**TITLE PAGE**

**ATTITUDE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT TOWARDS THE STUDY OF ECONOMICS IN ORLU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF IMO STATE**

**A PROJECT PRESENTED**

**BY**

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**JULY, 2018**

**APPROVAL PAGE**

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**DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to God Almighty for his Love, mercy and protection. I also dedicated this work to my lovely mother, Late Mrs. Rita Ijeoma Onwusonye, my beloved father Mr. Donatus Uche Onwusonye.

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I pray that God will continue to bless you all Amen.

Finally, I owe a million thanks to God, the author of wisdom and knowledge who controls and pilots the affairs of man and as well directs the future.

**ABSTRACT**

The study sought to find out the attitude of senior secondary school student towards the study of economics in Orlu local government area of Imo state. With the use of survey design and random sampling of five secondary schools in general, questionnaire administration is used to acquire information. The study found out that students attitude of can be positively develop through the teaching methods,selection of suitable books and motivation of students. The study concludes that Economics teachers should motivate the students. They should be given the privilege to attend seminars, workshops and conferences so that they are conversant with the recent developments in chemical and teaching world. The children should be given sound foundation from homes as well as schools being partners in progress.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

**Background of the Study**

Economics is the [social science](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_sciences) that analyzes the [production](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Production_theory_basics), [distribution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Distribution_%28economics%29), and [consumption](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consumption_%28economics%29) of [goods](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Good_%28economics_and_accounting%29) and [services](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service_%28economics%29). The term economics comes from the [Ancient Greek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek) word (oikonomia, "management of a household, administration") hence "rules of the house(hold)". [Political economy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_economy) was the earlier name for the subject, but economists in the late 19th century suggested "economics" as a shorter term for "economic science" that also avoided a narrow political-interest connotation and as similar in form to "[mathematics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathematics)", "ethics", and so forth.

Economics is concerned with human behaviour such as how people earn their living and make a choice between alternatives to satisfy their wants. It focuses on the study of firms and the government whose activities are geared to the production of goods and services for the satisfaction of human want since economics is concerned with human behaviour. So economics is a social science, and like any science subject, the reasoning procedure in economics is methodological, its analysis is systematic, and the validity of its various theories can be tested.

When economics was introduced into the secondary school curriculum, its popularity grew rapidly because the first few schools which offered it in West African School Certificate Examination [WASCE] had unexpectedly good results. There was a positive relationship between the quality of results in economics and the number of candidates that offered it in subsequent years in the WASCE. In this unit, you will learn the factors that caused the late introduction of economics, and its acceptance in the school system, Economics was first taken in the West African School Certificate Examination as a school subject in Nigeria in 1967. Since school certificate was a two year course, it may be said that economics came into the secondary school curriculum in Nigeria in 1966, much later than most other secondary school subjects. Economics was, however, taken by private candidates in the General Certificate Examination before it became a secondary school subject. It was recognized that economics problems were at the heart of modern society. Ever since economics was first taken, as a school subject in West African School Certificate Examination in 1967, the number of schools that teach it and the number of candidates that take the examination has witnessed a phenomenal increase. For example in 1967, it was 0.07% of the total number of candidates that sat for the examination, in 1969 it was increased to 12.56%, in 1970, it was 17.16% and by 1976 exactly 10years of its inceptions, the population has risen to 76.95%. For further confirmation by more recent entries, we have that in 1985, 441,448 school candidates entered for economics while in the same year English had 373,507. In 1996 it was 711,377 for economics, 748,239 for mathematics, and 748,984 for English language. By this analysis it is probably understatement that English Language and Mathematics top the list of entries. It may be said that economics is probably the most popular subject in the secondary school curriculum if the popularity of a secondary school subject may be determined by the number of schools that teach it and the number of candidates that offer it in school learning certificate examination.

Economic analysis may be applied throughout society, as in [business](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Business_economics), [finance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_economics), [health care](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_economics), and government, but also to such diverse subjects as crime,[[education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_economics), the [family](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Family_economics), [law](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_and_economics), [politics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_choice), religion social, war, and [science](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economics_of_science). At the turn of the 21st century, the expanding domain of economics in the social sciences has been described as [economic imperialism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_imperialism_%28economics%29).

It may be said that economics comes after English language and Mathematics. Furthermore, when it is appreciated that economics became a secondary school subject in Nigeria in 1966, it may be said that the growth in its popularity as a secondary school subject in Nigeria has been monumental.

An attitude may be defined as a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given attitude object (Oskamp and Schultz 2013). Adu (2012) defined attitude as internal beliefs that influence personal actions which is learned through one’s experience. This has to do with a disposition to act or react in a particular way as the individual responds to a situation (Amoo & Rahman, 2010). Thus, the students’ perception of the teachers’ characteristics could influence their attitude toward Economics or any other school subject. Students more often than not judge their teachers in such areas as the teachers’ knowledge of the subject matter, communication ability, the choice of appropriate teaching method and the general classroom management skills. A persons’ attitude to an idea or object determines what the person thinks, feels and how the person would like to behave towards that idea or objects.

