**THE CONSTRAINTS OF READING DISABILITY ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OWERRI NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, IMO STATE**

**BY**

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**U14/EDU/EIS/017**

**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION,**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION,**

**GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY, UGWUOMU-NIKE**

**ENUGU STATE.**

**JULY, 2018.**

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**A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE**

**DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION,**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION,**

**GODFREY OKOYE UNIVERSITY, UGWUOMU-NIKE**

**ENUGU STATE.**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS B.A. (ED) DEGREE IN ENGLISH/LITERARY STUDIES EDUCATION.**

**SUPERVISOR: DR. F.N ENE**

**JULY, 2018.**

# APPROVAL PAGE

# The project has been approved for the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education Godfrey Okoye University Ugwuomu-Nike Enugu.

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**Dr. F.N Ene Date**

**(**Project Supervisor)

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**Dr. F.N Ene Date**

(Head of Department)

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**Prof. Aaron Eze Date**

(Dean Faculty of Education)

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**External Examiner Date**

**CERTIFICATION**

I, Onuigbo Goodness A., an undergraduate of the Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, Godfrey Okoye University with Registration number U14/EDU/ELS/017 hereby affirm that the work embodied in this research/thesis *the influence of reading disability on students academic performance in secondary schools in Owerri north local government area, Imo state* is original and has not been submitted in part or full in any other diploma or degree of this or any other university.

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**Onuigbo Goodness Agozirim Date**

**DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to Almighty God for His protection, guidance, mercy and favours for seeing me throughout the four years of my academic pursuit in the university.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am eternally grateful to Almighty God for His love, goodness, mercy and favour upon me.

My million thanks go to my project supervisor and Head of Department, Dr F N Ene for her efforts and useful criticisms that resulted in a successful completion of this project work. May God reward her abundantly with his riches in glory for her works.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to my loving and caring parents, Bishop Dr Marcel and Rev Mrs Gladys Onuigbo who have been there for me through my failures and successes. Also to my older siblings Pastor Ifechukwu, Pastor Miracle, Mrs chidimma and Mr jeff for their support.

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To my friends, Dodo Boma Sandra, Umo Blessing, Nnamoko Blessing, Okeke Onyinyechukwu, Eneh chinelo, Obi Chidimma Rachael, Ezeokafor Anita, Anyanwu Mary Kosi, Ufodiama Precious and my beautiful roommate Oranebo Chidimma for all the wonderful assistance, help and words of encouragement during the process of this work. I appreciate all your efforts.

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**ABSTRACT**

The study was undertaken to find out the influence of reading disability on secondary school student’s academic performance in Owerri North Local Government Area of Imo state. The study adopted a descriptive survey approach in which four research questions were posed. The population of the study consisted of 550 government teachers teaching in 16 government secondary schools in Owerri North Local Government Area of Imo state and 4,051 government secondary school students in Owerri north Local Government Area of Imo state giving a total number of 4, 617 populations. Simple random sampling procedure was used in selecting (5) secondary schools to represent the 16 government secondary schools that were sampled in the study. 40 students were equally selected randomly from each of the five schools making a total number of 200 respondents. A questionnaire of four-point scale was used as instrument for data collection. Mean scores were used in answering the research questions. The results revealed that reading disabilities, quality of the teachers, school administration and environment affect the secondary school student’s academic performance in Owerri north Local Government Area of Imo state.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Background to the study**

The human brain undoubtedly, is the most essential structure of the human composition carefully woven by God to lead and control the activities of man. The brain is packed with high sensitivity to the point that it travels millions of miles in a second without the guidance of the conscious self, making it the most essential composition or the building block for constructive or effectual reasoning.

