RELEVANCE OF SCHOOL CLUBS IN ENHANCING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Abstract

School clubs are student-led groups or organizations in schools that focus on a particular interest such as press club, debate group, science club, Mathematics club among others. These clubs contribute significantly to the students' academic performance as well as the general development of them as human beings. This is because these clubs broaden the scope of school activities beyond the confines of the curriculum and by extension helping the child to make adjustments in the larger society on graduation from school. This paper is an assessment of the effects of school clubs among secondary school students primarily in terms of their academic performance. It also assessed the impact on them in the development of social, emotional, psychological and leadership skills. From the discourse, it was established that students who participate in school clubs academically performed better than those that do not participate. That these clubs help in the development of skill sets in social, emotional, leadership, and psychological aspects of humanity. Conclusively, it is the opinion of these authors that government at all tiers in Nigeria should prioritize the formation of school clubs as a policy by clearly defining their modus oparandi with a view of re-lunching it in the educational fabric of Nigeria.

Keywords: ***Academic Performance, School Clubs, Students***

Introduction

Education could be summarized as the process of development and transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next one. It involves teaching and learning with aim of developing the physical, mental, emotional, social, moral and spiritual aspects of life. It is categorized into primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Among the categories of education, the secondary level accommodates adolescent students who are associated with the period of transition from childhood to young adulthood. This is a critical period of human development characterized by rapid physical, emotional and psychological changes. Therefore, it is pertinent that the secondary level of education should be equipped with all necessary tools and means of informing and grooming these young ones to a complete human. It is against this backdrop that the assessment of the effects of school clubs on academic performance among secondary school students in fulfilling the goal of education is considered.

The word 'education' is derived from the Latin words *Educare*, *Educere*, *Educo* and *Educatum*. '*Educare*' means 'to bring up' or to 'nourish', '*Educere*' means 'to draw out' or to 'manifest', '*Educo*' means 'to lead out of', '*Educatum*' means 'act of teaching or instruction' '*Educere*' also means to draw out or to manifest (Eduhutch, 2014). The term *Educare* or *Educere* mainly indicates development of the latent faculties of a child. Thus, education could be seen as the process of development and transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next generation which involves the transmission of knowledge, values and skills among others that would make the individual become a functional member of the society he or she belongs. The object of education is to develop physical, mental, emotional, social, moral and spiritual aspects of life. It is a lifelong process.

Aim of Education

The aims of education can properly be understood in the light of two different philosophies which are idealism and pragmatism.

Idealism stands for absolute, ultimate, eternal and universal values. It promotes high ideals of life. These are mainly spiritual in nature and approach. Idealism seeks knowledge for knowledge's sake." Therefore, in an idealist society, education is for the general and moral development of a person. According to idealism, the aims of education are spiritual and idealistic in nature and are predetermined, absolute, unchangeable and universal. The aim of idealist education is to realize these pre-existing, absolute and universal values. It is education for complete living (Adeyinka & Paulley: 2023). It is education for yesterday, today, and forever.

Pragmatism on other hand deals with life as it is and not as it should be. It is also known as the realistic approach to life. In realism the existing or prevailing social, political and economic conditions of life are taken into consideration. The existing conditions of life determine the aims of pragmatic education. Pragmatism does not believe in absolute and eternal values.

Karl Marx was a materialist thinker, so he emphasized material aim of education, i.e., the practical economic needs of man. In a materialist society, educational aims are based on the materialistic outlook of the people. In such a society, moral or spiritual values have nothing to do with education but the idealist society tries to glorify these values and emphasize moral upliftment of personality.

The socio-political ideologies also determine the aims of education in modern times. A democratic government, a fascist government, and a communist government; each one formulates its own ends and means of education. Democratic ideals of life are flexible and change with the changing conditions of life. Hence, education must prepare the future generation for the economic and social system of the country. In determining its educational objectives, every country has to take into consideration its economic conditions. Thus, we find, inconsistency is the nature of educational aims across the world.

Some other thinkers had contrary views to Karl Marx. Plato considered that the guardians of the state should have high philosophical ideals. John Locke emphasized "the disciplined and well-ordered mind." Hegel stress on idealistic aim of education saying, glorification of the state and the fulfillment of the will of the absolute.

