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Educational Research and Reviews

Table of Contents: Volume 12 Number 23 10 May, 2017

ARTICLES

- | | |
|---|------------|
| A study on reading habits of social studies and history teachers in Turkey
Şengül Bircan Tuba | 569 |
| Study habit and its impact on secondary school students' academic performance in biology in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja
Ebele Uju F. and Olofu Paul A. | 583 |
| A systematic review of research into rare diseases in the educational sphere
Leire Darretxe, Zuriñe Gaintza and Javier Monzon-Gonzalez | 589 |

Full Length Research Paper

A study on reading habits of social studies and history teachers in Turkey

Şengül Bircan Tuba

Karatekin University, Turkey.

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The development of reading habits in the society is influenced by both the family and school environment. Teachers are the most effective element within the school environment. Social studies teachers at the primary education level and history teachers at the secondary education level can be said to be branch teachers who should have an "advanced" reading habits both in terms of their fields and their missions. As a result, this study was carried out in order to determine their attitudes towards reading and their reading habits. This study was conducted with 110 participants from 4 provinces. 50 were social studies teachers while 60 were history teachers in Central Anatolia and Marmara regions in 2014 to 2015 school year. In the study, a mixed method was used involving both quantitative and qualitative dimensions. As a result of the research, it was determined that the teachers of social studies and history had a reading habit at an "intermediate" level. Based on findings; regarding the willingness to read books between social studies teachers and history teachers, a meaningful difference was found in favor of social studies teachers in the sub-dimensions of adopting the influence and benefit of reading the book; and a significant difference was found in favor of female teachers in the subscales of adopting the effect and benefit of reading the willing to read books between female teachers and male teachers. In addition, teachers expressed that they read in order to learn more because of factors such as timelessness, but that the environment does not encourage them. Activities suggested by the teachers to improve reading did not really contribute to improve reading habits.

Key words: Social studies teachers, history teachers, reading habits, teacher qualities, reading activities.

INTRODUCTION

Reading, expressed in term of definitions such as making meaning from written symbols (Demirel, 1999); creating new meanings by integrating the information of the individuals with the preliminary information (Güneş, 2009) is a cognitive process. Reading which is also a source of learning and development of the individual; is the assurance of the future and the continuity of new generations. For reading to become a habit, an individual

as to perceive it as a pleasurable need and it has to be done regularly over a long period of time. Reading is a critical means to acquire knowledge; it should therefore be encouraged both in and out of the school (Leppänen et al., 2005).

For reading to become a habit, families, the environment, the school, and teachers have separate responsibilities. A study in America has proven that

E-mail: tbsengul@gmail.com.

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children's reading acquaintances at early ages are effective in acquiring reading habits (Duros and Papadopoulos, 2009). The attitude of the parents towards reading is the determinant of this process. The fact that parents play important roles in helping their children develop good reading habits, they can do this by helping the children like reading through various applications in the house, and the inclusion of bookstores and libraries visits in their day to day activities time-span are among the things parents can do to have their children acquire and develop reading habits in their transition from childhood to adulthood. The following could be realized to gain reading habit to children (MEB, 2015):

- (1) A specific time should be spared for our children especially in childhood and reading habit should be founded by reading stories and tales appropriate for their age and area of interest.
- (2) A library or a book corner could be built at home which could be accessible by the family members and the children.
- (3) It would not be realistic to expect children to have reading habit if the television is always on and nobody is reading anything...
- (4) Books should be chosen according to the interest area of the children and with children. When parents go for shopping or take a walk with their children they should not neglect to go to a bookstore or a book-magazine corner.
- (5) Libraries are important to gain reading habit. For this reason visits to local libraries and active usage of school library is very important and children should be motivated accordingly.
- (6) Books must be in the prize list of the parents. It would be better to assist and motivate the children to read rather than advising reading continuously.
- (7) Subscription to a magazine suitable for his/her age or motivating them to follow up a magazine regularly would be effective.

School life and teachers, are other factors that are effective in gaining reading habits (Garrett, 2002). Strengthening or establishing reading comprehension and habit started within the family can be included among the tasks of the teachers. Not only primary school teachers and Turkish teachers, but all teachers should be sensitive to this issue and should take responsibility for it as well. Teachers should be role models for students, especially at early ages to gain reading habit. Some activities and practices could be done at the school to develop reading habit. These are:

- (1) In-class activities including reading practices can be done.
- (2) Reading competitions can be organized and students who read much can be awarded.
- (3) Teacher can talk and discuss the book that his/her student reads.

(4) Classroom and school libraries could be developed, and they could be organized for effective usage of the students.

(5) School trips to book exhibitions could be organized.

In the lectures, the days when only the knowledge acquisition is taken into consideration are left behind, and an education-teaching policy which is important for the acquisition of skills and value is taken has become a basis. In gaining reading habits from early ages, teachers are expected to be the role models for their students and to offer supportive activities in reading lessons. At this point, it is possible to say that teachers are one of the most responsible ones in the development of reading habit. We can list social studies teachers at the primary education level and history teachers at the secondary education level among the teachers who should have the higher levels of reading habits according to their fields and missions.

Reading habit in Turkey is the subject of many studies (McNinch ve Steelman, 1990; Yılmaz, 1992; Saracaloğlu, Bozkurt ve Serin, 2003; Gömleksiz, 2005; Kurulgan and Çekerol, 2008; Konan, 2013). Study samples were primary school, secondary school, high school and university students, preservice teachers and teachers in different fields and school administrative staff. However, no study was found on determining the reading habit of history teachers and only limited studies were found related with reading habit of social studies teachers.

For this reason, it was thought that it would be useful to determine the attitudes of social studies teachers and history teachers towards reading and to determine their reading habits and for this purpose, studies were conducted to examine the reading habits of social studies teachers and history teachers. Responses for following questions were sought for this purpose.

- (1) Is there any difference for branches in terms of attitudes of Social Studies and History Teachers for reading books?
- (2) Is there any gender difference in terms of attitudes of Social Studies and History Teachers for reading books?
- (3) Is there any difference in terms of vocational seniority in terms of attitudes of Social Studies and History Teachers for reading books?
- (4) What are the evaluations of Social Studies and History Teachers about reading books and reading habits?

METHODOLOGY

Research model

Quantitative and qualitative research methods have been used in the study. It is helpful to use quantitative and qualitative data to support each other in terms of enhancing the validity and reliability of the work (Creswell, 2003). The screening model was used in the analysis of the quantitative data of the study.

According to Karasar (2005), screening model is a research approach aimed at describing the past or present situation as it exists. Kaptan (1998), on the other hand, says that with screening model it is easy to collect information about teachers, administrators etc. and to examine their relation to the variables. This study is a study with descriptive quality in terms of researching social studies and history teachers' reading habits and attitudes towards reading books.

Descriptive analysis was used in the analysis of the qualitative data of the study. Through semi-structured interview form, 14 questions were answered and the answers given by social studies and history teachers to the questions were analyzed by means of descriptive analysis method. The answers of the teachers were examined one by one, and the obtained data were tabled and interpreted. At this stage of the study, the opinions of the investigator and the experts were compared, after receiving 3 experts' opinions (Table 1).

Research group

The research was conducted in 4 provinces in Central Anatolia and Marmara regions of Turkey in 2014 to 2015 academic year. The sample of the research consists of 110 social studies and history teachers who are working in these cities.

Data collection tools

The "Reading Attitude Scale" developed by Gömleksiz (2005) has been used in order to determine the attitudes of social studies and history teachers about their book reading habits and their attitudes towards reading books on a quantitative scale. The cronbach-alpha reliability coefficient of the scale have been determined as 0.88. The KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy) value of the scale was calculated as 0.83 and the Bartlett test was calculated as 2202,200. Scale consists of 21 positive, 9 negative impeding, 30 attitude sentences. There are 6 sub-dimensions on the scale. 5-point likert scale was used. The options on the scale of the cinque likert type are 'Strongly Agree', 'Agree', 'Slightly Agree', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree'.

In the qualitative dimension, a 14-question semi-structured interview form was used to deeply understand the social studies and history teachers' views on reading habits and reading. Teachers who participated in the study through the interview form were instructed in a total of 14 questions, 9 structured and 5 open-ended questions. With the open-ended questions, researchers have the opportunity to obtain more detailed information on the subject (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005).