The general input to the brain to a larger extent determines the functionality of the brain and goes a long way in constituting in the range of information an individual has in his/her repertoire and the inability to read effectively poses a serious challenge on the student academic performance. This inability to read and comprehend has been firmly noted to be a disability on the students path which hinders their general learning process; with this in mind, reading disabilities are now firmly established as recognized disabilities that cause serious difficulties in school learning. The field of reading disability continues to be dynamic and an eclectic discipline that is responsive to advances in educational research and policy and to major changes in society. People with reading disabilities are found in every classroom. Unless their problems are recognized and treated, these students are destined to become educational discards. The condition of reading disabilities is perplexing because each individual has a unique combination of talents and characteristics.

According to Lerner (2006) Students with reading disabilities are not blind, yet many do not see as their peers do; they are not deaf but many do not listen or hear normally; they are not retarded in cognition development, but they learn in a different way. Many also exhibit behaviours that make them disturbing in the classroom and vexing at home.

According to Lerner (2006) in today’s world, high technology and automation have spurred a demand for highly trained people. Old jobs rapidly become obsolete, making the process of retraining a necessity. It is predicted that workers in every occupation will have to retrain themselves to prepare for new jobs many times during their work careers. The ability to read efficiently is a key tool for retraining and for maintaining employment. We live in a multimedia world; we obtain many kinds of information through non print media. For many purposes, the global environment of television has replaced the world of print. Some educators have even suggested that a “bookless curriculum” be established in our schools—one that instructs through the use of non print media designed to relate information and to create appropriate learning experiences. Despite such signs of the declining value of reading in contemporary life, there is also contrasting evidence that reading is assuming a greater role than in the past. For example, although millions of Nigerians watch television to view momentous occurrences—such as sports events and critical political happenings- these television viewers are eager to read the newspapers the next day to make the events they have witnessed more coherent, detailed and comprehensible. Our newest information system is the computer, which brings with it telecommunication, e-mail, internet, social media platforms and the World Wide Web, all of which require users to read the written electronic information on a monitor screen or phone screen, which makes the reading ability inevitable.

However, in spite of the new role that non print media play in providing a message, illiteracy is more debilitating than ever. If children in our modern society do not learn to read, they do not make it in life. A few generations ago, people managed to get along quite well in the business and social worlds without the ability to read, but in today’s world this is no longer possible. Today students face minimum competency tests, longer periods of compulsory education, job requirements of diplomas and degrees, and more comprehensive school testing. These hurdles, as well as the necessity of filling out application forms and taking licensing examinations, make life for the non reader very uncomfortable and full of impassable barriers. It is said that “children must learn to read so that they can later read to learn”. Indeed, since reading is the basic tool for all academic subjects, failure in school frequently can be traced to inadequate reading skills. It is on this note that this study focuses on reading disability and its effect on student’s academic performance.

**Statement of the Problem**

The influence of reading disability on student’s academic performance has marred students more than it could ever make them. With obvious fact, reading disabilities can be seen in the light of a wide range of unusual disorder or condition found in children, adults and students. Most of the problems we see in students could be caused by dyslexia, phobia for reading, background in which the student was born into. It could force a student out of school due to inability to comprehend academic works like other students. Circumstances surrounding the student at the time of reading could also be a problem. It could also be limited experience with books. Due to reading disability, the student could lack in thorough speech and phonemic awareness.

Reading disabilities is without doubt a serious challenge both in academics performance and in the social life. The life span of a student in the school which is majored by how good or poor a student’s academic performance is adjudged can be determined by the amount of encoded information the student was able to assimilate during the period of learning in the classroom, and later tested in the form of examination to produce in written format those information decoded by the student when the teacher was teaching. To be able to overcome the examination hurdles, such student must be able to first read the teachers note and textbooks in order to effectively answer those examination questions. In a situation where the student cannot even read those written signs and symbols poor academic performance becomes inevitable.

**Purpose of the study to:**

The main objective of this study is to find out the influence of reading disability on student academic performance in secondary schools in Owerri North Local Government Area.

The following research purpose have been outlined for the study:

1. Ascertain the extent school administration determines the reading disability on students academic performance.
2. Examine the learner’s previous academic background that affects their reading disability.
3. Ascertain how the school and environment affects the reading disability of the students.
4. Examine the extent the quality of teachers affects the reading disability of the students.

**Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study will boost the students to participate and yearn for knowledge thus, this research is highly significant.

Through this study teachers become more versatile in handling students with reading disabilities to widen their knowledge by designing study scheme that will help in the easy comprehension of what is being taught to them.

This study will be beneficial to students, teachers, general public, and curriculum planners and also an eye opener to parents.

In conclusion, students, teachers, parents, curriculum planners and the general public will benefit greatly from this study thereby reducing the ignorance level towards reading disability in the society.

**Scope of the Study**

The content scope of this study is to determine the extent reading disability influence student’s academic performance. Reading disability will be studied as the independent variable which will specifically cover the environmental factors, school administration, quality of the teachers, teaching methods and learner’s previous academic background. Geographically, the study is delimited to 4, 051 students in Owerri north local government area Imo state.

**Research Questions**

1. How does school administration affect the reading disability on student’s academic performance?
2. How does reading disability affect student’s academic performance?
3. How does the school environment affect the reading disability of the students?
4. How does the quality of teachers affect the reading disability of the students?

**CHAPTER TWO**

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter reviewed literature to the purpose and objectives of the study. The reviewed literature was presented under the following sub-headings conceptual framework, theoretical framework, empirical studies and summary of review of related literature.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

* Concept of reading disability
* Approaches to reading
* Hereditary influence/Environmental influence of reading disability
* Reading comprehension error
* Phonological/Orthographic processing deficit
* Effects of reading disability

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky theory

**EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

**SUMMARY OF THE REVIEWED LITERATURE**

**Concept of reading disability**

According to (Okoye and Ene 2011) reading, which is a complex psych-linguistic process, involves mastery of the language signals such as letters, words, sentence structures and also such psychological factors as readiness and motivation. Reading involves communication. Reading involves mental contact and how people’s minds can meet one another through interacting with written material even though the people may be far apart physically.

Reading disability is a neurological disorder in which a person finds it difficult to read and write. Reading disability especially dyslexia impairs a person’s ability to read. These individuals typically read at levels significantly lower than expected despite having normal intelligence. Although the disorder varies from person to person, the common characteristics among people with dyslexia are difficulty with spelling, phonological processing (the manipulation of sounds) and rapid visual-verbal responding. In adults dyslexia usually occurs after a brain injury or in the context of dementia. It can also be inherited in some families, and recent studies have identified a number of genes that may predispose an individual to developing dyslexia. This may also be traced down to poverty as most parents don’t have enough money to send their children to private schools where teachers with vast knowledge about the issues of reading disabilities and possess the technical knowhow on how best to tackle such issues are employed, so they tend to send them to public schools where this issues are not properly given the desired attention.

**Approaches to Reading:**

* **Scanning and skimming**

Reading is an exercise every student must almost always encounter in course of their quest for knowledge. This exercise is carried on till the entire life span of the person even in the labour market, offices, business conferences to mention but a few. One is expected to read instructions, program bulleting, seminar work etc. the knowledge of the right approaches to adopt in reading when faced with different situation becomes pertinent. Before a student is adjudged to have successfully scaled through examination, test or assignments, reading skills must be adopted. It is dependent on the training pupils get when they are younger that they carried to their advance stages in life and in school, so the important being taught the right approaches to reading becomes pertinent and subject to improvement because it can be developed.