Types of Education

Education can be divided into three categories namely informal, formal, and non-formal education. However, in the paper we shall make reference to the formal and non-formal as the focus of the discourse is situated in formal type.

a. **Formal Education**: Formal education according to Ngaka, Openjuru & Mazur (2012) means a hierarchically structured and chronologically graded educational system, which starts at pre-school and continues through university where academic studies including a variety of specialized programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training take place. Children, families and adults voluntarily participate in formal education because they believe that formal education will provide a certificate or diploma for their children and these official documents will help them receive a higher level of education and to build a better professional career and life. It is important to state here that governments are pleased to see that people demand more formal education so that they get better employment opportunities at the end of formal education.

Contrarily, if people do not get better employment opportunities and positions when they graduate, they may lose their desire to continue and participate in formal education (Hasan, 2018). Modern formal education is divided into three categories or tiers which are, primary, secondary, and tertiary.

b. **Non-Formal Education:** Non-formal education on the other hand according to Ngaka, Openjuru & Mazur (2012) refers to that type of education which does not take place in formally structured schools such as a university campus, government primary and secondary education facilities. Non-formal education may cause children to develop desirable or undesirable behaviours. The environment plays a crucial part in this point. Even if it is impossible to monitor students out of school, parents should know where their children play and with whom they spend time.

Non-formal education is intended for citizens who have never entered the formal educational system to develop their skills, e.g. in order to have a better professional career. Additionally, non-formal education may accompany formal education and may appear in many different forms. For example, improving reading and writing skills of citizens, professional development in a specific field, learning about a healthy life style, teaching socialization processes to immigrants and acquiring the habit of spending time productively is non-formal education (Hasan, 2018). With modern facilities such as the various components of internet including Artificial Intelligence (AI), non-formal education could be taken from home or any other place of choice.

3) **Informal Education**

Informal education is a means of education that does not correspond with the organized and systematic view of education. It does not include subjects and objectives usually encompassed by the traditionally known curricula or way of education. It is mostly aimed at the larger public and it imposes no obligation. Informal education does not provide degrees or diplomas, it is a supplementary way of education for Formal and Non- formal type of education. Informal education includes, listening to a television or radio broadcast on scientific or other educational themes, participation in scientific contests, visiting of museums and other historic environments, attending of conferences, seminars and the likes, reading of magazine, newspapers, journals and other educational texts, having group chat or discussion on themes that are educative, among others.

Overview of the Origin of School Clubs

The development of school clubs could be traced to the second and third decades of the 20th century (1911-1931) in the United States of America when these clubs were found to be on the increase in a number of schools (Maris, 1934). If the school curriculum had been based more on students' activities taken from normal living experiences and in accordance with the interest and aptitude levels of the different age groups, there would not have been the extreme need for school clubs as it is indicated by the great number and variety of clubs now organized in public high/secondary schools across the globe.

Schools which have had experience in opening industrial arts shops after school hours to pupils who wish to come on a voluntary basis to work on club types of projects, under the general supervision of an instructor willing to give extra time for this work, testify to the interest of the students for such activities. It sometimes occurs, especially in junior high schools that more students are found working in the shops after school hours on such construction projects as model airplanes, model boats, gliders, radio sets, printed notices, etc., than are found in all the industrial arts classes during the day (Maris, 1934). Again, students in drafting courses and in art courses sometimes organize clubs for the purpose of carrying on group and individual projects in which they have special interests. The projects undertaken by the club as a unit organization are usually for the school or for some community

purpose; the individual projects undertaken by the members, when completed, are usually kept by the pupil for his own use or disposed of by him as a gift or sale. In some instances, a member of a club undertakes a project, on contract, for an outside person.

A further illustration is to be had from the fact that pupils in home economics courses sometimes organize catering clubs for the purpose of serving school and outside organizations by special arrangements. In all these cases the club work is characterized by practical types of activities and includes opportunities for Projects which accord with normal living experiences, thus meeting the needs of the pupil for functional types of self-expressions for which the school curriculum does not make adequate provisions.

School club activities has forced itself into the global school programmes, not as subject in the curriculum of studies but as a part of a programme of school activities recognized as desirable and accepted as a responsibility of schools in their efforts to provide ways and means for the realization of generally accepted aims of education. The major reason for the development of the school clubs resonates in the wake of changes taking place in educational philosophy, educational psychology and principles governing educational practices. These changes are strengthened by the following. That

a. education is not a preparation for life, it is life;
b. the child learns to do by doing;
c. the school curriculum should be composed of functional activities representative of normal experiences in life;
d. students activities in the curriculum should be in accordance with their interest and ability levels of the different age groups;
e. individual differences among students as to aptitudes and interests are to be taken into consideration in providing an educational programme;
f. adolescents are gregarious;
g. social or group approval is a strong factor in the control of an educational situation;
h. students are to be provided with opportunities for self-expression in a variety of ways;
i. provisions should be made for exploration in a variety of activities;
j. opportunities are to be provided for the exercise of initiatives;
k. the educational programme is to contribute to social adjustment; and
l. the educational programme should include opportunities for training the individual to do better in those desirable things which the child will do anyway.