The interview form was prepared by the researcher, and has been examined by 3 experts for coverage. Then pilot test of the measuring instrument was carried out with 2 teachers; the results of the pilot study have been evaluated to determine whether the questions were clear, understandable and whether the answers given by the teachers to the questions reached the desired level by 3 experts. For the reliability of the study, using Miles and Huberman (1994) formula ($\text{Agreement} / (\text{Agreement} + \text{Disagreement}) \times 100$), it was calculated as 84%. Thus, the internal validity study has been concluded. In qualitative research, internal validity is related to how much the researcher' measuring tool or method is measuring the data he or she is measuring (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005).

Analysis of data

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) 23.0 package program was used in the statistical analysis of the research data. Positive items are scored as 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 starting from "Strongly

Table 1. Descriptive information on the research group.

Field	n	Percentage
Social studies teacher	50	45.5
History teacher	60	54.5
Gender		
Male	57	51.8
Female	53	48.2
Professional seniority		
1-5 year	5	4.5
6-10 year	8	7.3
11-15 year	30	27.3
16 and over	67	60.9
Total	110	100

Agree" option and negative items are scored as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 in reverse. The reason why positive and negative attitudes are evaluated with different scores is; in the Likert type attitude scales, the attitudes are calculated by summing the scores given to the items. The reliability coefficient for Cronbach Alpha of the scale was recalculated for the study, and the confidence coefficient found as 0.81. In this way the reliability of the scale has been re-tested and found to be a reliable scale.

In the analysis of the data, (*f*) frequency, (%) percent and (\bar{X}) arithmetic of the descriptive statistical methods were calculated. Teachers' attitudes towards reading books were compared according to their gender and area; and independent groups t test was used for this purpose. Mann-Whitney U test was used for non-parametric t test when significant difference was found as a result of the Levene statistic. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine whether the teachers' attitudes towards reading in terms of vocational seniority. The Tukey HSD multiple comparison test was applied to determine the difference between different groups in the situations where the differences were determined as a result of the analysis of variance. It has been tested at $\alpha = 0.05$ to determine whether there is a significant difference between the independent variables.

Qualitative data have been analyzed using descriptive analysis. The purpose of descriptive analysis is to form raw data in an understandable way according to the determined theme and to present it as a summary to the reader (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2005) The interview form, which is used as a qualitative measurement tool in the study, is primarily ordered by numbering, the data are depicted and tabled, then the descriptions were interpreted. In order to ensure dependability of this work, two experts were consulted.

RESULTS

In this part of the research, quantitative and qualitative findings of social studies and history teachers' reading habits have been tabled and interpreted.

Quantitative results

Results of field comparison

The data obtained from attitudes scale regarding the

Table 2. Attitudes towards love, habit and necessity sub-dimensions.

Sub-dimension	Field						sd	t	P
	Social studies teachers			History teachers					
	n	\bar{X}	ss	n	\bar{X}	ss			
Love	50	4.171	0.49	60	4.178	0.54	108	-0.071*	0.943
Habit	50	4.230	0.41	60	4.162	0.62	108	0.653	515
Necessity	50	4.420	0.59	60	4.283	0.54	108	1.258*	0.211

*p<0.05.

Table 3. Attitudes towards request and impact sub-dimensions.

Sub- dimension	Field						sd	t	P
	Social studies teachers			History teachers					
	n	\bar{X}	ss	n	\bar{X}	ss			
Request	50	4.566	0.45	60	4.216	0.59	108	3.429*	0.001
Influence	50	4.665.	0.36	60	4.258	0.51	108	4.685*	0.000

*p<0.05.

Table 4. Attitudes toward usefulness lower-dimensions.

Sub- dimension	Field						sd	t	P	Homogeneity	
	Social studies teachers			History teachers						Levene	P
	n	\bar{X}	ss	n	\bar{X}	ss					
Benefit	50	4.857	0.18	60	4.427	0.58	108	5.384	0.000	42.968	0.000

*p<0.05

reading habits of the social and history teachers are analyzed in terms of "field", the results of the analysis are interpreted and have been presented as the tables of findings (Table 2).

When Table 2 was examined, it was seen that there was no meaningful difference between the average scores of the social studies teachers and the history teachers' "Reading Habits Attitude Scale" from the likes, habits and necessities subscales regarding the "field". Based on results table, it can be expressed that both social studies teachers and history teachers liked to read books, that they had the habit of reading books and that they need to read books.

As seen on Table 3, there is a significant difference in favor of social studies teachers among the average scores of social studies teachers and history teachers' "Reading Habit Attitude Scale" from the "wish" sub-dimension [$t_{(108)} = 3.429$; $p > 0.05$]. In addition, there is a significant difference in favor of social studies teachers between the points averaged from the "effect" sub-dimension in the same table [$t_{(108)} = 4.685$; $p > 0.05$]. Although teachers in both groups express their

willingness to read books and share the opinion that they are influenced by reading, it is not wrong to state that social studies teachers are more willing to read books than history teachers and that they are more influenced by reading.

As seen on Table 4, there is a significant difference in favor of social studies teachers among the average scores of social studies teachers and history teachers' "Reading Habit Attitude Scale" from the "benefit" sub-dimension [$t_{(108)} = 5.384$ $p > 0.05$]. However, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test has been applied since the results of the Levene statistic show that the items are non-parametric and as a result a significant difference is observed. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test on the benefit subscales of teachers were given in Table 5.

Findings related to the Mann-Whitney U test in Table 5 indicate that there is a meaningful difference in favor of social studies teachers in terms of benefits (U=838.500 $p < 0,05$). According to this, it can be said that social studies teachers (SO= 68.73) are more inclined to read books than history teachers (SO= 44.48).

Table 5. Mann-Whitney U test results regarding benefit sub-dimensions.

Groups	n	Queues average	Queues total	M-Whitney U	Z	P
Social studies teachers	50	68.73	3436.50	838.500	-4.228	.000
History teachers	60	44.48	2668.50			

Table 6. Attitudes towards love, habit, wish and benefit sub-dimensions.

Sub-dimension	Gender						sd	t	P
	Male			Female					
	n	\bar{X}	ss	n	\bar{X}	ss			
Love	57	4.115	0.51	53	4.239	0.52	108	1.258*	0.211
Habit	57	4.144	0.50	53	4.245	0.57	108	-0.979*	0.330
Request	57	4.269	0.53	53	4.490	0.56	108	-2.111*	0.037
Benefit	57	4.543	0.51	53	4.707	0.46	108	-1.742*	0.084

* $p < 0.05$.

Results related to gender comparison

The data obtained from the attitude scale on the reading habits of social studies and history teachers are analyzed in terms of "gender", the results of the analysis are interpreted and the following findings are shown in tables.

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that there is no meaningful difference between the average scores of social studies teachers and history teachers' "Reading Habits Attitude Scale" in their likes, habits and benefits subscales. Based on the findings, it is possible to say that both male and female teachers have adopted the idea that they like to read books, they have the habit of reading books and that reading books is beneficial.

In addition, there is a significant difference in favor of female teachers among the scales of the "wish" subscale of attitude scale of male and female teachers in the same table [$t_{(108)} = -2.111$ $p > 0.05$]. Although teachers in both groups suggest that they are willing to read books, it can be said that female teachers are much more willing to read books than male teachers.

As seen in Table 7, there is a significant difference in favor of female teachers among the mean scores of "necessity" subscale of "Reading Habit Attitude Scale" of male and female groups [$t_{(108)} = -1.232$; $p > 0.05$]. In addition, there is a significant difference in favor of female teachers between the mean scores of the "influence" subscale of male and female groups in the same table [$t_{(108)} = -1.843$; $p > 0.05$]. However, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test has been applied since the results of the Levene statistic show that the items are non-parametric and as a result a significant difference is observed. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test on the benefit subscales of teachers were given in Table 8.

When the "necessity" subscale of the Mann-Whitney U test in Table 8 is examined, there is no significant

difference between the average scores of male and female teachers regarding the necessity of reading a book. As a result, it can be said that both male and female teachers see reading as being important on the same level. In the "effect" sub-dimension of the same table, the relevant data show that there is a significant difference for female teachers ($U = 1137.000$ $p < 0.05$). According to findings, it is possible to say that female teachers ($SO = 62.55$) adopted the influences of reading a book more than male teachers ($SO = 48.95$).

Findings related to vocational seniority comparisons

In this part of the research "Is there any difference related to professional seniority in terms of liking to read books among social studies and history teachers, book reading habits, reading books, being willing to read books, attitudes to adopt the influence and benefit of reading books?" hypothesis' findings have been presented and interpreted.