The focus of this project is on school students’ attitudes towards Economics subjects taught in secondary classrooms. The term ‘subjects ‘refers to both theory and laboratory classes in secondary school. Thus, the scope of the present study was limited to Economics as experienced by students in secondary school rather than out-of-school experiences obtained from external sources such as the media, museums, field trips and friends. Attitude towards Economics or science denotes interests or feelings towards studying Economics or science. It is the students’ disposition towards like or ‘dislike’ science while attitude in science means scientific approach assumed by an individual for solving problems, assessing ideas and making decisions. Student beliefs and attitudes have the potential to either facilitate or inhibit learning (Yara, 2014).Many factors could contribute to student’s attitude toward studying science (Economics). Popoola(2011) also reported that students attitudes and interests to sciences, especially Agricultural science correlate highly with their science achievement. Halladyna and Shanghnessy (2012) and Adesoji (2010) have concluded that a number of factors have been identified as related to students’ attitude to science (Economics). Such factors include; teaching methods, teacher attitude, influence of parents, gender, age, cognitive styles of pupils, career interest, social view of science and Scientifics, social implicating of science (Economics) and achievement.

The studies thus reviewed suggest that there is a relationship between attitude and methods of instruction and also between attitude and achievement; and that it is possible to predict achievement from attitude scores. What is needed to complement the results of such studies however is the nature of relationship between students’ attitude and factors related to teaching and learning of Economics? Results of these types of study are likely to broaden our knowledge as how we can influence students’ attitude positively towards Economics as a subject in Orlu LGA of Imo state Nigeria.

**Statement of the problems**

Despite the greater number of Economics graduates produced by our tertiary institutions; every year there are numbers of s econdary schools where Economics teachers are not competent in the teaching of the subject. Also, the attitude of the students in secondary schools towards Economics as a profession is not encouraging. This makes the teaching of Economics ineffective and inefficient even where there are competent teachers to teach. It is on this premise, that this study is designed to investigate the attitude of students to teaching and learning of Economics in secondary schools.

**Purpose of the study**

The general purpose of this study was to find out attitude of senior secondary school student towards the study of economics in Orlu local Government area of Imo State. Specifically this study

1. Determine the attitude of students toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State.

2. Determine the environmental factors positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

3. Determine the environmental factors that are negatively influencing student attitude toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State.

**Significance of the study**

The study is aimed at looking at the students’ attitudes towards Economicsin some selected secondary schools in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State. The results of the study is hoped to assist Economics teachers to develop new learning experience for the students and reorganize these learning experience in some ways enough to arouse the interest of the students. It would be of good assistance to teachers to create a habit were they would improve on the obsolete teaching methods, use adequate, modern and relevant instructional materials and textbooks at their disposed to the fullest. This study may also assist the students to improve their attitude towards the study of the subject. Finally, the government and parents would benefit from the study of their roles as these would be highlighted at the recommendation column. This study will be useful to researchers, students, teachers, policy makers, curriculum planners, government and virtually everyone who loves the acquisition of knowledge.

After this study, if the suggestions can be applied, then students in Orlu will have a positive attitude towards Economics.

**Scope of the study**

The study was limited to secondary schools in Orlu Local Government of Imo State only. Based on the time frame and financial constraints in covering all the secondary schools in the Local Government, the study was also limited to the students in Senior Secondary Schools (SS Class).

**Research Questions**

The following research questions were constructed by the researcher as a guide to this study.

1. What are the attitudes of students toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

2. What are the environmental factors positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

3. What are the environmental factors that are negatively influencing student attitude toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter dealt with the review of relevant literatures for the study. It has the following headings:

**Conceptual framework**

* Goals of secondary school economics.
* Problems facing the teaching and learning of secondary school economics.
* Students’ attitude towards the study of economic.
* Students’ interest and their attitude towards economics.
* Motivation and students’ attitude towards economics.
* Economics as a science.
* why do we study economics

**Theoretical framework**

Following theories were advanced to support the research topic:

- The stimulus- response theory of pavlov, thorndike and skinner.

- Abraham Maslow motivational theory.

- Clark hull s-r theory.

**Empirical Review**

**Conceptual framework**

According to the early curriculum experts Dewey (1913), Stratemeyer (1918) and Tyler (1949) have expressed in their different articles the necessity of relating the content of the school curriculum to the needs, interest and experience of the learners as well as goals, needs and values of the society. Milton Friedman (intellectual father of the Monetarist school of thought) recommended economics strongly as did Keynes who said that the study of economics lets one understand many things about life. In another perspective, Keynes (1936) recorded that there are so many things a person really cannot understand without some “scientific knowledge” of economics, and that economics usually does not seek to predict the behaviour of a specific individual, instead it focuses on the general behaviour of a large number of individuals. Tradition played a very important role in economics in ancient times and, infarct throughout most of history. It still plays a very important role in some of the less developed countries of the world. Its influence still can be seen even in modern society in such things as the economic relationship. According to the growth of economics in the school curriculum spans through what constituted curriculum in the pre-historic time, Greek, Romans period to the present. By the period of the Roman imperialism, economics has been included in the writings of most philosophers from the very beginning . The Old Testament and the New Testament of the bible contain much economics, as do the writings of religious other than Christianity. Every religion has been concerned with the issues of the right and wrong economic behaviour and with social choices. The bible, the Talmud, the Koran and other sacred scriptures and religious writings contain much economics. The end of the 19th century witnessed the colonization of the present Nigeria. The British tradition in education is steadily planted in Nigeria schools through the curriculum that was western world oriented. Remarked that “one clear inheritance from the past of the persistent official desire to justify economics (or, as it was always called in the early days, common sense) as a ‘useful subject”’. Teachers were offered economics courses in the ‘Normal Schools’ and colleges and given welcome incentives. Step by step, the teachings of economics entered the secondary schools. Within the apparently rigid and stable society, dynamic forces were at work as Darwin, Charles,Marx; etc turned the world into an unquiet position. Many eminent people began to have interest in the notion of children’s economic work as a valuable activity in its own right. St Thomas Aquinas, a medieval philosopher was one of the writers who insisted that economics was a process, important to individual development. Tyler (2010) as quoted by , suggested that since learning results from the active involvement of the learner, the teacher should have adequate information about his students to know whether their present achievements, their present background and their present mental sets are such that the desired behaviour is possible for them since the drive for further achievement results from the satisfaction of past achievements.