The development of school clubs has been a means of broadening the scope of school activities beyond the confines of the curriculum, with a consequent enlargement of the contribution the school toward the adjustment of the individual to society. One reason for the ready acceptance of school club activities in the high/secondary schools is the fact that changes in the school curriculum to meet new conditions in education are not readily accomplished. A great deal of inertia exists in the school curriculum. Because of this, both new and old subjects are presented from a new angle or by a new procedure often brought into the school as extra-curriculum activities, that is, activities outside or beyond the bounds and compass of the school curriculum. Subject clubs such as Mathematics Club represents a new method of attack or a different emphasis or both for a subject, which has not been accepted as a curriculum practice. Other clubs such as Press clubs, debate groups among others represent functional activities of a practical type in subjects not included in the curriculum of the school in which they are organized.

The amount and variety of work now carried on by schools as extra-curriculum activities, including school clubs, represents so large a development that the question has been raised as to whether or not the extras may not come to make a major contribution to the aims of secondary education. It is to be noted, however, in connection with this thought that there is a tendency to broaden the school curriculum by taking over extra-curriculum activities. Today an activity that is treated as an extra-curriculum matter in one school is included in the curriculum of another school. This practice naturally operates against the rate of increase in extra-curriculum activities. In the case of school clubs, the numerous phases of life experiences included as activities, the organization of the work so as to make a strong appeal to the pupil for participation in the club programme, and the opportunities afforded the members for initiative warrant the statement that in many schools the work carried on by school clubs constitutes a large fraction of the total activities that contribute directly and specifically to the adaptation of the pupil to society about him.

(Adopted from the United States Department of Interior, Bulletin 1934, No. 18)

Impact of School Clubs on Academic Performance of Students

School clubs classed in the region of extra-curricular activity in the doctrine of the educational systems, has its merits and demerits on the academic life of participating students. According to (Zhanna & Olav, 2022) studyconducted in Russia, 2021 titled, "Extracurricular Activities and Educational Outcomes: Evidence from High-Performing Schools in St Petersburg, Russia."High/Secondary school students participation in extracurricular activities such as school clubs impacts positively on their grades, and with higher levels of university aspirations.

The statistical analysis the study "The Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Student Achievement The Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Student Achievement at the High School Level" (Steven, 2012) conducted in the United States of America indicated that there was not a statistical significant difference between participation in sports and grade point average, had slightly higher grade point averages than the students that did not participate in sports. The results also indicated that there was a significant difference between participation in music and grade point average. The students that participated in music programmes had a higher grade point average than the students that did not participate in the music programmes. Also, the results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference, between participation in school clubs and grade point average. The students that participated in school clubs had a significantly higher grade point average than students that did not participate in clubs. The data does show that the students that were involved in some type of extracurricular activity (varsity sports, school music programmes, or school clubs) had higher grade point averages than the students that were not involved in any activities.

Similar study in 2016 titled: "The Impact of Club Participation in Student's Lives" conducted in Bangladesh buttressed similar results (Hamidullah & Hafiz Uddin, 2017). The researchers stated that, the club activities truly have positive impact on student's life that means, the significant of club participation in student's lives is huge and now it is proved by the majority of the student's affirmative responses. Beside this, it is also needed to show that the majority of students are already part of it and rest of. It also indicated a positive view on club activity rather real life self-development involvement. Furthermore, most of the surveyed students believes that club activities have lots of benefit than any other self-development activity. Even though, students are getting a lot of assistance to enhance their academic performances with achieving extra ordinary behavioural expertise. Moreover, these accomplishments can make their career fruitful in the long run according to student's opinion.

Also, a study in Kenya titled, "Influence of Science Club Activities (SCA) on Secondary School Students' Interest and Achievement in Physics in Vihiga County of Keny" established similar results (Esokomi, Indoshi, & Odour, 2016). The results showed that participants of the science club activities (SCA) slightly out-performed non-participants on Physics Achievement Test (PAT). The efficacy of science club activities (SCA) can be attributed to the fact that they encouraged direct interaction between students on concepts of interest and hence allow multiple approaches to learning. The learning emanates from discussion, research, presentations and open inquiry which are practiced by learners and are active methods or child centre approaches to learning. Science club activities (SCA) also provided learners with room of interpersonal communication and collaboration skills as they are exposed learners to team-based problem solving especially when working on science congress projects.