According to Brown and Fishco (2001) the development of reading skills should not be mechanical, as these skills condition general progress at school, as well as the effectiveness of the use of other language skills like writing, speaking and listening. By getting used to reading from the early stage of foreign language acquisition, learners get unconsciously accustomed to target language structures and phrases, thus generally to the way of constructing utterances. Reading enriches vocabulary, widens the knowledge of idioms and set phrases, because, as it was proved, new words and phrases are best memorized when they are provided in a context. While reading, the reader encounters ready-given usage of words, which prevents him from inappropriate application of these words in subsequent stages of language use. The awareness of foreign language structures stemming from the beneficial influence of reading also facilitates comprehension of foreign language speech, thus, helps listening skills develop. Underdevelopment of reading skills, however, has the greatest impact on writing performance, as the writing skills are taught after reading skills have been developed well enough to proceed further. It seems obvious, thus, that inadequacies in reading comprehension skills affect the learner’s writing performance and academic performances in general

Moving back to reading as a purely mechanical process, a few words should be devoted to the importance of going beyond such an approach. Perceiving reading as a mechanical phenomenon focuses on already described lower-level processing, while not accounting for such activities as selecting information relevant to a particular topic, expanding on information previously provided, following sequence of instructions, identifying answers to questions concerning a given text, detecting information implied in a passage, interpreting and evaluating writer’s intentions, and showing awareness of the variety of literary genre. And this lack of technical knowhow in reading affects majority of students in so many ways. Realising the importance of reading skills development, Kellermann proposes four assumptions concerning methods of their teaching. According to Kellermann, reading in a foreign language:

1. must be taught according to a defined pattern;

2. must be taught in well-defined stages;

3. should occur frequently, regularly, and at first intensively;

4. should be accessible to all pupils literate in the native language” (Kellermann, 1981:9)

To conclude, as many researches revealed, people have an innate capacity to understand more than they actually know, and that understanding increases considerably with practice; put bluntly, with regular and extensive reading. Lack of practice and stimulation, on the other hand, may result in the reduction of understanding. Thus, good reading instruction and development of reading skills should become an educational priority for teachers in early stages of education

**Scanning**

This is employed if the reader’s task, however, is to quickly look for specific facts or key words and phrases, scanning should be applied. During scanning the reader runs his eyes down the page in search for particular information. If unfamiliar words are encountered, the reader should look them up in a dictionary, as they can be key words in the text. Scanning is also very helpful if the reader needs to search out statements, definitions etc.

The various strategies that have been explored in this subheading highlights the importance of having a technical knowhow in reading, and further pinpoint on the dangers of having reading disability.

**Skimming**

This comes into play when the reader if the task of the reader is merely to get an overall idea of the passage, he is most likely to use the strategy called skimming. This strategy enables the reader to say what kind of text it is and what kind of information it contains. Thus, the learner can expect what the passage is about and, consequently, he can activate appropriate schemata. Skimming is also helpful in deciding whether a text is relevant for particular reader’s purposes, as the reader can quickly estimate the relevance of the text by skimming it. Since this technique provides the reader with the main ideas of the text, it affords a logical framework for details to be fitted into it during more intensive reading. What is significant to add, during skimming the reader does not pay attention to details and can skip new words providing the text can still be understood.

**Hereditary Influence/ Environmental Influence to Reading Disability.**

The role hereditary and the environment plays in a child’s general development both mentally, physically and the interaction with the society cannot be over overemphasized.

How an individual grows and develops is a function of two factors. These factors are heredity which is biological in nature and environment which is social in nature. An aspect of an individual which is biological can be influenced or modified by environment either positively or negatively. These two factors among other variables account for various differences in growth, development and maturation that are observed in the physical features and behavioural aspects of human. (menkiti, 2012).

From the above citation, it becomes pertinent to say that, hereditary and environmental factors can equally affect the way a child learn and comprehend in school and can as well cause a reading disability. The kind of activities an expectant mother indulges in while pregnant can as well affect the psychological build up of the child. A parent who takes excessive drugs, alcohol and other harmful substances can damage some cells in the child right from the womb and cause serious damage to the mental health of the child.