* **Goals of secondary school economics.**

Economics is concerned with human behaviour such as how people earn their living and make a choice between alternatives to satisfy their wants. It focuses on the study of firms and the government whose activities are geared to the production of goods and services for the satisfaction of human want since economics is concerned with human behaviour. So economics is a social science, and like any science subject, the reasoning procedure in economics is methodological, its analysis is systematic, and the validity of its various theories can be tested. Thus an attempt has been made to integrate the theoretical foundations of the subject with their practical applications. Economics is one of the electives or group of subjects expected to be studied at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level under the new National Policy on Education. This curriculum according to Osunnaiye (2010) has been designed by the Comparative Education study and. Adaptation centre (CESAC) to meet the requirements of Economics in the new system. The guiding principle of this curriculum is the need to equip graduates of the Senior Secondary School with the basic knowledge and skills that will enable them to better appreciate the nature of economic problems in any society. In the light of this philosophy, the following are the set objectives for the Economics course:

(i) To equip students with the basic principles of Economics necessary for useful living and for higher education,

(ii) To prepare and encourage students to be prudent and effective in the management of scarce resources

(iii) To raise students respect for the dignity of labour and their appreciation of economic, cultural and social values of our society and

(iv)To enable students acquire knowledge for the practical solution of the economic problems of society; Nigeria, developing countries and the world at large.

According to Obemeata [2011] the importance of economics education to any nation, is very clear. It enables both leaders and citizens to understand basic economics concepts, principles as well as to understand, appreciate and seek to improve the economic situation for their own social good. The understanding of economics is a pre-requisite for good citizenship. To him the principal objective for teaching economics should be "to provide economics understanding necessary for responsible citizenship". Being a responsible citizen involves the ability to take rational decision on important economic issues with a good basis for doing so Furthermore, Obemeata [2010] stated that the position of economics in secondary school curriculum has been strengthened because it has been accepted that it has some civil values because of some topics as "the element and determinants of national income, the structure and activities of labour unions, the working and influence of financial institution". These prepared one adequately for life in modern society. According to Adu [2009] the study of economics serves a useful purpose in modern life. It gives us facts and shows us what may be expected to be the outcome of certain lines of conduct; it helps us to decide which of several alternatives to choose. It charged its recipient to make wise choice that will satisfy their needs in the presence of unlimited wants and resources. Obemeata [2010] says economics as a subject has various values to the learners and these values according to him include;

i) The Cultural Values: - Economics has some intrinsic value that makes it appealing as a school subject for example: there is a great logic in it. It connects learners to the essentials of everyday life and it is also concern with almost tropical events such as International Monetary Fund [IMF], Structural Adjustment Programme [SAP] and so on Pause and justify the above assertion in your own understanding

ii) Intellectual Training: - Economics also contribute to intellectual training because it involves looking at issues in a way which foremost new to people. Economics is not primarily a body of knowledge, it is a method rather than a doctrine, an apparatus of mind, a technique of thinking which helps its possessors to draw correct conclusion iii) Vocational Training: - The vocational nature of economics made it readily acceptable to students. Economics as a subject is of direct utility in many branches of industries and commerce. It is also an essential part of most professional examination like Banking, Accountancy, and Secretariat.

* **Problems facing the teaching and learning of secondary school economics.**

The practical problems facing the teaching of economics are as follows: Obsolete Textbooks with the exception of a few, the economics textbooks written in Nigeria are badly written, sketchy and lack the in-depth content. They are largely descriptive. They are poorly illustrated and contain lots of inaccuracies and they are mostly produced in a hurry.

**Lack of teacher's commitment:** The issue of teacher commitment and effectiveness is now a perennial one in educational discourse. The teachers today occupy a paramount position in the teaching learning situation. It is agreed that no education can rise above the quality of its teacher. Teachers need to be committed and dedicated to teaching profession. Teaching requires a cultivated ability. To be done exceptionally well, it also requires a special talent and a sense of vocation. Students Poor Attitude and Interest The kind of attitude a child has affected his school work and learning in general because, if he has a positive attitude about the teacher and the subject, success is inevitable. It is observed that student's attitudes to economics determines the degree to which they pass economics and negative attitude towards the subject and teachers will definitely have adverse effect on their academic achievement in the subject.

**Preferences:** -Teachers do select topics based on personal interest and how the topics appealed to them. The choice of topic to be taught is therefore being influenced by their subjectivity.

**The Difficulty of the Subject**: There had been controversies over the teaching of economics in secondary school. This was based on the belief that economics is too now pause and think about more practical problems facing the teaching of economics and then write them out. Difficult to teach. The argument is that, since the power of deduction and abstract reasoning do not usually develop much before the age of sixteen, economics cannot be effectively taught to students before this age.

**The Need for Simplification:** At lower level, economics should be based on selection to make it simple but care should be taken not to further create abstraction which may lead to the exclusion of some advanced theory from the syllabus if the tendency is to teach what the student would understand, what remains might not be economics e.g. the case of Oligopoly and Monopolistic competition, an attempt to avoid this from secondary schools syllabus because it involves analysis which may be too difficult for the students therefore we concentrate on perfect competition and monopoly both of which do not exist anywhere, the real situation is the Oligopoly and Monopolistic Competition

**Negative Attitudes of Education Ministry:** The Ministries of Education in Nigeria show no interest in the subject. There was a time when they appointed subject inspectors such as inspectors of Mathematics or English Language. A survey was undertaken to determine whether inspectors were appointed for Economics by the various state ministries of education. It was found that only three states, Bendel, Rivers and Kwara had inspectors for economics, But non in Imo State.

