

Students' Attitude and Interest as Correlates of Students' Academic Performance in Home Economics in Junior Secondary School

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship in the students' attitude to Home Economics, students' interest and academic performance of student in Home Economics in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Subject for the study were two hundred and ten (210) JSS II Home Economics students randomly drawn from seven (7) Junior secondary schools in Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State, Nigeria. The research design adopted was a descriptive survey research which was questionnaire based and past terminal continuous assessment results of the students involved in the study. The instruments used to collect relevant data from the subjects were Home Economics Attitudinal Scale (HECAS), Home Economics Interest Scale (HECIS) and terminal continuous assessment results. The instruments were subjected to validity and reliability mechanism. Pearson Product Moment correlation(r) statistical analysis was used to analysed the two null hypotheses formulated for the study. The findings showed that there is significant relationship in the student attitude to Home Economics and student academic performance in Home Economics, and the findings also revealed that there is significant relationship in the student interest in Home Economics and student academic performance in Home Economics. Conclusion and recommendations were also made in this paper.

Keywords: Attitude, student's attitude, Interest, student's interest and academic performance.

Introduction

The National Policy on Education (2007) describes a two tier of secondary education lasting for a period of six years. A child is required to spend the first three years of secondary education in junior secondary school (JSS) and another three years in senior secondary school (SSS) if a student's performs well in both continuous assessment (C.A) and terminal examinations (Badmus, 2007). According to NPE (2007), the junior secondary school shall be both pre-vocational and academic. Emphasized among the pre-vocational subjects proposed for junior secondary school is home-economics.

Grace (2005) cited Mugenda (1995) that in 1959, the American Home Economics Association defined home economics as the field of knowledge and service primarily concerned with strengthening family life through educating individuals for family living, improving the services and goods used for families, conducting research to determine the changing needs of individuals and families, and the means of satisfying those needs, furthering community, national and world conditions favourable to family living.

Also, Mugenda (1995) as quoted by Grace (2005) that in the late 1970's at the International Federation of Home Economics Council's meeting, the definition of home economics was examined again. The council defined home economics as a discipline that is concerned with using, developing and managing human and material resources for the benefit of individuals and families, institutions, and the community. This involves the study and research in sciences and the arts concerned with different aspects of family life and its interaction with the physical economic and social environment.

Moreover, Uko-Aviomoh (2005) as cited by Joe Project store (2018), home economics is a skill-oriented field of study that is expected to equip learners with survival skills that make for self-reliance, employment and paid employment. Home-economics is a broad field of knowledge and services concerned with all phases of family life, it's a course designed to promote a healthy home and society.

Home Economics is the only curriculum area that focuses on practical living skills related to family. Junior secondary school (JSS) Home Economics curriculum is designed to provide learners with basic intellectual and practical education knowledge relevant to Nigeria society. According to Badmus (2007) it is also part of the aim of the curriculum to prepare youth formally for jobs as well.

The attitude towards home economics has been that it is a female domain, a subject for the less gifted children and an easy subject. Grace (2005) quoting Muthui (1981) in a study on "the teaching of clothing and textiles in secondary schools" revealed that the most disliked area of home science was clothing and textiles because there were no commercial patterns available. Also, Joe Project store (2018) asserts that the term Home-Economics may call up stereotypical images of girls busily sewing and cooking, images that have led many people to view this field as fundamentally narrow, dull and socially conservative. So often,

home economics has been cast as a conspiracy to keep women in the kitchen, an interpretation that overlooked its impressive and diverse contributions. Home economics is one of the compulsory pre-vocational subjects taught at junior secondary education level in Nigerian education system.

In Nigeria, in spite of the enormous role that home economics plays in human existence and nation development, academic performance of students in junior secondary school is nothing to write home about due to adverse effect of their attitude towards the subject and negative interest in the subject.

Adesoji (2002) defined attitude as cognitive, emotional, and action tendency to a particular behavioural intent. He ascertained that attitude is an important factor that determined achievement of students in sciences. Akinyemi (2009) stated that attitude are required through learning and can be changed through persuasion using variety of techniques. Also, Awodun (2015) in his study on the effects of out-door activities on students' learning outcomes in senior secondary school Physics in Ekiti State defines attitude as an opinion or general feeling about something. Attitude, once established, helps to shape the experiences the individual has with an object, subject or person. Although attitude changes gradually, people constantly form new attitudes and modify old ones when they are exposed to new information and new experiences (Adesina and Akinbobola, 2005). Students' attitude towards science is more likely to influence achievement in science courses than achievement influencing attitude (O'Connel, 2000).