In Table 9, answers given by the teachers to the questions about the "liking" sub-dimension of the "Reading Habit Attitude Scale" were presented according to the seniority groups. One-way ANOVA test was conducted to examine whether there is a difference related to professional seniority in terms of attitudes; love towards reading, having a reading habit and adopting the effects and benefits of reading among teachers of social studies and history, Tukey HSD multiple comparison test was applied to determine the groups in which the difference occurred when differences were determined in attitudes as a result of analysis of variance. Datas and interpretations of the analysis are presented in Table 10.

Table 9 and Table 10 show a significant difference between the first group and the third group when the

Table 7. Attitudes towards Influence and necessity sub-dimensions.

Sub-dimension	Gender						sd	t	P	Homogeneity	
	Male			Female						Levene	P
	n	\bar{X}	ss	n	\bar{X}	ss					
Necessity	57	4.280	0.51	53	4.415	0.61	108	-1.232*	0.220	4.338	0.040
Influence	57	4.359	0.44	53	4.533	0.53	108	-1.843*	0.068	5.552	0.020

*p<0.05.

Table 8. Mann-Whitney U test results regarding benefit sub-dimensions.

Sub-dimension	Groups	n	Queues average	Queues total	M-Whitney U	Z	P
Necessity	Male	57	50.81	2896.00	1243.000	-1.653	0.098
	Female	53	60.55	3209.00			
Influence	Male	57	48.95	2790.00	1137.000	2.292	0.022
	Female	53	62.55	3315.00			

Table 9. Teachers' love sub-dimensions.

Group	Group name	n	\bar{X}	ss
1	1-5 year	5	4.62	0.46
2	6-10 year	8	4.16	0.51
3	11-15 year	30	3.97	0.57
4	16 Years and over	67	4.23	0.46
-	Total	110	4.17	0.52.

Table 10. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for love sub-dimension.

Source of variance	Sum of squares	sd	Squares average	F	P	difference
Between groups	2.511	3	837	3.283	0.024	1-3
Groups	27.026	106	255	-	-	-
Total	29.537	109	-	-	-	-

attitudes of the social studies and history teachers on the "love" sub-dimension of the "Reading Habits Attitude Scale" were examined in terms of occupational seniority ($F(3-106) = 3.283$; $p < 0.05$). The Turkey High Speed Data (HSD) multiple comparison test was conducted to show in which groups there are significant differences. According to the results of the test, the teachers in the 1st group reported 'Strongly Agree' ($\bar{X} = 4.62$) while the teachers in the 3rd group reported 'Agree' ($\bar{X} = 3.97$). Thus, a significant difference has been found in favor of the 1st group regarding the attitude of love towards reading books among the groups. According to this result, teachers who have 1 to 5 years of professional

experience in the 1st group are more interested in reading books than teachers who have 11 to 15 years of experience in the 3rd group.

When Table 11 is examined, when the attitudes of "Reading Habits Attitude Scale" of social studies and history teachers on "habit, necessity, desire, effect, benefit" sub-dimensions are examined in occupational seniority dimension, no significant difference was found between the groups. Teachers in all seniority groups participating in the study have been responded with 'strongly agree' level with questions about the sub-dimensions of "habit, necessity, desire, effect, benefit" As a result, even if they have different professional experience; it can be said that they have a habit of

Table 11. ANOVA for habit, necessity, request, effect, benefit sub-dimensions.

Sub-dimension	Source of variance	Sum of squares	sd	Squares average	F	P	Difference
Habit	Between groups	1.059	3	0.353	1.226	0.304	No
	Groups	30.523	106	0.288	-	-	-
	Total	31.582	109	-	-	-	-
Necessity	Between groups	1.780	3	0.593	1.876	0.138	No
	Groups	33.468	106	0.316	-	-	-
	Total	35.248	109	-	-	-	-
Request	Between groups	676	3	0.225	0.716	.545	No
	Groups	33.348	106	0.315	-	-	-
	Total	34.024	109	-	-	-	-
Influence	Between groups	.354	3	0.118	0.475	0.701	No
	Groups	26.353	106	0.249	-	-	-
	Total	26.707	109	0	-	-	-
Benefit	Between groups	.281	3	0.094	0.373	0.773	No
	Groups	26.656	106	0.251	-	-	-
	Total	26.937	109	-	-	-	-

Table 12. Data relevant to teachers' reading rate.

Categories	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Once a week	12	21	11	21	23	21
Monthly	41	72	37	70	78	71
Yearly	4	7	5	9	9	8
Total	57	100	53	100	110	100

reading books, that they think it is necessary to read a book, they are willing to read, they adopt the influence of reading the book, and have the opinion that reading a book is beneficial.

Quantitative findings

In this section, social studies and history teachers were included in the evaluation of reading and reading habits. When Table 12 is examined, it can be said that social studies and history teachers have moderate reading habits. Only 21% of participants have good level reading habits.

When Table 13 is examined, it is seen that 60% of social studies and history teachers have "no time" as a reason of not reading the book. This is followed by "enough reading" by 20%. It is seen in Table 14 that to

the "Why are you reading books?" question, 43% of social studies and history teachers answers "Love and Enjoy" and 42% of them answers "Read to Learn".

When Table 15 is examined, it is seen that the teachers of social studies and history prefer to read especially "novels" (75%). In addition, it is possible to say that male teachers tend to read more types of books than female teachers based on the findings obtained. Table 16 shows that 85% of the social studies and history teachers have taken into account the book's subject, 18% consider the author and 13% got to know about the book through friend suggestions, and that these factors predominantly affect book choices.

The first question in Table 17 relates to regular newspaper reading. While 47% of social studies and history teachers said that they regularly buy newspapers, 33% of them do not buy newspapers regularly, and 20%

Table 13. Teachers data of reasons for not reading a book.

Categories	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Enough reading	10	18	12	22	22	20
No time	36	63	30	57	66	60
Books/magazines are very expensive	2	3	0	0	2	2
Not among my priorities	9	16	11	21	20	18
Total	57	100	53	100	110	100

Table 14. Teachers data of reasons for reading a book.

Categories	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Read to learn	26	46	20	38	46	42
Read to spend time	4	7	4	7	8	7
Read for exams	0	0	2	4	2	2
Love and enjoy to read	20	35	27	51	47	43
Other Read to improve myself	5	9	0	0	5	4
Read for comfort	2	3	0	0	2	2
Total	57	100	53	100	110	100

reported that they regularly follow newspapers on the internet. The following are the newspapers read by the teachers who regularly buy newspapers: Hurriyet, Radikal, Sabah, Yeni Safak, Birgün, Cumhuriyet, Haberturk.

In the same table, in relation to the questions related to the regular purchase of magazines, 54% of social studies and history teachers are shown to buy magazines regularly and 46% do not buy magazines regularly. The magazines

preferred by teachers are History magazines, Atlas, Toplum ve Bilim, National Geographic, Bilim ve Teknik, Birikim, Ot, Gezi, Evim magazines.

Table 18 contains answers to social studies and history teachers' to questions about the necessity of reading. Teachers themselves in the name of realization (31 people) argue that reading is necessary. There are also teachers (25 people) who think that reading is necessary to keep up with current events.

Table 19 contains social studies and history teachers' views on how reading habits can be obtained. Teachers think that reading habits can be gained in the early ages (81 people); with setting examples within family, school and surrounding (67 people) areas.

Table 20 contains social studies and history teachers' views about acquiring reading habits. Teachers say that; life recognizing and comprehension (74 people), looking at events

Table 15. Data on the types of literature teachers read.

Categories	Gender				
	Male	Female	Total		
			Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	
Novel	34	49	83	75	
Paper	20	14	34	31	
Poem	14	4	18	16	
Textbook	1	14	15	14	
Story	9	5	14	13	
	Research-history	12	5	17	15
Other	All	5	2	7	6
	Diary	2	0	2	2
	Personal growth	1	0	1	1

Table 16. Datas relating to the factors affecting the teachers' book preferences.

Categories	Gender				
	Male	Female	Total		
			Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	
Subject	50	43	93	85	
Author	13	7	20	18	
Friend	6	8	14	13	
Suggestion	2	7	9	8	
Promotions	4	0	4	4	
Price	0	3	3	3	
Name	7	5	12	11	
Other	All	7	5	12	11
	No Factor	3	0	3	3
	Necessity	2	0	2	2

from a broad perspective (62 people), being cultured (61 people), and acquiring experience counts as a characteristic of reading habits.

Looking at Table 21, it appears that the obstacles to the acquisition of reading habits are questioned. Social studies and history teachers suggest that especially lack of time (82 people) and the education system (81 people) hinder the acquisition of reading habits. These views are followed by thoughts on the negative effects of technology misuse (71 people) and television (70 people). It was emphasized that the absence of an example within the family and school environment (70 people) also negatively affects the acquisition of reading habit.