* **Students’ attitude towards the study of economic.**

According to [John2011], “attitude is a developmental state of organism valence created by psycho-biological processes, exerting a motivational influence upon the individual’s responsive behaviour in situations directly and indirectly related to it “. He further contended that attitude possesses intellectual, biological, social and emotional components derived from experience, which exercises a determining influence upon behaviour. Numerous experiences that show in individual, certain stimuli are responsible for satisfying state of affairs that predispose him to readily accept such stimulations as beautiful. Biological limitation and visual impairments hinder this appreciation. The school aims at helping learners to perceive the aesthetic structure of objects to sense and love beauty whenever encountered. This creates positive attitude. Children learn such appreciation when they perceive themselves as constituting part of the experience, teachers who are sensitive to beauty in nature and art can influence the development of appreciation of expression in others, through subtle teaching, comments and facial and body movements as they share their aesthetic experiences with the learners. In consonance to proposition, adds sharing something of value, with students (such as humour and personal experiences) listening to them with empathy, treating them with warmth and acceptance, showing interest in the subject, communicating positive expectations and encouragement and ensuring that students set realistic goals. Positive attitude enhance learning as they create interest in the tasks viewed as beautiful. This attitude could be generalized to the teacher, other subjects, other teachers and the entire school or even the education system. Negative attitude creates dislike and leads to opposite responses.

**- Students’ interest and their attitude towards economics.**

The mental state called interest has received much attention in recent literature. Psychologists have disputed as to the exact meaning to be assigned to the term and the precise nature of mental state. Interest has been variously defined as a kind of consciousness accompanying and stimulating attention, a feeling pleasant or painful directing attention – the pleasurable or painful aspect of a process of attention and as identical with attention itself. Thus it may be said; “I attend to what interests me”, and again that to be interested and to attend to are identical. In their description of normative interest sees interest in the sphere of action that has a legalistic connotation. According to them, in the sense of the usage of the term, they refer to action to which one has right, actions that are appropriate and worthwhile for the person concerned. In the school system, they contend that the teacher in the normative sense of the use interests ought to pursue the concerns of his student. His actions and teacher – pupil relationship in the course of doing his job as a teacher should be intent in guidelines; and he is indeed following the curriculum? What are the expected achievements of the programme and is he equipped to achieve those set goals? Consideration of interests in this sense refers to those aspects of school activities that are beneficial to the children to which, by rules and regulations of the school system, the school pupils have a right to benefit from. Again, also described the psychological usage of the term “interest” as what a child in school for instance is interested in, what he pays attention to, and what he is inclined to participate in, take notice of or even contribute to. They further added that there is a reference to interest in a more dispositional sense, dispositions that are somewhat permanent as in the case of hobbies like reading, gardening, walking, and singing. There are activities we could be interested in and disposed to in a somewhat permanent way. Furthermore,( John 2012) defined interest as “a preference for one activity over another.” This definition emphasizes two points: first, interest involves the selection and ranking of activities along a like – dislike dimension. One student, for instance, may prefer listening to records to working arithmetic problems. Second, interest involves activities or behaviours engaged in by individuals. Interest is expressed by actions verbs, such as reading a book, playing a phonograph or planting flowers. Regardless of the method used to measuring interests, the components of indicating preferences for activities along a like- dislike dimension will be present.

* **Motivation and students’ attitude towards economics**.

(Abraham 2012) defines motivation as “a theoretical construct used to explain the initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of behaviour, especially goal-directed behaviour”. It refers to the subjective experiences of students particularly their willingness to be involved in learning activities including reason to or involvement. Also, [12 pp205] says “motivation is a trigger stimulus – it can be mere expectation.” Generally, it refers to a process of arousing, maintaining, controlling and channelling interest and attention towards or while performing a particular task. In general terms, students’ motivation refers to a students’ willingness, need desire and compulsion to participate in, and be successful in, the learning process. Developed the definition further, noting that students who are motivated to engage in school “select tasks at the border of their competences, initiate action when given the opportunity and exert intense effort and concentration in the implementation of learning tasks; they slow generally positive emotion during ongoing action, including enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity and interest”. Less motivated or disengaged students on the other hand, “are passive, do not try hard, and give up easily in the face of challenges”. Student motivation is often divided into two categories: extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation.

A student can be described as extrinsically motivated when he or she engages in learning “purely for the sake of attaining a reward or for avoiding some punishment”. He further contends that school practices that seek to motivate students extrinsically include publicly recognizing students for academic achievement; giving out stickers, candy and other rewards; and taking away privileges, such as recess, on the basis of students’ academic performance.