Interest is a feeling of curiosity or concern about something that makes attention turn towards it (Encarta Dictionary, 2004). As opined by Hidi, Renninger and Krapp (2004), personal interest develops slowly and tends to have long-lasting effects on a person's knowledge and values, whereas situational interest is an emotional state that is evoked suddenly by something in the immediate environment and that may have only a short term effect on an individual's knowledge and values. Situation interest is aroused as a function of the interestingness of the content and context and partially under the regulation of teachers (Schraw and Lehman, 2001). Various researches have indicated positive relationships between students interest and learning (Trumper, 2006 ; Elster, 2007 and Logan and Skamp, 2008). However, there are also many findings that shows that interest declines as students pass through the secondary school years (Chiappetta and Koballa, 2006 and Babalola and David, 2011).

It is against this background that this study therefore intends to examine the student's attitude and interest as correlates of student academic performance in Home Economics in Junior Secondary Schools in Ikere Local Government Area, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at $p < 0.05$:

1. There is no significant relationship in the student's attitude to Home Economics and student's academic performance in Home Economics.
2. There is no significant relationship in the student's interest in Home Economics and student's academic performance in Home Economics.

Methodology

This was a descriptive survey research which was questionnaire based and past terminal continuous assessment results of the students involved in the study. The population of the study was all Junior Secondary class two (JSS II) Home Economics students in all the public Junior secondary schools in Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State, Nigeria.

A total of two hundred and ten (210) JSS II Home Economics students, which were randomly selected from seven (7) public junior secondary schools in Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State, formed the sample (i.e. 30 Home Economics Students from each school). The sample comprises of ninety (90) male and one hundred and twenty (120) female JSS II Home Economics students. The researchers made personal contact with all the selected schools and collected the following:

- (1) Terminal continuous assessment scores of JSS II Home Economics students, and
- (2) The responses of the students involved in the study to the: Home Economics Attitudinal Scale (HECAS) and Home Economics Interest Scale (HECIS).

The instruments were subjected to validity and reliability mechanism and they were found appropriate for the study. The researchers administered HECAS and HECIS on the respondents and the terminal continuous assessment scores of the respondent were also collected from their school authorities.

Pearson Product Moment correlation(r) statistical analysis was used to analysed the two null hypotheses formulated for the study.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship in the students' attitude to Home Economics and students' academic performance in Home Economics.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of Students' Attitude to Home Economics And Students' Academic Performance in Home Economics

VARIABLE	N	X	SD	df	r-cal	r-tab	Remark
Students' Attitude to Home Economics	210	11.52	0.375	208	0.287	0.164	*
Students' Academic Performance	210	8.23	0.312				

$P < 0.05$ (* = Result is Significant at 0.05 level)

The result in table 1 showed that 'r' value, r_{cal} (0.287) with a P value < 0.05 alpha level is greater than the critical r_{tab} (0.164). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, which means that there is significant relationship in the students' attitude to Home Economics and students' academic performance in Home Economics. The study also revealed that students' attitude to Home Economics ($X = 11.52$) have higher disposition towards academic performance in Home Economics.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship in the student's interest in Home Economics and student's academic performance in Home Economics.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of Students' Interest in Home Economics and Students' Academic Performance in Home Economics

VARIABLE	N	X	SD	df	r-cal	r-tab	Remark
Students' Interest in Home Economics	210	11.46	0.312	208	0.277	0.164	*
Students' Academic Performance	210	9.20	0.264				

$P < 0.05$ (* = Result is Significant at 0.05 level)

The result in table 2 showed that 'r' value, r_{cal} (0.277) with a P value < 0.05 alpha level is greater than the critical r_{tab} (0.164). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, which means that there is significant relationship in the students' interest in Home Economics and students' academic performance in Home Economics. The study also revealed that students' interest in Home Economics ($X = 11.46$) have higher disposition towards academic performance in Home Economics.

Discussion

As shown in table 1, there is significant relationship in the students' attitude to Home Economics and students' academic performance in Home Economics. The findings agreed with that of O'Connel (2000) that students' attitude towards science is more likely to influence achievement in science courses than achievement influencing attitude. It also agreed with the finding of Akinyemi (2009) that improved students' attitude toward a particular subject will enhance students' performance in the subject.

Similarly, as shown in table 2, there is significant relationship in the student's interest in Home Economics and student's academic performance in Home Economics. The findings agreed with that of Trumper (2006), Elster (2007) and Logan and Skamp (2008) that indicated positive relationships between students' interest and learning in their various findings. However, there are also many findings that shows that interest declines as students pass through the secondary school years (Chiappetta and Koballa, 2006 and Babalola and David, 2011).

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, the findings revealed that there was statistical significant relationship in the students' attitude to home-economics and students' academic performance in Home Economics.

Findings also revealed that there was statistical significant relationship in the students' interest in home-economics and students' academic performance in home-economics.

Recommendations

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

- Home Economics educators should encourage the use of better teaching method that would stimulate students' positive attitude towards Home Economics.
- Home Economics educators should encourage the use of better teaching method that would stimulate students' interest in Home Economics.

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