In Table 22, it is seen that social studies and history teachers are questioned whether they are encouraging reading in their classes. It is emphasized that most of the performance duties as literacy incentive activities are being given to support reading (35 people). I read books about the topic and discuss them in the class (19 people), I bring materials to class; book related to the

subject, magazines etc. (18 people), introduce the books I read to the students (17 people) and suggest books about the lessons (16 people) are among the expressions of the teachers.

DISCUSSION

Although reading is included in the foundations of education and seen as the first victory in life for the individual, the development and support of this skill is lacking and not sufficiently taken into consideration.

In the study of the attitudes and evaluations of the social studies and history teachers regarding the book reading, which are supposed to support the development of reading habits and contribute to the consolidation of this skill; it seems that both social studies teachers and history teachers like to read books and that they had the habit of reading books and for them it was necessary to read books. However, on the basis of the findings of comparison made on the "request", "effect" and "benefit"

Table 17. Data on questions that teachers gave short responses to.

Questions	Categories	Gender					
		Male		Female		Total	
		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Do you buy newspapers regularly?	Yes	37	65	15	28	52	47
	No	11	19	25	47	36	33
	Prefer internet	9	16	13	25	22	20
Do you buy magazine regularly?	Yes	24	42	35	66	59	54
	No	33	58	18	34	51	46
Do you think is it necessary to read?	Yes	57	100	53	100	110	100
	No	0	0	0	0	0	0
Do you apply reading promoting practises in your lessons?	Yes	55	96	53	100	108	98

Table 18. Teachers' assessment of why reading books is necessary.

Categories	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
It is necessary for self-development	17	14	31
It is necessary to follow current events	12	13	25
It is necessary to learn for life	10	7	17
It is necessary to build knowledge	9	8	17
It is necessary to satisfy the impulse of curiosity	12	5	17
It is necessary to know culture and society	3	10	13
It is necessary to enjoy life	4	7	11
It is necessary to break the routine of education	9	2	11
It is necessary to calm down and rest	5	2	7
It is necessary to satisfy intellectual hunger	7	0	7
It is necessary to develop thinking and interpreting skills	5	2	7

sub-dimensions; social studies teachers are more willing to read books than history teachers, and of that they have adopted the influence and benefit

reading books.

As a result of gender comparison in the survey, female teachers seems to be more willing to read

books, think that reading books is necessary and adopted the beneficial effects of reading; it can be said that both male and female teachers have a

Table 19. Teachers' assessment of how to acquire reading habits.

Categories	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Starting to reading at a young age	42	39	81
Family, school and surrounding area as an example	35	32	67
With suggestions about the importance of reading	13	16	29
Taking the time	21	8	29
Motivated by prizes	13	9	29
In case of need	5	7	12
Planned study	7	2	9
Through topics of interest	5	2	7
Needs willing and wonder. Can't be obtained later	1	5	6
Can be obtained later, with persistency	2	0	2

Table 20. Teachers' evaluations on the benefits of reading habits.

Categories	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Gives life recognition and meaning	47	27	74
Allows to view at events from a broad perspective	30	32	62
The way to be cultured	37	24	61
Gives experience	42	17	59
Increases vocabulary, improves communication skills	15	21	36
Improves the imagination	9	27	36
Ensures respect for different opinions	12	9	21
Makes happy	10	4	14
Provides intellectual accumulation	7	1	8
Interpretation and thinking provides skill development	5	2	7
Provides a calm, peaceful life	5	2	7

Table 21. Teachers' evaluations of causes that prevent reading habits.

Categories	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
No time	39	43	82
Education system	39	42	81
Misuse of technology (smart phone, computer, web, pad ...)	34	37	71
Television	34	36	70
Family-school environment	33	37	70
Economic concerns	35	22	57
Responsibilities of life	17	35	52
Incorrect examples	22	26	48
Laziness-reluctance	19	29	48
Prejudices	9	14	23
Unconsciousness	7	11	18
Force	5	10	15

habit of reading books, and that they think it is necessary and useful to read the book, based on the findings. In the

Table 22. Practices to promote reading applies to teachers in classes.

Categories	Gender		
	Male	Female	Total
Identify reading performance assignments in a supportive way	20	15	35
Read books about the subject and discuss it	14	5	19
Bring books, magazines and other materials related to the topic to the class	13	5	18
Introduce the books I read to the students	7	10	17
Offer books about the course	12	4	16
Following the "reading time" application	3	9	12
Talk to students about the need to read books	0	5	5
Give extra notes to students who read	1	4	5
Make students read the topics and highlight the important lines	0	3	3
Give books to readers	0	2	2
Encourage them to read through project work. (We are reading, what about you!)	0	2	2
Share interesting sections with the students from the books I read and create curiosity about the book	2	0	2
Read the activities in the course book in detail	1	0	1

study conducted by Aslantürk (2008), the fact that female teachers are slightly more interested in reading male teachers can be important for the support of research results.

In comparison of occupational seniority, only a difference in the "love" lower-dimension among the groups has been found. As a result of the deepened analyzes in this direction, a significant difference was found in favor of the 1st group between the 1st group having 1 to 5 years of experience and the 3rd group having 11 to 15 years of experience. Depending on this result, it would not be wrong to say that new teachers in the profession are more likely to read books than senior teachers. According to Yılmaz (2002), it has been seen that the younger teachers read more books and the reading habits level decreases as the age increases.

In the study, social studies and history teachers were found to have moderate reading habits. Participants with good reading habits were about 21%. A study by Aypay (2011) stated that three out of four teachers regularly and frequently spend time reading books. It can be seen that the results of the studies done by Aslantürk (2008), Oğuz et al. (2011) also show that teachers have moderate reading habits. In the research conducted by Yılmaz (2002), the reading habits of the teachers were not found adequate. According to the Vakfı (2006), 33.4% of teachers are reading regularly, 63.3% read books now and then, and 3.3% never read. Obviously, 70% of the teachers do not have reading habits or are their habits are weak and not enough for them to be role models in this respect (Ungan, 2008). In the light of these indicators, it is useful to take into consideration to encourage teachers' reading habits as an important issue. It has been determined that "no time" is the reason why teachers propose that they do not read. In the study conducted by Konan and Oğuz (2009), the most

important factor preventing the teachers from reading adequately was 'no time' with 55.5%. Yılmaz (2002) study also reached the conclusion that the inability of finding time prevents reading habit. However, whether the answer of this question represents the truth or constitutes a pretext as an excuse is unknown.

It has been seen that teachers mostly preferred to read novels (75%) while stating that they are reading to "learn". The similarity of the research result is striking as a result of the fact that the most read literacy types are novels (34%) in the "Turkey's Reading Culture Map" research (Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2011).

It has been seen that teachers regularly read newspapers and magazines; while male teachers seen to be regularly reading newspapers, female teachers mostly read magazines regularly. Result obtained from teachers' answers is that reading is necessary in order for the person to be able to self-actualize and follow current events. It is important that social studies and history teachers have these skills when the aim is development of reading, thinking and research skills.

In the social studies course, it is expected that teachers should follow up the periodic and scientific publications in order to support their professional development and contribute to their fields; history lessons are also required to apply reading strategies in addition to these and in order to make history lessons relate to different lessons and environment, and to make students' learning more concrete, the attention should be attracted to 'papers, essays, magazines, newspapers ... etc.

Reading strategies have an important place in the name of the acquisition of field content and achievements for students. In addition, most of the students' success in social studies and history lessons are related to the success of the students' success in reading. All of this is possible through the teachers who are reading,

researching and sharing these experiences with their students and their practices in their classes. At this point, 98% of the teachers stated that they are encouraging to read in their classes; and they are more likely to use the performance assignments for this purpose. The answers of the teachers have shown the result that different and effective applications are not frequently performed. The study by Burgess et al. (2011) suggests that teachers with higher reading habits are more successful in teaching practice, which can be considered as a clue that teachers' improved reading level can also affect their profession positively. It is beneficial for people from each group to read, to keep up their reading habits and to keep the reading conscious of the community awake. At this point, various examples around the world are attracting attention. "Keep Reading" in the United States and "Continue Reading" in the UK are some of these campaigns (Arıcı, 2008).