A student can be described as intrinsically motivated when he/she is motivated from within. Intrinsically motivated students actively engage themselves in learning out of curiosity, interest or enjoyment or in order to achieve their own intellectual and personal goals. According to, (Abraham 2012) “a student who is intrinsically motivated will not need any type of reward or incentive to initiate or complete a task; “ this type of student is more likely to complete the chosen task and be excited by the challenging nature of an activity”. While any kind of motivation seems preferable to none, there is compelling evidence that students who are more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated fare better. To further buttress’s proposition, opined that students’ attitude about their capabilities and their interpretation of success and failure further affect their willingness to engage themselves in learning. For example, students who understand poor performance as a lack of attainable skills, rather than as some innate personal deficiency, are more likely to re-engage themselves in a task and try again. Students whose self concept is bound up in their history of failure, on the other hand, are less likely to be motivated to learn. To motivate students in the study of economics, teachers should tend to magnify students’ initial level of motivation. This is fine for students who enter the classroom motivationally “rich”, they will “get rich”. However, for students whose motivation is low, their typical classroom experiences may result I its further deterioration, also, promotion of mastery learning. When a student completes an assignment that does not meet the expected criteria, give him or her opportunity or more to tackle the task again, with guidelines on how to achieve the desired result. Evaluate students’ work as soon as possible after a task completion, and be sure that feedback is clear and constructive. Research has it that the teachers who are more successful in engaging students develop activities with students’ basic psychological and intellectual needs in mind , will motivate them to study economics eagerly.

* **Economics as a Science.**

Economics, like all other science subjects is called a science as a result of the following reasons.

According to M.L Jhingan(2011). “A science is a systematized body of knowledge ascertain by observation and experimentation”. It is a body of generalizations, principles theories or laws which traces out a causal relationship between cause and effect. For any discipline to be a science it must meet the following conditions:

i. It must be a systemizes body of knowledge

ii. It must have its own laws or theories.

iii. The law or theories must be tested by observation and experimentation

iv. It must be able to make predictions

v. It must be self corrective

vi. It must have universal validity.

If these features of a science are applied to economic, it can be said that economics is a science. M,L.Jhingan (2011) sees economics as thus: “economic is a systematized body of knowledge in which economic facts are studied and analyzed in a systematic manner”. For production, exchange, distribution and public finance which have their laws and theories on whose basis these departments are studied and analyzed in systematic manner.

Like other science, the generalization theories or laws of economics trace out a causal relationship between two or more phenomena. A definite result is expected to follow from a particular cause in economic like all other science. An example of a principle in chemistry is that, all other thingbeing equal a combination of hydrogen and oxygen in the proportion of 2:1 will from water. In physics, the law of gravitation states that, things coming from above must fall to the ground at a specific rate, other thing being equal. Similarly, in economics, the law of demand tells us that other thing remaining the same, a fall in price leads to extension in demand and rise in price to contraction in demand. Here, rise of fall in price is the cause and contraction or extension is the effect. Hence economics is a science like any other science which has its own theories and law which establish a relation between cause and effect.

Economic is also a science because its laws possess universal validity such as the law of diminishing return, the law of diminishing marginal utility, the law of demand Gresham’s law etc. again economics is a science because of its corrective nature. It goes on revising its conclusion in the light of new facts based on observation. Economics theories or principles are being revised in the fields of macroeconomics, monetary economics, international economics, public finance and economic development.

Economic therefore possesses those attributes of science like investigation, observations arrangement, classification and interpretation of facts, empirical testing of facts, deductive and indicative method of theories used to formulate laws and finally, establishing principles, propositions, generalizations, theories and laws used for the analysis, predication and forecasting of economic problems and solutions. It is as a result of the above reason that students of economics of many universities graduate with Bachelor of Science (B.sc) degree. The above evidence serves as empirical proof that economics like other subject that possess similar qualities is a science subject However, economics is not a natural or pure but a social science.

* **Why do we study economics**

We study economics which is a branch of the social sciences because of the following reasons according to Chikezie, Samuel (2011).

a. **Human wants:** We study economics because it deal with human beings and the satisfaction of their numerous wants with their limited available resources.

b. Scare resources: As a result of the fact that the resources within the limit or reach of human being are not in abundance it becomes necessary for one to study economics which will help you to decide on the next alternative uses of these scare resources in order to satisfy our human wants.

c. Production: We also study economics because it deals with the fundamental question of what, where, for whom and how to produce goods and services in order to satisfy human want:.

d. Distribution: After production economics goes further to study how the goods and services produced are to be distributed to the different areas which are in need of it.

e. Budget : The study of economics is indispensable because the economist ,alter studying human beings and the economic activities of a country, will be in a better position to estimate a country’s total revenue , human want and project the total expenditure in a given year.

f. Economic analysis: The study of economics enables us to build up theories and tools of economic analysis.

g. Human behaviour: the study of economic enables us to understand individual differences and why people behave the way they do in their material pursuit.

h. Since no knowledge is a waste, the study of economics is useful because of the knowledge we acquire from it.

**Theoretical framework**

* **The Stimulus- Response Theory of Pavlov, Thorndike and Skinner.**

The stimulus – response theory split into classical and operant conditioning theories of Ivan Pavlov, Edward Lee Thorndike and Burrhus Skinner, which has it that all responses are subject to stimulus within the environment, supports the age, gender and students’ attitude towards economics. Generally, students have a strong aversion for mathematics and mathematics related courses such as economics, so to be able to develop their interest for economics one has to pair what they (students) like by praising every effort they make in solving any economics problem in the class.

Edward Lee Thorndike (1874-1949) was one of the earliest American educational psychologist and the first that systematically carried out experiments to study how non- reflexive behaviours can be modified from experience. In his operant conditioning of stimulus- response theory, he considered the strengthening of the connection between stimuli and responses as being responsible for the formation of habits. He performed some experiments to demonstrate how this happens and used an apparatus called puzzle or problem box where he placed hungry animals such as rats, cats and tested them to create a stronger stimulus – response connection from them. The educational implication of Thorndike operant conditioning theory as it relates to study is that the teacher is to ensure that once an appropriate response is made, it is important to reward it. Continuously rewarding the correct response ensures the establishment and strengthening of the stimulus response connection or bond.