**Reading Comprehension Errors**

1. Reading difficulties are the principal causes of failure in school (Carmine, Silbert & Kameenui, 1997) in Mercer and Mercer (2001) between 10 per cent and 15 per cent of school-going learners have reading difficulties. Teachers should be in a position to identify a learner’s problem including those related to reading from a holistic point of view in order to help such a learner manage academically in school. Lerner (2006) also notes that teachers should identify students with reading problems early and provide them with appropriate early interventions rather than practicing the policy of wait and fail method. The ability to read fluently is vital both in school and for life. Good reading skills will improve performance in all school subjects. Reading helps in information gathering and learning of concepts. Through reading the learner is exposed to new vocabulary, new sentence structures and different registers. Reading also acquaints the learner with good models of language use. A good foundation of reading should be laid at the beginning of a student’s education. This is because reading is a very important component of language learning and it will also help in the study of all other subjects.

* **Types Of Reading Difficulties And Disabilities**

The most widely recognized and researched reading disability is associated with difficulty in reading single words. This type of difficulty is the most pervasive characteristics of dyslexia. These single-word reading problems are thought to be based on an underlying phonological processing core deficit. Persons with dyslexia experience great difficulty in applying the alphabetic principle to decode words quickly and efficiently. The result is that decoding is labored, fluency is poor and comprehension is negatively affected. A less common and poorly researched reading disability is associated with poor language comprehension. While much less frequent than decoding difficulty, this disability affects some persons who have normal phonological processing skills but who demonstrate difficulty in formulating main ideas, summaries and inferences. This difficulty is demonstrated when listening to, as well as reading a text.

The third groups of students who experience great difficulty in learning to read are those who experience both decoding problems and language comprehension problem. So far, little research has been conducted with these students. It can be argued, however, that students in this last category have the greatest needs and the most severe reading disabilities.

* Dyslexia or alexia
* Phonological deficit
* Processing speed/orthographic processing deficit
* Comprehension deficit
* **Dyslexia or Alexia:**

The condition known as dyslexia is an unusual type of severe reading disorder that has puzzled the educational and medical communities for many years. Dyslexia is one type of severe learning disability that affects some children, adolescents and adults. Dyslexia is one of several distinct learning disabilities. It is a specific language-based disorder of constitutional origin characterized by difficulty in single word decoding, usually reflecting insufficient phonological processing abilities. These difficulties in single word decoding are often unexpected in relation to age and other cognitive and academic abilities; they are not the result of generalized developmental disabilities or sensory impairment. Dyslexia is manifested by variable difficulty with different forms of language, often including, in addition to problems in reading, a conspicuous problem with acquiring proficiency in writing and spelling. People with this baffling disorder find it extremely difficult to recognize letters and words and to interpret information that is presented in print form. Many people with dyslexia are intelligent in other ways. For example they may have very strong mathematics or spatial skills.

* Dyslexia is probably due to a congenital neurological condition.
* Dyslexic problems persist into adolescence and adulthood.
* Dyslexia has perceptual, cognitive and language dimensions.
* Dyslexia leads to difficulties in many areas of life as the individual matures.

People with dyslexia often find ingenious ways to hide their disability and cope with their inability to read. Even their close associates may never suspect the truth. For example, an elderly man handled the problem of dinning in a restaurant by putting down his menu and saying to his companion, “why don’t you order for both of us, dear? Your selections are always delicious.” This is how this man handled his situation.

The methods for identifying dyslexia are controversial. Badian (1996) discusses the difficulty of differentiating between poor readers who have dyslexia and ordinary poor readers (“garden variety” poor readers). Furthermore, the identification depends on the definition and criteria used to assess the condition. For example, if the criterion for dyslexia is a discrepancy between an IQ score and a composite reading achievement score certain types of students will be identified. If the criterion used in identifying the population is a phonological core deficit, other subject will be identified. If the criterion is “unexpected reading problems” in the light of cognitive strengths, still other individuals may be identified.