In Turkey, during the 2004 to 2005 school year, the Ministry of National Education (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı-MEB) started the "Read 100 Basic Works" reading campaign in all high schools. 100 books compiled from Turkish and world literatures were identified and teachers were given responsibility to instruct students to read these books. Uncontrolled and unsystematic development of the campaign, launched for a constructive purpose prevented the achievement of the desired and targeted goal. It is noteworthy that even the teachers who are important participants of this campaign did not read the whole set of books (Çocuk, 2009). As a result, while the share of teachers in the development of reading habit cannot be denied; social studies and history teachers need to be a bit more focused on their own development in this sense and be exposed to the need to increase their proficiency in reading. From study findings; the importance of the development of reading habits and reading cultures has been reached as a result that should be taken into account as a matter to be emphasized at every level of education. At this point;

- (1) The planning and implementation of teacher candidates' work to support their reading habits,
- (2) Including activities such as seminars, writers' speeches, book promotion days to encourage teachers and students to read in schools,
- (3) Providing examples of activities to support reading habits in accordance with the field in the trainings phrase of the teachers (arrangement of reading dates ...),
- (4) Developing practices that will encourage teachers to read (gifting book sets at the beginning of the year for each teaching area ...),
- (5) Students and teachers who read the most will be awarded by organizing competitions and events that encourage reading is suggested.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Study habit and its impact on secondary school students' academic performance in biology in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja

Ebele Uju F. and Olofu Paul A.

Department of Science and Environmental Education, University of Abuja, Nigeria.

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Study habits is how one studies. That is, the habits which students form during their school years. Without good study habits, a student cannot succeed. Thus, this study investigated the impact of study habits on secondary school students' academic performance in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The study was guided by one null hypothesis. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design as its plan. The sample of the study constituted of 1050 senior secondary school students drawn from the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. Chi-square was used for data analysis. The finding of the study revealed that there is significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance. It was recommended that teachers and school guidance counselors should collaboratively guide students on how to develop good study habits; thereby enhancing their academic success.

Key words: Habits, study habits, biology, impact and academic performance.

INTRODUCTION

How a student takes his or her studies, greatly determines his/her level of academic achievements. The level of preparation and learning strategies developed and employed consciously by students, go a long way to influence their level of academic performance.

Thus, study habit is one of the greatest students or learning factors that hugely influences students' academic achievements. If undermined by students at all levels, teachers, administrators, parents and guardians, school counselors and the government, then, the trend and menace of students' abysmal performance in both internal and external examinations would continue to

boom and become more devastating and alarming.

Mark and Howard (2009) are of the opinion that the most common challenge to the success of students in all ramifications is a lack of effective or positive (good) study habit. They further maintain that if students can develop a good study habit and with good discipline, they are bound to perform remarkably well in their academic pursuit. Husain (2000) stresses that lack of effective or positive (good) study habits is a critical study problem among students at all levels. Grace (2013) also maintains that the process of learning is still a little mysterious but studies do show that the most effective process for

*Corresponding author. E-mail: paulagbade@gmail.com.

studying involves highly active behavior over a period of time. In other words, to study effectively, one must read, draw, compare, memorize and test himself over time.

The concept of study habit according to Husain (2000) is broad, as it combines nearly all other sub-concepts such as study attitude, study methods and study skills. Attitude is a mental and natural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a direct influence on the individual's response to all objects and situations with which is related.

Attitude towards study has great contribution on academic achievement, and good study pattern. Successful learners adopt positive attitude towards study, and do not waste time or energy over what they have to do. If the learning experience is pleasant, the learner's attitude and motivation is usually positive, and if the learning experience is not pleasant he tends to avoid it.

Negative attitude towards study sometimes finds expression in comment such as "I study but cannot remember what I study" or "the lessons are too long". Attitude serves as index on how we think and feel about people, objects and issues in our environment. Study attitude, according to Husain (2000), refers to the predispositions which students have developed towards private readings through a period of time. According to him, study attitude offers great possibilities for successful achievement in studies. Study method is the knowledge and application of effective study skills or techniques by students. Several study methods have been identified several effective study methods and skills that could be used by students based on the learning environment (Husain, 2000).

Kelli (2009) posits that for students to succeed in their studies, they must be able to appropriately assimilate course content, digest it, reflect on it and be able to articulate the information in written and/or oral form. What is fundamental is the ability of a student to acquire effective study habits. Many students feel that the hours of study are the most important.

However, students can study for hours on end and retain very little. The more appropriate question is how students should study more effectively. Developing good time management skills is very important. Students must realize that there is a time to be in class, a time for study, time for family, time to socialize and time to just be alone. The critical issue is recognition that there must be an appropriate balance. Students should also have vision. A clearly articulated picture of the future they intend to create for themselves is very important and contributes to students' success in school. This will promote a passion for what they wish to do. Passion is critical and leads to an intense interest, dedication and commitment to achieving career goals and objectives.

Marc (2011) explains that students with learning problems, however, may still have generally inefficient and ineffective study habits and skills. Becoming aware of your learning habits or styles will help students to

understand why they sometimes get frustrated with common study methods. He observes that good study habits are essential to educational success; as they contribute to a successful academic future. Good study habits lead to good grades while good grades lead to admissions to better colleges and universities, possibly with a scholarship thrown in. This in turn, will lead to a great career. Developing good study habits to Marc is very crucial for every student irrespective of his level of education. It boosts students' ability to be self-disciplined, self-directed and ultimately successful in their degree programs.

The sooner a student starts practicing and developing good habits, the better chance he will have that he will continue with them. Procrastination can be overcome with proper study habits and improving one's study habits is the key to better studying. Being organized and having homework routines are the most important things in helping a child/student develop good study habits for life. Developing good study habits help spell success and a student will find himself working more efficiently and experiencing lesser stress in the process. He adds that having effective study habits creates a more efficient academic environment. Planning your study schedule as a student in advance and faithfully sticking to it saves time. When students have good study habits, they tend to be less stressed. Students who are anxious on exam day are typically the procrastinators who come unprepared. Students who organize their lives and stick to their established study schedules are confident and relaxed at test-taking time (Marc, 2011).

Ashish (2013) opines that if students must ensure academic success throughout the entire year, it is important to ditch bad study habits and establish good ones. He further maintains that no matter what age or academic level, employing effective study strategies can make all the difference between acing a class, barely passing or worse and failing miserably. She admits that many of today's most common study methods or habits can lead to utter disappointment despite best efforts and intentions. To Ashish (2013), knowing exactly what does and does not work on a personal level, even tracking study patterns and correlating it with related grades and then proactively creating a study plan and schedule around the proven effective methods, is the most powerful study tool of all.

Adeninyi (2011) maintains that good study habits allows students to study independently at home and aspire for higher educational career. The formation of good study habits in secondary school level further serves as the basis for students' performance in external examinations such as West African Examinations Council (WAEC), National Examinations Council (NECO) and Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB).

In the view of Agba (2013), unserious students do study anyhow without specific techniques, and he submits that such students are most likely to perform

below average. Thus, he concludes that good study habits help students to: attend classes very often and do so on time. It also helps them to submit their assignment on time, read or prepare very well for tests and exams, take down notes and develop the points independently, ask relevant questions in class; thereby having good grades at the end of the term or semester. Monday (2008) writing on bad study habits maintains that developing good study habits in school will help students succeed in class and achieve educational goals.

Similarly, Bolling (2000) asserts that good study habit through planning helps students prepare for what is ahead, and accomplish their academic goals. Thus, lack of study habits clearly puts students at a disadvantage, and is one of the main reasons students need remedial classes, fall behind in coursework and drop out of school. Developing good study habits drastically lowers students' risk of academic struggles, and failure to complete a college degree. Hence, Bolling (2000) submits that students who tend to perform high across most of their subjects can be considered to have good study habits by being actively involved in their own learning process, continuous planning and carefully monitoring of the educational task that they are required to complete.

Different students have different and unique study habits. What may be a good study habit to a particular student may be a bad one indeed to another student. As such, it is often difficult to practically pin-point that this is good and that is bad. In the opinion of Katelyn (2013), there is no doubt that different people study in different ways and it is a near certainty that what works for one person may not work for another. John (2010) opines that not all students are alike.

There are several key study habits that are crucial to all students' success. One of such is study in a good environment, a little bit of background music, such as classical with no lyrics are fine and a good studying location. Whether studying in rain or shine, day or night, what is most important is to be consistent and stay on one schedule.

Generally, study habits can be classified into two-good study habits, and bad study habits. Good study habits according to Katelyn (2013) are sometimes referred to as positive or productive study habits. As the name implies, they are those pleasant study habits which have the tendency to improve the academic performance of students or that seem to produce good results. They are the study habits which make students successful in their studies after developing and applying them throughout their academic career.