In another study in the Philippines, undertaken (Maribeth & Revina, 2023)thefindings revealed that the school clubs and organizations are extremely relevant to the students' personal and social well-being. This implies that the participants valued and acknowledged the importance of the activities and services as well as the existence of the clubs in their life as students. It also showed that the clubs and organizations are extremely effective in exposing students to a variety of activities designed to meet their interests and needs in maintaining good academic standing. It further posited that the different webinars and activities conducted by the clubs and organizations effectively contribute to the holistic development of the students. And it also revealed that the clubs and organizations contributed to the holistic development and wellness of the students.

In Nigeria, a research titled "Influence of Co-curricular Activities on Senior Secondary School Students' Academic Achievement in English Language in Nigeria" discovered that there is significant influence in students' participation in co-curricular activities and their academic achievement (Alabere, Kamrul, & Taye Fatima, 2015). The result of the study revealed that literary and debating society and press club are the most active activity among students. It further revealed that the period of involvement in co-curricular activities has significant influence on students' academic achievement and it indicated that 685 out of 800 respondents are members of co-curricular activities. In agreement with this finding, Hafiz and Tudor (Hafiz & Tudor, 1989) attested that second language learners who spend more time in reading and listening for pleasure will have significant level of improvement in all the language skills. Olajide (2004) also affirmed that lovers of literacy and extracurricular activities should embark on schemes that would promote reading not only in Nigerian schools but also other colleges all over the world. Therefore, students who are exposed to extensive reading, listening and speaking will substantially improve in their linguistic proficiency skills in English language.

Summary of Literature Review

From the reviewed literature, it has been established across the world that students participation in school clubs significantly influence their academic performance. This is to buttress that school clubs are contributors and are important in the education of adolescents in secondary schools. School clubs could be regarded as enhancer and a catalyst to academic excellence among secondary school students. Conclusively, school clubs play an important role in supporting students' development providing them with valuable opportunities for personal growth, academic enrichment, and leadership development.

Some other impacts of school clubs are,

i. Social and emotional development: School clubs provide students with opportunities to build relationships, develop teamwork skills, and improve their social skills. By participating in club activities, students learn how to communicate, collaborate, and problem-solving with their peers.

School clubs facilitate students to meet, mix, and work together with other students from different backgrounds in a diverse environment. They come out of their comfort zone and socialize with other students which are vital in the lives of adolescents.

ii. Academic enrichment: School clubs can also provide students with opportunities to further explore their interests and passions outside of the traditional classroom setting. Whether they are working on the project in a group or separately, each one of them can learn from each other. They gain new insights and also learn the significance of valuing another person's viewpoint. School clubs focused on subjects such as science, math, or literature can help students deepen their understanding of a particular topic and enhance their critical thinking skills.

iii. Leadership development: School clubs offer plenty of opportunities for students to take on leadership roles and show off their talents through different activities. School clubs often offer students leadership roles, such as club president or treasurer that allow them to develop important skills such as decision-making, delegation, and conflict resolution Such initiatives enable the students to discover that they can be productive. This increases their level of confidence and their sense of independence. These leadership opportunities can help students build confidence and prepare them for future leadership roles in college and beyond.

iv. Personal growth: Participating in school clubs can help students develop a sense of identity and belonging, as well as foster a sense of pride and accomplishment in their achievements. Students may also discover new interests and talents through their involvement in clubs, leading to personal growth and self-discovery.

v. Community engagement: School clubs build small communities. They entice people who share the same interests such as in music, dance, science, arts, or sports. Club activities assist students to cultivate a sense of unity and working with others in reaching the same goals.

School clubs organize community service projects or events that allow students to give back to their communities and make a positive impact. These experiences can help students develop empathy, compassion, and a sense of social responsibility.

Conclusion

In assessment of the effect of school clubs and general academic performance among secondary school students, it has been established in the origin that the development of school clubs is a means of broadening the scope of school activities beyond the confinesof the curriculum, with a consequent enlargement of the contribution the school makes toward the adjustment of the individual to society. Thus, this paper has established that, students who partake in school clubs perform significantly better academically than those that do not participate. And school clubs contribute significantly to the social, emotional, academic, psychological and general performance of students positively. Therefore, government at all tiers should prioritize school clubs thereby developing a policy towards it, clearly defining its modus oparandi with a view torelaunching it in the educational fabric of Nigeria.

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