Age				
<10	5	8.3	7	11.7
11-15	30	50.0	40	66.6
16-19	25	41.7	13	21.7
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0
Subjects offered				
Science	15	25.0	14	23.3
Art	12	20.0	10	16.7
Commercial	08	13.3	06	10.0
All	25	41.7	30	50.0
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2006

Table 2: Assessment of the reading habit of day and boarding students

	Day Student	Boarding students
I read in the school library regularly	22.0	67.0
I read at home regularly	38.0	-
I read after school hours	18.0	80.0
I made use of the school library to do my school assignment only	21.0	72.0
I read my class notes only	55.0	10.0
I read my class notes and library books	20.0	68.0
I read novel only to improve my English language.	48.0	68.0
I read during examinations only.	75.0	12.0
I read occasionally	62.0	3.5
I don't read at all	-	-
I am too busy with house chores to read	78.0	-

Source: Field survey, 2006, \*Multiple responses

Table 3: Reading profile

Reading period	Day students		Boarding students	
	No.	%	No.	%
At schedule time daily	2	3.3	60	100.0
Anytime daily	5	8.3	-	-
Every other day	10	16.7	-	-
Twice a week	15	25.0	-	-
Once a week	8	13.3	-	-
When occasion demand	20	33.3	-	-
Rarely	-	-	-	-
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2006

Table 4: The Academic performance of day and boarding students

Variable	Day students		Boarding students	
	No.	%	No.	%
Academic Performance				
Excellent	4	6.7	15	25.0
Above average	18	30.0	24	40.0
Average	20	33.3	11	18.3
Below average	8	13.3	6	10.0
Very poor	10	16.7	4	6.7
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0
Influence of reading on Academic performance of the students				
Positive	34	56.7	54	90.0
Negative	-	-	-	-
No influence	6	10.0	-	-
I don't know	12	20.0	06	10.0
No response	08	13.3	-	-
Total	60	100.0	60	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2006

Concerning the students' reading habit (Table 2), most of the boarding students read after school hours regularly (80%), they made use of the school library to read (67%) and to do their class assignments (72%), they also borrowed library books and novels (68%). About 38% of the day students revealed that they read regularly at home, 62% read occasionally. Larger percentage of the students (78%) said that they were usually occupied with house chores and some of them (75%) mentioned that they only read during examination. While reading, they only made use of their class notes (55%), few of them used library (22%) and library books (20%). In Table 3, the boarders further explained that they have scheduled time for reading on daily basis except Saturday and Sunday. Day students did not have a fixed time for reading, the statement was confirmed by 98% of these students, 33% narrated that they only read when occasion demand it, 25% read twice a week and 17% read every other day. Both boarding (68%) and day students (48%) read novel in order to improve their English language. From all the findings in Table 2, it implies that boarding students have better reading habit than day students.

As indicated in Table 4, the students' academic performance was rated for a period of twelve month and it was observed that boarding students performed above

Table 5: Factors affecting the reading habit of the respondents

Variable	Day students (%)	Boarding students (%)
Environmental	84.0	12.0
Parental influence	62.0	45.0
Pair pressure	58.0	50.0
School curriculum	44.0	19.0
Teachers influence	48.0	28.0
Library facilities	50.0	58.0
Other (s) specify	60.0	20.0
No response	5.0	-

Field survey, 2006

Table 6: Result of the correlation coefficient and t-test

Variable	n	Pearson correlation coefficient (r)	t-test		Decision
			t-cal	t-tab	
Day vs Boarding students	120	0.388	4.96	1.852	Reject H <sub>0</sub>

Significant at 0.05 levels, Sources: Computed from the field survey 2006

average (40%), this is followed by excellent (25%) and average (18%) performances. Day students performed averagely (33%) and below average (30%), only few were excellent students (7%). It is no doubt that boarding students performed excellently well than day students.

Table 4 also showed the influence of reading on the students' academic performance, about 90 and 57% of boarding and day students, respectively affirmed that reading have positive influence on academic performance. Only 20 and 10% of the same students claimed ignorance of its influence.

The factors affecting the reading habit which the students (day and boarding) rightly indicated were shown in Table 5. They are; environmental influence, parental influence, pair pressure, school curriculum and teachers influence.

Table 6 showed the results of the correlation coefficient which is 0.388. The t-test calculated is 4.96 and it is greater than t-tabulated (1.852) at 5% level of significance. The decision here is that null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) is rejected and the alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>a</sub>) is accepted. This means that there is a significant difference between the academic performances of day (secondary) school students and boarding students.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is obvious from the foregoing research that secondary school students in boarding spend more time especially after the normal school hours to read, they also perform better in their academics. Therefore, in order to improve the reading skill and the education performance of secondary school students in general, it is important to recommend the following;

- Parents/guardian of day student should have schedule time for their reading.

- Parents/guardian should reduce their wards' house chores in order to create time for reading.
- Reading period should be included in the student time table.
- School teachers should teach students the art of reading and how to use the library.
- School libraries should be furnish with adequate ready resources.

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