Good study habits occur as a result of practice and knowing what methods are most effective for you as a student. When studying, stay away from distractions, such as the computer. Instead of procrastinating, work on a long term assignment daily, instead of studying the night before, study a little each night. Review what you learned in class every day when you get home, before

starting homework. Also, a good tip is to review what you did in class the previous day at the beginning of class when you have a few minutes before the teacher starts talking. By learning the ways that you learn the best, you will be successful in your studies.

Katelyn (2013) therefore, identifies fourteen positive or good study habits which students can employ in order to improve their academic performance. They are: attending all classes, reviewing your notes daily, reading material prior to it being covered in class, study daily, have at least one conference with the professor, develop and learn a word list for the course, read materials to improve your background in the course (other than text), attend help session, attend learning resource lab when available, develop a list of possible questions, ask questions in class, study an old exam (when available), avoid a last minute cram session, and sleep at least 8 hours the night before exams commence.

In the same vein, Harper and Row (2009), highlight good study habits as thus:

1. Studying every day
2. Creating a quiet place at home or anywhere to study
3. Turning off the phone, TV and other devices that may disturb you when studying
4. Listening to soft music or white noise
5. Studying in a way that suits your learning style
6. Taking regular breaks
7. Studying early (do not wait for last minutes)
8. Studying the hardest things first, spending more time on topics you find difficult
9. Asking for help if one is struggling with his studies, taking notes as one studies as well as organizing notes in a notebook or folder.

On the other hand, bad study habits according to John (2010) are negative or non-productive study habits which are undesirable and counter-productive to students' academic performance. When developed and utilized by students at all levels, they tend to hamper academic progress and performance of the users. Due to the peculiarity and uniqueness of individual student, what may be considered as bad study habits to student "A", may seem to be very productive and efficient for student "B".

However, bad study habits generally range from procrastination, truancy, not taking note, selective reading, studying while watching television or what is generally regarded as distractive study etc. Nikki (2013) identifies bad reading habits to include studying with friends, listening to loud music, studying in uncomfortable conditions, cramming, etc.

There are several factors that tend to affect students study habits. Anything can affect students' study habits. Their ability to study and concentrate can be increased by finding a quiet place where they can concentrate. Distractions such as phones, chat rooms, TM and text

messaging, TV, video games, music and computers can all decrease students' ability to learn. Whatever is going on around and within a student's own mind is going to affect his study habits.

According to SheeRa (2012), study habits can be affected by factors such as:

1. Age of a student
2. Home environment
3. Studying materials
4. Television and computer games
5. Social network (face book)
6. Students' determination and aspiration
7. Financial and economic status of parents
8. Surrounding such as entertainment center, games center etc.
9. The rule of the schools
10. The teaching style of teachers
11. The leisure of the students
12. Some activities in schools
13. Availability of library
14. The nature friends and peer group
15. Assignments and homework restriction
16. Students' parents educational background
17. Parents not interested and supportive in helping their children study
18. Household chores
19. Family problems
20. Procrastination and poor time management
21. Students' comfort level
22. The noise level
23. The lighting level and the availability of items that might be necessary to study or to enhance concentration.

Statement of the problem

The extent to which a student excels or performs in his or her studies depends on the kind of study habits he or she develops and uses to a very large extent. A student who develops and utilizes good study habits is likely to perform better in his studies when compared with the one who has bad study habits. Thus, study habit is very instrumental to the academic success of every student at all levels.

However, one wonders the extent to which students in recent times develop and use their study habits; as most of the students in secondary school hardly know how to study. This position is further stressed by Mark and Howard (2009), who are of the opinion that the most common challenge to the success of students in all ramifications is lack of effective or positive (good) study habits. Most students do not have study plan to guide their studies. Some hardly attend classes, do their homework and prepare for their exams etc. This may not be unconnected to the recent abysmal performance of students in both internal and external exams.

Objectives of the study

This study focused on study habit and its impact on secondary schools students' academic performance in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Specifically, this study sought to ascertain relationship between study habits and secondary school students' academic performance in Biology.

Research question

Does study habit have significant relationship with students' academic performance in Biology?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between study habits and secondary schools students' academic performance in Biology.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The choice of this design was informed by the fact that a group of respondents considered to be the representative of the larger population were used for the study. The sample of the study comprised of 1050 secondary school students drawn from 30 schools within the study area. A simple random sampling technique of probability sampling approach was used. In order to gather valid data from the respondents (secondary school students), a close-ended questionnaire designed in a four point likert rating scale of strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed was employed by the researcher. Considering the relatively large size of the sample of the study and the spread of the schools used, the questionnaires were administered on the respondents by the researcher in conjunction with two trained and learned research assistants. The respondents were visited in their respective schools and two weeks were used to gather the data. Thus, data gathered from the respondents were collated and analyzed with chi-square statistical technique.

DATA ANALYSIS

Hypothesis One (H₀₁): There is no significant relationship between study habits and secondary school students' academic performance in biology.

Hypothesis One (H₁): There is significant relationship between study habits and secondary school students' academic performance in biology (Table 1).

To test hypothesis one, chi-square statistical technique was used at 0.05 level of significance and 1 degree of freedom. From Table 1, the calculated chi-square value is 67.36 while the table chi-square value is 3.84. Chi-square decision rule states that if the calculated Chi-square value is greater than the table value, the null hypothesis

Table 1. Study habits and students' academic performance in Biology.

Type	Value	df.Sig.	Level of Sig.
Calculated chi-square	67.36	1	0.05
Table chi-square	3.84	-	-

should be rejected while accepting the alternative hypothesis.

Thus, since the calculated chi-square value of 67.36 is greater than the table chi-square value of 3.84, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance is rejected while upholding the alternative hypothesis which states that there is significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance.

This therefore, implies that there is significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance. That is, when students develop and utilize good study habits, they tend to perform better compared with students who study without plan or with bad study habits.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis 1 sought to determine whether there is significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance. Result obtained showed that there is significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance.

The finding of the study corroborates with the opinion of Marc (2011), who observes that good study habits will contribute to a successful academic future as well as leads to good grades while good grades in turn lead to admissions into better colleges and universities, possibly with a scholarship thrown in. Developing good study habits according to Marc (2011) is very crucial for every student irrespective of his level of education; as it boosts students' ability to be self-disciplined, self-directed and ultimately successful in their degree programs. He further maintained that effective study habits are important part of the learning process.

Having effective study habits according to Marc (2011) as quoted earlier, creates a more efficient academic environment. Planning your study schedule in advance and faithfully sticking to it saves time. When students have good study habits, they would tend to be less stressed. Students who are anxious on exam day are typically the procrastinators who came unprepared. Students who organize their lives and stick to their established study schedules are confident and relaxed at test-taking time. Ashish (2013), admits that if students must ensure academic success throughout the entire year, it is important to ditch bad study habits and

establish good ones. He further maintains that no matter what age or academic level, employing effective studying strategies can make all the difference between acing a class, barely passing or worse, failing miserably.

The result of this study also corroborates with the finding of Onwuegbuzie (2001) who conducted a study to find out the relationship between academic success and study habit. The study reported positive relationship between the two variables (academic success and study habit). In like manner, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (1994) conducted a study to ascertain the relationship between study habits and the academic performance of the students. Findings of the study revealed a positive correlation between study habit and academic achievement (Omotere, 2011).

According to Adeniyi (2011), good study habits allow students to study independently at home and aspire for higher educational career. The formation of good study habits in secondary school level further serves as the basis for students' performance in external examinations such as WAEC, NECO and JAMB, he submits. In the view of Agba (2013), unserious students do study anyhow without specific techniques and he submits that such students are most likely to perform below average.

Thus, he concludes that good study habits help students to- attend classes very often and do so on time. It also helps them to submit their assignment on time, read or prepare very well for tests and exams, take down notes and develop the points independently, ask relevant questions in class; thereby having good grades at the end of the term or semester.

Conclusion

This study investigated study habit and its impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that students within the study area have bad study habits. The study also concludes that there is significant relationship between study habits and secondary school students' academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the findings of the study, the researcher recommended that teachers and school guidance

counselors should collaboratively guide students on how to develop good study habits, thereby enhancing their academic success.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

A systematic review of research into rare diseases in the educational sphere

Leire Darretxe^{1*}, Zuriñe Gaintza² and Javier Monzon-Gonzalez³

¹Department of Didactic and School Organization, University College of Teacher Training, University of the Basque Country, Spain.

²Department of Didactic and School Organization, University College of Teacher Training, University of the Basque, Spain.

³Department of Didactic and School Organization, Faculty of Education, Philosophy and Anthropology, University of the Basque, Spain.