* **Abraham Maslow motivational theory.**

Abraham Maslow motivational theory of 1954 as described in his hierarchy of needs proposes that every human being has needs which are consistent with the theory of learning. According to his self actualization needs theory which involves the drive to become what one is capable of becoming – includes growth, achieving one’s potential and self – fulfilment will motivate a student performance and attitude in a given subject. The educational implication is that performance motivation may thus be considered as a latent disposition which involves a persistent desire to get involved and perform.

* Clark Hull S-R Theory.

Clark Hull, an American psychologist covered different areas in his studies, which include hypnosis, concept formation, test measurement, learning and motivation. He focused mainly on habit strength, drive reduction and intervention variables. Hull’s 1943 theory was essentially a stimulus- response, in which he mainly sought to break this connection into a number of intervening variables that are responsible. He identified some positive factors that enable an individual to respond and some negative factors that hinder the response. The positive factors include the habit strength and drive while the negative factors include fatigue and conditioned inhibition. He further contends that the difference between the positive and negative factors determines the possibility, speed and intensity of the response. Hull advocated for drive reduction theory of reinforcement when he classified reinforcement into primary and secondary reinforcement. The theory states that “strong stimulation of any sort is aversive to an organism and any reduction in this stimulus acts as a reinforce for immediately preceding behaviour. The educational implication of Hull’s theory as it relates to this topic is that it provides much value to school system. The school authorities can base the planning of their curriculum, syllabuses, scheme of work and the notes of lesson on means of drive reduction. It also reduces negative stimulation for students and made for positive reinforce building. From the above discourse, it is pertinent to state that since attitude, motivation, interest, self – concept and involvement can change according to circumstances and incentives and since they can act in both directions, the attitude of students towards economics can change positively or negatively thereby affecting performance. It is also imperative that this study be carried out since it is assumed that little literature on attitude exists with reference to behaviour change and achievement in economics.

**Empirical Review**

Review of relevant literature depicts varying opinions and findings on the students’ attitudes towards science and their performances. According to Yara, (2009), attitude of students can be influenced by the attitude of the teacher and his methods of teaching. He further showed in his work that teachers’ method of mathematics teaching and his personality greatly accounted for the students’ positive attitude towards the subject and that without interest and personal effort in learning by the students, they can hardly perform well in the subject. According to Keeves (1992), attitudes towards science, economics inclusive are, in general, highly favoured, indicating strong support for science and the learning of science. There is also consistency across countries and age levels within a country in the average level of attitude towards economics and general science. However, in countries where a high level of technological and industrial development had been achieved, the findings showed that attitude towards science were more neutral. Generally, boys held more favourable attitude towards science, the findings concluded. Kempa and Dude (1974) reported that pupils’ interest in science is associated with their achievement in science. Collaborating these reports, Olatoye (2001) found that students attitude towards economics have significant direct effect on student achievement in the subject. Adesokan (2002) asserted that in spite of the recognition given to economics among the science subjects, it is evident that student still show negative attitudes towards the subject there by teaching to prior performance and low enrolment. Our nation needs to attract all the academically gifted female students into the pursuit of economics. There is also the need to maximize the scientific literacy of young female students, and to achieve equity in participation in economics. Bennett

et al.,(2001) argued that girls and boys start off on equal footing in economics and other science subject but once physical science and mathematics become optional at the secondary school level, there is a downward spiral of female enrolment accompanied by decrease in achievement and interest. This implies that there are underlying factors affecting the attitudes of young female students towards economics that needs to be addressed at the high school level (Santonimo, 2005).To locate relevant previous student studies, computer (internet) searches of three database were conducted and nine reports (Barnes et al , 2005; Salta and Tzougraki, 2004; Dhindsa and Chung 1999; Menis 1983, 1989; Harvey and Stables 1986; Steinkamp and Maehr 1984; Shannonet al ., 1982 and Hosfstein et al.,1977), their scope of study was limited to economics as experienced by students in Secondary School rather than out-of-School experiences obtained from external sources such as the media, museum, field trips, and friends. As indicated earlier none of these nine students explored the interaction effect between gender grade level on students attitudes towards economics lessons. A number of curriculum evaluation projects included student attitude to economics as one of the dependent variables (Adesoji and Raimi, 2004; Thompson and Soyibo, 2002), but they are not renewed in this project because they focused on the effectiveness of a curricular or instructional innovation rather than the attitudes of males and females toward economics lessons at different levels of schooling. Also, previous studies (Lang et al., 2005) which merely used student attitude toward economics as a variable to correlate with other constructs are not included in this review.

**Summary**

They advised students to discard the misconception that economics is difficult and volatile. This finding also corroborates the findings of Cheung (2009) who concluded that apart from teacher’s background that hinders student teachers relationship in good academic performances in senior secondary school, student can be affected by teachers teaching methods, ability to arouse students interest towards learning topic, poor and shabby orientation to students on the part of the teachers when the teacher is not ready to discharge, and motivate their students they are teaching.

The study also showed that negative attitude towards the subject is influenced by the parent’s attitudes.

Lastly, the study showed that teachers did not use adequate instructional materials and students complaint about textbooks not explicit enough for their private study.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODS/ METHODOLOGY**

**Research design**

The research design used in this study is a survey design. This design is chosen because it is a form of descriptive research that is aimed at studying large and small population where large and small samples from population are collected in order to examine the distribution, incidence and interaction of educational, sociological and psychological phenomena or problems.