The impact that dyslexia has is different for each person and depends on the severity of the condition and the effectiveness of instruction or remediation. The core difficulty is with word recognition and reading fluency, spelling and writing. Some dyslexics manage to learn early reading and spelling tasks, especially with excellent instruction, but later experience their most difficult problems when more complex language skills are required, such as grammar, understanding textbook material and writing essays. People with dyslexia can also have problems with spoken language, even after they have been exposed to good language models in their homes and good language instruction in school. They may find it difficult to express themselves clearly, or to fully comprehend what others mean when they speak. Such language problems are often difficult to recognize, but they can lead to major problems in school, in the work place, and in relating to other people. The effects of dyslexia reach well beyond the classroom.

Dyslexia can also affect a person’s self image. Students with dyslexia often end up feeling “dumb” and less capable than they actually are. After experiencing a great deal of stress due to academic problems, a student may become discouraged about continuing in school.

* **Phonological Deficit:** implicating a core problem in the phonological processing system of oral language. Most poor readers or students about 70-80 percent have trouble with accurate and fluent word recognition that originates with weaknesses in phonological processing, often in combination with fluency and comprehension problems. These students have obvious trouble learning sound-symbol correspondence, sounding out words and spelling. The term dyslexic is most often applied to this group.
* **Processing Speed/Orthographic Processing Deficit:**

Affecting speed and accuracy of printed word recognition (also called naming problem or fluency problem). Most of the students or poor readers ranging from 10-15 percent appear to be accurate but slow in word recognition and text reading. They have specific weaknesses with speed of word recognition and automatic recall of word spellings, although they do relatively well on tests of phoneme awareness and other phonological skills. They have trouble developing automatic recognition of words by sight and tend to spell phonetically but not accurately. This subgroup is thought to have relative strengths in phonological processing, but the nature of their relative weakness is debated by scientists who argue that the problem is primarily one of timing or processing speed, and others propose that there is a specific deficit within the orthographic processor that affects the storage and recall of exact letter sequences. This processing speed/orthographic subgroup generally have milder difficulties with reading than students with phonological processing deficit.

**Effects of Reading Disabilities on Students Academic Performance**

Reading disabilities as seen in the excerpt above has shown us the lot of disabilities that can be seen in the life of students and how it regulates the entire life of a student. In this phase, the effect of reading disabilities on students comes in various ways, which is one of the core reasons for this study.

According to recent research by Lerner (2006), there is a significance gender effect on ability to read. Clinics and schools in USA identify four times as many boys and girls who have learning disabilities (Lerner, 2006). Reid et al (2009), study on gender differences in reading have also confirmed that reading disability is higher in males than in females with the average ratio being four males to one female. Maletesha and Aaron (1982) claim that more male brains are prone to excessive balance in information processing strategies than female brains. It is believed that the males are more reading disabled than the females.

**Hyper-distractibility on student’s academic performance**

Students who are highly distracted show poorer academic performance in school and they exhibit deficiency in the work place as adult. A study on the effects of hyper distractibility and absenteeism on school performance in student with reading disability, found out that inattention and hyper distractibility were related to school performance. There is a significant relationship between absenteeism and school performance.

Hyper-distractibility is the most common neurobehavioral disorder of students and among the most prevalent chronic health conditions affecting school-aged children. The core symptoms in a student include: inability to hold information in short term memory, impaired organization and planning skills, such as selecting strategies and monitoring tasks, inability to keep to emotions from becoming overpowering and inability to shift efficiently from one mental activity to another. According to martin (2010) students with hyper distractibility are often regarded by parents and teachers as stubborn because they show a dislike for school as a result of their repeated failure in schoolwork. 80% of these students with hyper distractibility have reading problems that are severe enough to cause them to lag for several years behind their peers in school and a high proportion of them have learning disorders severe enough to cause academic impairment.

Most of these students perform poorly in academics because they avoid rehearsing information unless reinforced at high rates and they fail to get on track and get lost easily especially with added details. They also fail to get on track, especially on tasks that are long, repetitive, require holding information in mind such as mental ability in mathematics, multiple step directions, organizing or planning English composition. Students with hyper-distractibility are usually distracted and made inattentive by an over stimulating environment such as a large classroom. Inattention is a major factor in low academic performance and can cause students to frequently forget or miss assignments. These students exhibit several characteristics of academic impairment.