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Rare diseases (RDs) represent a wide, varied group of illnesses characterised by their low prevalence among the population. Moreover, they can appear at any time of life, including in infancy. For this reason, the aim of this article was to review and analyse research in the field of education to find out what kind of educational response is offered by schools to pupils with RDs. The following databases were used to find the pertinent bibliography: Web of Science, Scopus, Education Database (Proquest) and Eric. After retrieving the publications included in this study, each paper was reviewed and analysed on the basis of what journal they were published in and their abstracts. Out of the 53 studies included, only six bore any relation to the school context. The results showed that while there are scientific papers on RDs, most of them are restricted to the medical sphere. It was therefore concluded that further research is needed in the field of education to advance in the schooling of pupils with RDs.

Key words: Rare diseases, inclusive education, school, systematic review.

INTRODUCTION

Rare diseases (RDs) include those disorders that affect a small fraction of the population, < 5 in 10,000 people according to the European Union definition (Taruscio et al., 2011). Despite this low prevalence, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), RDs affect large numbers of people, there being nearly 7,000 RDs, which affect 7% of the world's population. As RDs are a public health issue, there are various sources of information and training, the first source of knowledge about education being the Orphanet database (Kovács et al., 2013).

Analysis of this database reveals that many of the RDs also affect children of school age. For example, some of the RDs that affect children are:

- (1) Dravet syndrome,
- (2) Angelman syndrome,
- (3) West syndrome,
- (4) Prader-Willi syndrome,
- (5) Williams syndrome,
- (6) Stüve-Wiedemann syndrome,

*Corresponding author. E-mail: leire.darretxe@ehu.eus.

- (7) Apert syndrome,
- (8) Ehlers-Danlos syndrome,
- (9) Duchenne muscular dystrophy and Interstitial lung disease.

Depending on the illness, diagnosis of RDs may be possible before birth, at a very early age or it can be taken between the ages of 5 and 30 (Tambuyzer 2010), in most cases being a period of between 10 and 15 years.

Nevertheless, it has been observed that the developmental stage at which the RD appears and is diagnosed essentially matches the school level. That is to say, many children can be diagnosed with RD from the moment they are enrolled at school, and many others will display symptoms while at school that will lead to subsequent diagnosis of RD.

Without any doubt, catering for these pupils will be a challenge for any school, since it is the job of the inclusive school to adapt and adjust the context itself to foster an education accessible to all children (Bryant et al., 2008).

As Rose (2002) points out, teaching staff must be aware of their pupils' needs and be able to give an educational response to meet these needs. But what happens when this need involves minority diversity? More so, what happens when these needs are not known, even in the medical sphere? In general terms, it can be said that teachers do not feel qualified to perform the tasks that the inclusive school sometimes demands of them (McLeskey and Waldron, 2002; Scott et al., 1998). Therefore, thought must be given to the fact that there may be a pupil in the class with an RD of which even the name is unfamiliar to them and they are unsure how to adapt their educational response in the classroom.

Faced with this situation, and in order to provide teachers with the minimum of knowledge they need to fit their educational response to pupils with RD. For this reason, the aim of this article was to review and analyse research in the field of education to find out what kind of educational response is offered by schools to pupils with RDs.

Rare disorders

While the definition of RDs is based on the concept of prevalence or the maximum number of patients in a region, ranging in approximate terms from 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 10,000 people (Ayme et al., 2015), it differs from country to country (Dragusin et al., 2013; Facey et al., 2014; Facey and Hansen 2015). There is no single description of RDs for everybody (Cui and Han, 2015). Despite this lack of consensus, RDs display common specific features, which are:

- (1) Low prevalence among the population,

- (2) A wide diversity of diseases and symptoms,
- (3) Difficulty in diagnosing many of them and,
- (4) A lack of effective therapies (Taruscio et al., 2014b).

Even though, as already pointed out, RDs are pathologies with a low prevalence, there are large numbers of people in the world with RDs, as according to the World Health Organization there are about 7,000 existing RDs. Experts estimate that around 400 million people around the world are patients with some RD or the other (von der Schulenburg & Frank 2015). This figure is corroborated by Fagnan et al. (2015), who point out that at world level RDs affect about 350 million people.

It can therefore be stated that RDs are a broad, varied group of serious, incapacitating illnesses. Many RDs are complex, degenerative, chronic and debilitating, while others are compatible with a "normal" life if they are diagnosed in time and if given suitable treatment (Moliner and Waligora, 2013). These diseases can appear at any phase of life and their diagnosis is often difficult and late (García, 2013; von der Schulenburg and Frank 2015).

Diagnosis of the disease nearly always means a cul-de-sac in treatment terms. Due to the features of RDs, providing adequate treatment is more difficult than with common diseases (Schultz et al., 2012). Treatment varies in each case and only some RDs can be treated with medication known as orphan medicines (Ramalle et al., 2015).

Unfortunately, designation of a "rare" disease is associated with some substantial profits for the companies that play a role in developing new drugs. These drugs, known as orphan medicines, have major financial implications both for pharmaceutical concerns and for insurers (Clarke et al. 2014). On the other hand, RD patients and their families often require more social and health resources than most, and have to devote a large proportion of their household budget to meeting these needs (García, 2013). This fact causes not only financial problems for patients and their families but also psychological ones (Taruscio et al., 2014a).

In view of the difficulties encountered by people with RDs, they are beginning to join together and different associations are emerging to study, explain, and combat the impact the disease has on their lives. Since the 1980s, these patients' organizations have been meeting to help advance therapies and research (Brouard-Lapointe et al., 2015).

Thus, for example, in the United States in the 80s and in Europe in the 90s certain patients' organizations helped to take care of social justice and fairness regarding questions on RDs (Rabeharisoa et al., 2014). Both in the USA, with the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) and in Europe, with the European Organization for Rare Disorders (EURORDIS), these organizations have influenced policy in their respective countries. While these alliances are forming more slowly

elsewhere in the world, organizations of this kind also exist in, for example, Taiwan and Japan in the eastern Asia and in Columbia in Latin America.

References on RDs do not only appear in Europe and the United States. Research in this area is also emerging in other countries including China, Brazil, Russia and Australia. In China, public awareness on RDs has risen in the last decade, though no legislation exists on developing treatments (Cui and Han, 2015). China has no official definition for RDs, and the official World Health Organization existing definition is not sufficient to guide the Chinese government in developing specific strategies on orphan medicines.

In Brazil, RDs are receiving more attention than in the past (Fioravanti 2014). In Russia, Fedyaeva et al. (2014) state that classifying and prioritizing RDs is crucial to determining what state support measures are justified. And in Australia, despite having some of the best health indices, in the field of RDs the country is trailing behind other developed nations (Kirby, 2012).

With regard to the United States, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Office of Orphan Product Development (OOPD) defines an RD as an "orphan" disease affecting less than 200,000 patients. It is estimated that 25 to 30 million Americans are affected by one of the more than 6,800 RDs recognised by the US National Institute of Health (NIH) (Fagnan et al., 2015; Groft 2013). This means that about 6% of the general population of the USA has a rare disease (Groft and Rubinstein 2013).

In Europe, according to EURORDIS, an RD is any illness that affects a small percentage of the population (1 in 2,000). Despite their low prevalence, put together they account for 6 to 8% of the population, affecting between 27 and 36 million people (Moliner and Waligora, 2013; Taruscio et al., 2014b). The EURORDIS patients' organization is dedicated to improving quality of life for people suffering some kind of RD. In this respect, it has played a part in setting up Centers of Expertise (CE) and European Reference Networks (ERNs) for people with RDs since 2004. CEs are defined as highly specialized physical structures for dealing with and caring for patients with RDs. Their role is to offer high-quality care: to speed up the process of early, appropriate diagnosis and make adequate treatment possible for patients.

Monitoring of RDs is assured at regional, national, European or international level. Each CE specializes in a single RD or in a group of them in order to meet both the medical and social needs of patients. The designation of CEs is an important step as it provides the basis for connection to the next level of cooperation at ERN level (Ayme and Rodwell, 2014; Taruscio et al., 2014b). ERNs represent the best way to speed up access to appropriate and timely diagnosis as well as suitable care, since they are networks to share experience by connecting CEs together at European level (Andersen et al., 2014).

The same authors state that on 24th October 2011,

EURORDIS contributed to the approval of the Recommendation of the European Committee of Experts on Rare Diseases (EUCERD), whose subsequent job was to make recommendations for setting up both CEs and ERNs. EUCERD was recently replaced by the Commission Expert Group on Rare Diseases (Ayme and Rodwell, 2014; Taruscio et al., 2014a). Another major step forward in the level of cooperation came about in 2009, when NORD and EURORDIS signed a memorandum of understanding, formalizing an alliance between the two organizations (Mavris and Dunkle, 2014). The purpose of this alliance is to connect patients and patients' organizations in the USA and Europe, focusing particularly on areas related to education, awareness, advocacy and public policy. Thus, it can be said that the current community of people with RDs is becoming a co-international movement.