**Area of the study**

Orlu local Government Area in Imo State. it has an area of 88km2 and a population of 420,000 at the 2006 census.

There are Ten towns in Orlu lga which are Amaifeke, Ihioma, Ebenese, Umuna, [Umuowa](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Umuowa&action=edit&redlink=1" \o "Umuowa (page does not exist)), Umutanze, Okporo, Orlu-Gedegwum, Isiaku and Owerre-Ebeiri.

The people of this town are recognized for their hard- working in agriculture, crafts, workmanship. Greater than the past decades the population density has led to intensified strain on land, forests and other natural resources, leading to escalating postural sacristy which is an attribute if thickly inhabited pastoral areas.

**Study population**

The population of this study constitutes of 100 students in senior secondary from four (5) secondary schools randomly selected from fifteen (15) secondary school in Orlu municipality which was randomly selected using simple random sampling techniques. The names of the school are:

* St. Dominic School, Orlu.
* Orlu Comprehensive school, Orlu .
* Umuna High school, Orlu.
* St. Peter’s Unity High School, Orlu.
* Orlu Girls Grammar school, Orlu

The students of the selected schools ages were between 15 and 18 years old.

**Research instrument**

In carrying out the study the research will employ the use of questionnaire to collect necessary data for the study (Appendix I). The questionnaire is of closed type which allows for either strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly disagree (SD), or Disagree (D) responses from respondents. The questionnaires were for the final year students of Senior Secondary School that are randomly selected in the above schools. The questionnaire used for this study was a self constructed on the attitudes of students towards the study of economics, the instrument was divided into two sections. Section A consists of the bio-data of the students while section B consists of questions on their likeness for the subject, teachers’ attitudes, availability of textbooks and instructional materials.

**Administration of instrument**

The questionnaires will be administer to the students during the third term of 2017/2018 session. The study will be conducted during normal morning periods. The questionnaires will be answered individually and collected back the day they were administered. The questionnaire items will then be scored based on the responses for the final analysis.

**Validation of instrument**

The draft questionnaire will shown to my supervisor and some economics teachers in some secondary schools for scrutiny and content validation to ascertain the contents face and construct validity.

**Procedure for data collection**

The questionnaire will be distributed and answered in good and smooth atmospheric condition. Permission will be sorted from the school principals before the study will be conducted. However, with the assistance of class and subject teachers, questionnaires will be distributed to the students and they will be filled, the researcher will pass some vital instructions to them with regard to the whole exercise. The questionnaires will be collected after completion from the students and verified.

**Data analysis procedure**

The collected data were assembled into tables and analyzed using simple mean.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**Data Presentation and analysis**

The data collection form this study were analyzed and presented using frequency table for explanation and analysis.

The presentation and analysis of data based on the responses obtained from the questionnaire are as follows:

**Question 1:**

What are the attitudes of students toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree  Agreed  Strongly disagreed  Disagreed | **Frequency**  10  10  70  10 | **Percentage**  70  15  5  10 |
| Total | 100 | 100 |

Table 1 reveals that 80% respondents did not consider the subject as their favourite subject, 20% respondents did not consider the subject as their favourite subject. From the results obtained there is an indication that these students have negative attitude towards economics as a subject.

**Research Question 2**

What are the environmental factors positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agreed  Agree  Strongly Disagree  Disagreed | **Frequency**  20  10  60  10 | **Percentage**  58  12  723 |
| **Total** | **100** | **100** |

From the analysis (Table 2), 70% disagreed that they are not given assignments regularly, 30% disagreed that they are not given assignments regularly.

From the results obtained there is an indication that the attitude of teachers contributed to the negative attitude of the students to the subject.

**Question 3:**

What are the environmental factors that are negatively influencing student attitude toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Strong agree  Agreed  Strong disagreed  Disagreed | **Frequency**  55  25  6  14 | **Percentage**  55  25  6  14 |
| **Total** | **100** | **100** |

From the analysis (Table 3), 20% disagreed qualify economics teacher(s) will positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics, 80% agreed qualify economics teacher(s) will positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics.

From the results obtained there is an indication that qualified economics teacher(s) will positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics.

**Summary of Findings**

The findings of this study revealed that the negative attitudes of the students are the functions of lack of interest erroneous believed that economics is volatile and poor motivation by teachers.

They advised students to discard the misconception that economics is difficult and volatile. This finding also corroborates the findings of Cheung (2009) who concluded that apart from teacher’s background that hinders student teachers relationship in good academic performances in senior secondary school, student can be affected by teachers teaching methods, ability to arouse students interest towards learning topic, poor and shabby orientation to students on the part of the teachers when the teacher is not ready to discharge, and motivate their students they are teaching.

The study also showed that negative attitude towards the subject is influenced by the parent’s attitudes.

Lastly, the study showed that teachers did not use adequate instructional materials and students complaint about textbooks not explicit enough for their private study.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATION OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

**Summary of findings**

The findings of this study revealed that the negative attitudes of the students are functions of lack of interest erroneous believed that economics is volatile and poor motivation by teachers. This is in support of their ports of Cheung (2009) and Cousins (2010). They suggested that students should be motivated always to put in their best to the study of the subject. Eagly and Chaiken (2010) in their works too, concluded that the hatred from some science teachers especially economics is an offspring of negative attitude in the subject itself. They advised students to discard the misconception that economics is difficult and volatile.

This findings also corroborates the findings of Cheung (2009) who concluded that apart from teachers background that hinders student teachers’ relationship in good academic performances in Senior Secondary School, students can be affected by teachers teaching methods, ability to arouse students interest towards learning topic, poor and shabby orientation to students on the part of the teachers when the teacher is not ready to discharge, when teachers could not motivate their students they are teaching. The study also showed that negative attitude towards the subject is influenced by the parents’ attitudes. In the opinion of Aiyelaagbe (2011) he attributed this problem to the illiteracy idea on the part of the parents.

Lastly, the study showed that teachers did not use adequate instructional materials and students complaint about textbooks not explicit enough for their private study. This attitude of the economics teachers were not in-agreement with ideas of Lang et al., (2005) and Popoola (2008) they believe, that they should use recent/modern and adequate instructional materials to teach their students, by this students interest would be aroused.

**CONCLUSION**

From the results of the study it was reveals that right or positive attitudes of students is very essential if students want to perform well in economics both theory and practical. It seems we need to concentrate all efforts and energy on improving factors that tend to militate against the positive attitudes. Economics teachers should give intrinsic motivation to the students. They should be given the privilege to attend seminars, workshops and conferences so that they are conversant with the recent developments in chemical and teaching world. The children should be given sound foundation from homes as well as schools being partners in progress. Necessary, modern text books should be provided to learners and teachers. Teachers should employ modern methods of teaching that will facilitate individualized instruction. Government should encourage teaching profession admirable one through prompt payment of living wages (attractive salaries) and allowances to forestall strike actions. They should provide instructional materials to schools and should please find adequate schools to keep them going progressively.

**Educational implication**

The implication of this study is that Orlu students will become more improved compared to what it used to be, thereby increasing the interest of students in economics. And also, will increase the student attitude positively to the study of economics.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The results of the study showed that the students who found the subject of the study were glaringly opposing economics as a subject. It is believed that their feeling is a reflection of their apathy and frustration created in part by the prevailing conditions surrounding to effect any meaningful change in the present situation economics teaching and learning facilitates must be provided into all schools.

Besides, certain measures must be taken to improve the quality of economics teachers, this include better recruitment, better substantive education of economics teachers in training institutions, retraining programme for young teachers with shallow experience, in-services and long vacation courses, improvement in teachers’ salaries with special allowances for economics teachers and upgrading of the teaching profession. This could be ways by which economics teaching can be made more interesting to the teachers. Teachers should involve all students in practical work as it is known that learners learn fast what they can do on their own. Teachers should assist in improving the attitudes of students towards the theory and practical in order to enhance achievement in school certificate examination. The following suggestions if well executed would assist students to pass with flying colours.

* **Teaching methods**: teachers should realize that no single method is perfect for instruction.
* **Selection of suitable books**: modern and relevant textbooks should be recommended and should be used in schools.
* **Provision of enough exercise:** teachers should endeavour to give substantial work to students to aid mastery of concepts. These must be cross checked, marked and give correction wherever the need arises.
* **Practical work:** emphases should be laid on the practical aspects of the subject. These must be cross checked, marked and give correction wherever the need arises.
* **Motivation of students:** teacher can arouse and sustain students interest by giving enough motivation and reinforcement. Encourage group work by pairing them into groups with regard to sex and brilliant/ dull abilities.

Finally, to the Government and Parents Teachers Association, the necessary instructional materials, equipment and personal needs in schools should be provided or in the alterative be supplemented such as: standard libraries, qualified teachers, textbooks, communal efforts in encouraging and motivating the teachers, encouraging the students towards sound learning and soon.

**Limitation of the Study**

The study has successfully carried out even though there are some bottle nocks along the line.

The researcher had problems with sourcing of funding also time was not in favour. Distances to places to collect data were however a hindrance. But despite all these, the researcher was able to come out with something.

**Suggestions for Further Study**

For further investigation into the problems and solutions to Students’ attitude towards the study of economics, the researcher wishes that more study should be carried out.

Since the study was limited to Orlu local government area, the same research could be conducted in other local government areas to compare the finding.

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**APPENDIX**

Godfrey Okoye Unversity

Thinker’s corner

Enugu

Dear Respondent,

I am a final year Students of the above institution, researching on Students’ attitude towards the study of economics in Nigerian secondary schools. A case study in Orlu Local Government Area in Imo State

Your sincere response to the questionnaire items will be highly appreciative for this study all information given will be confidential and for academic purpose

Thanks for your co- operations

Yours faithfully,

**Onwusonye Kingsley Onyekachi**

**Section A: Bio data**

To help in the interpretation of data please provide the following information

1. Name of school:

2. Class:

3. Sex:

4. Age: 12-14( ), 15-17( ), 18-20( ), 21-24( )

**SECTION B: KEYS**

**SA-** Strongly Agree

**A-** Agree

**SD-** Strongly Disagree

**D-** Disagree

QUESTIONS 1

To what extent does the study intends to find out attitude of students toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S/N | QUESTIONS | SA | A | SD | D |
| 1 | Is economics your favourite subject? |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Economics is one of the subjects you intend studying? |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Economics is needed of all in your work of course of study? |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Do you believe that you know and understand economics? |  |  |  |  |

QUESTIONS 2

To what extent does the study determine the environmental factors that are negatively influencing student attitude toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Is your economics teacher (s) higly motivated while teaching? |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Is he/she approachable? |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Are you given assignments regularly? |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Do you enjoy doing private practice with economics questions? |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Do you believe that you know and understand economics? |  |  |  |  |

QUESTIONS 3

What environmental factors positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Home work regularly will positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Qualify economics teacher(s) will positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Parent guiding student work will positively influence student attitude toward the study of economics |  |  |  |  |