The different levels of cooperation proposed up to now form part of an institutional framework all work as official bodies and submit their respective statutes. However, communication via social networks should not be forgotten. In the case of RDs, due to their low prevalence and the lack of experience, on the one hand patients are obliged to seek knowledge about their own condition using the net (Budysh et al., 2012). Social networks of patients offer people with specific health problems the chance to share experiences as well as to seek, receive and provide information, advice and even emotional support online (Torrente et al., 2010).

On the other hand, researchers feel the need to fall back on social media to find out about a particular RD and at the same time to share knowledge with other researchers who are probably far from where they are. Like this, Facebook, Internet forums and traditional website become contexts for conducting research (Schumacher et al., 2014). According to Facey et al. (2014), new forms of research using social networks, blogs, etc. can prove to be valuable resources to connect patients all over the world and so help to describe their illness and its impact. Both social networks and the job done by patient support networks have helped to considerably raise public awareness of RDs in recent years.

In recent decades recognition that RDs are an important medical and social problem has grown constantly in the public mind as a result of the work of active advocacy groups which include academics and politicians (Schieppati et al., 2008).

Doctors must recognize the active role of patients in approaching planning processes, while patients must play a part in innovation and change (Schultz et al., 2012). In fact, it is undeniable that people with RDs are playing an active, decisive role in determining policy and research projects (Luzzatto et al., 2015; Moliner and Waligora 2013). Numerous experts opt for patient-centered research to provide better-quality services for RDs (Facey and Hansen, 2015; Kesselheim et al., 2015).

Table 1. Results from international databases.

Term in the title	Web of science	SCOPUS	Education database (Proquest)	ERIC	Total
"Rare diseases"	1119	1894	24	2	3039
+ "Education"	6	8	0	0	14
+ "Educational"	2	1	0	0	3
+ "Inclusion"	0	1	0	0	1
+ "Integration"	2	3	0	0	5
+ "Mainstreaming"	0	0	0	0	0
+ "School"	1	0	0	0	1
+ "Teacher"	0	0	0	0	0
+ "Support teacher"	0	0	0	0	0
+ "Students"	4	1	0	0	5
+ "Classroom"	0	0	0	0	0
+ "Special needs"	1	0	0	0	1
+ "Disability"	6	7	1	1	15
+ "Curriculum"	1	1	0	0	2
+ "Methodology"	10	7	0	0	17
+ "Collaboration"	7	9	0	0	16

With this study, as professionals in the educational sphere in favour of inclusive schools, we set out to consider the issue of RDs from an educational point of view. As already pointed out, the aim of this paper was to review and analyse research in the field of education to find out what kind of educational response is offered by schools to pupils with RDs.

METHODOLOGY

Search procedures

Using the Web of Science, Scopus, Education Database (Proquest) and Eric database systems, between the years 2000 and 2016, a computer search of the literature was conducted. While Web of Science and Scopus are multi-disciplinary databases, the other two databases selected (Education Database Proquest and Eric) are specific to the educational sphere.

Initially, to find out what research existed in the field of RDs, the term "rare diseases" was searched for in the title of the paper. Subsequently, to find out how many pieces of research corresponded to the educational sphere, the above term was combined with others related to education. Before beginning the search, an iterative process of searches for tests was undertaken to determine which search terms would find the widest range of relevant studies. This used term was already used in other reviews related to schools or inclusive education (Alkhateeb et al., 2016; Begeny and Martens, 2007; Demetriou et al., 2015).

In this way, 15 search terms were established: "education", "educational", "inclusion", "integration", "mainstreaming", "school", "teacher", "support teacher", "students", "classroom", "special needs", "disability", "curriculum", "methodology", "collaboration".

Inclusion criteria

As pointed out earlier, the searches were for the term in the title. If

the title suggested that the research could meet the criteria for inclusion, the abstract of the article was then examined. If the abstract indicated that the research did deal with RDs in the educational sphere, then the paper was ordered and reviewed to determine whether the study did in fact match the criteria for inclusion. Initially, a study was included if it fulfilled the following conditions:

- (1) It was published between the year 2000 and December 2016.
- (2) The term was included in the title.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This analysis led to a total of 80 documents being included in the review (Table 1). On the one hand, searching for the term "rare diseases" as a title of studies, both in the Web of Science database and in Scopus, gave quite a lot of results.

However, when education-specific databases like Education Database Proquest and Eric were used, hardly any academic articles relating to RDs were to be found. On the other hand, when the search term was supplemented by another related to the educational sphere, the results were considerably less. Only 3.5% in the Web of Science database and 2% in Scopus had any education-related term in the title. There was a much more drastic reduction in the number of studies in the education-specific Proquest database.

The study by Cismondi et al. (2015) that set out to develop guidelines for improving scientific knowledge about RDs found a situation similar to that shown by this study. When the database in the medical field pub MED was analysed for the period 2005 to 2014 it showed that 12,646 papers on RDs had been published, but when the

term medical education was specified the number fell to 377. The study concluded that, “the issue of medical education in RDs is not ‘specifically’ described in the articles analyzed”.

Out of the 80 shown in Table 1, a total of 27 papers were in more than one database, so in the end the study had 53 papers. These papers where there appeared to be a link between RDs and education were analysed in detail, revealing the following:

As regards the journal in which they were published, it was found that the vast majority, 97.4%, appeared in journals indexed in databases in the medical field, MEDLINE and/or Embase and/or pub Med, etc. After reading the abstracts it was found that, even though one of the terms in the educational sphere appeared in the title, the content of the paper was medical. Some were related to the training of medical and healthcare staff in the field of RDs (Jinnah, 2011; Van Karnebeek et al., 2012). Others had to do with university studies and knowledge, as in the case - for example - of the paper by Cismondi et al. (2015), which addressed the educational issues associated with particular rare diseases in the curricula of Health Sciences and Professional Training Programs. Many others presented a study related to a particular RD, for example that by Chisolm et al. (2014) or that by Smith et al. (2014).

Thus, only six (Barrio and Castro, 2008; Han, 2008; Lee and Lee, 2014; Lin et al., 2013; Silibello et al., 2016; Waldman et al., 2008) of the studies analysed were at all related or included any information of interest to the education/school sphere.

These papers showed no general pattern and each of them had its own characteristics. The paper by Lin et al. (2013) described a general demographic picture of patients with rare diseases and the prevalence of rare diseases over time, age and gender distributions.

The study highlighted that the incidence of RDs increased significantly in children from 3 to 5 years old and schoolchildren from 6 to 14 years old. This only confirms the fact that there may be pupils with RDs in schools. The study by Waldman et al. (2008) underlined that one of the common features of RDs is the social consequences that impact on schooling, these pupils' future jobs and free time with friends.

Two papers published in 2008 focused on the educational response needed by pupils with RDs, arguing that as they have more complex educational needs it is essential to offer educational support strategies (Han, 2008) as well as good coordination between school and family (Barrio and Castro 2008).

Also in the school context, the study by Lee and Lee (2014) recorded the experiences and needs of pupils diagnosed with a particular RD, specifically congenital vascular malformation. Going a little further in the analysis of the situation of people with RDs, the study by Silibello et al. (2016) recorded, through questionnaires,

the voice of 154 families with children with RDs in the school context.

This study confirmed both the existence of pupils with RDs in ordinary schools and that of an educational response aimed at them. However, despite the existence of this response, parents with severely disabled children were less happy with the education system than the rest and considered family-centred attention and multi-disciplinary work to be essential (Silibello et al., 2016).

The four papers directly related to the school context all point out that: these pupils were considered pupils with special educational needs; they needed both educational support and adaptations to the curriculum; maximum knowledge of pupils with RDs was needed in order to tailor the educational response; and multi-disciplinary work was needed between the different professionals to improve quality of life for these people and their families.

Conclusions

It can nevertheless be concluded that, on the one hand, this study shows there is interest in research into RDs in the medical sphere, and on the other that there are pupils with RDs in ordinary schools. There is very little research in the latter sphere to determine, as this study aimed to do, what kind of educational response is offered to pupils with RDs in schools. Therefore, in this sphere we see a need to call for more attention to be paid to research, to transform and make progress in the educational response to pupils with RDs within the framework of inclusive schooling.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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