* Inattention and memory problem (examples: losing or forgetting things, being absent minded, not finishing things, misjudging time, and having trouble to get started.
* Often fails to give close attention to detail and makes careless mistakes.
* Often have difficulty sustaining attention in task.
* Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly
* Avoids or dislikes task requiring mental effort
* Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.

**Theoretical Framework**

* Jean Piaget’s and Lev vygotsky’s theory of cognitive

This study was guided by Jean Piaget’s (1983) theory of cognitive development. Cognitive development is the aspect of development that deals with thinking, problem solving, intelligence and language. According to Piaget, cognitive development is a combined result of the maturation of the brain and nervous system and the experiences that help individuals adapt to the environment. He contends that cognitive development in all children will follow predictably and qualitatively distinct levels or stages. These stages are from concrete operational thought to formal operational thought. These stages are useful in this study in that adolescents “reading abilities and social/emotional adjustment in secondary schools depend on how successful they went through this early step”.

Piaget emphasizes that the order in which the periods occur is approximately fixed but a child’s rate of progress through them is not and the age at which each stage or sub-stage is negotiated varies from child to child. The stage progression portion of piaget cognitive development theory has important implications on reading development stages (chall, 1983). First, reading process is developmental and no child skips a stage. Second, individual children may take different lengths of time and need different experiences to complete their development. The schemata (mental structures) aspect of Piagets (1983) theory is in line with the reading definition of reading beyond the lines in this study. This relates to the way reading is correctly viewed as a highly subjective interaction of learner’s prior knowledge, perception and purposes with those of the author. This interaction is guided by Piaget’s two complementary processes of assimilation and accommodation.

To Piagets, he was curious about certain phenomenon especially the nature of knowledge and how children acquire it and later broke these stages into smaller group and unit. Central to Piaget’s theory are the following principles and concepts:

* Children are active and motivated learners
* Children organise what they learn from their experiences
* Children adapt to their environment through the processes of assimilation and accommodation
* Interaction with the physical environment is critical for cognitive development
* Interaction with other people is equally critical
* The process of equilibration promotes increasingly complex forms of thought
* Children think in qualitatively different ways at different age levels

**Piaget’s Stages of Cognitive Development**

1. Sensiromotor. Birth to age 2
2. Preoperational. Age 2 through age 6 or 7
3. Concrete Operations. Age 6 or 7 through age 11 or 12
4. Formal Operations. Age 11 or 12 through adulthood

While Lev Vygotsky, on the other hand, tackles the issue of education a rather sociocultural perspective, he opined that child education is mostly interwoven with the environmental and cultural realities they are exposed to and how the adults citizens interacts with them, he outlined the following as his model for education:

. Through both informal interactions and formal schooling, adults convey to children the ways in which their culture interprets the world.

* Every culture passes along physical and cognitive tools that make daily living more effective and efficient
* Thought and language become increasingly interdependent in the first few years of life
* Complex mental processes begin as social activities. As children develop, they gradually internalise the processes they use in social contexts and begin to use them independently
* Children appropriate their culture’s tools in their own idiosyncratic manner
* Children can perform more challenging tasks when assisted by more advanced and competent individuals
* Challenging tasks promote maximum cognitive growth. Zone of proximal development (ZPD)
* Play allows children to stretch themselves cognitively

Reading is an ongoing process hence the wish for this study is to find out whether the secondary school teachers were aware of reading difficulties and whether they wer aware of remedial measures of such problems. The study also wished to determine the specific strategies used by those teachers in dealing with reading difficulties to enhance academic performance and social/emotional adjustment of learners in their schools.

**Empirical Studies**

Ferrer E, et al (2010) in his research findings shows that in typical readers, reading and IQ development are dynamically linked over time. This finding provides the first empirical demonstration of a coupling between cognition and reading in typical readers and a developmental uncoupling between cognition and reading in dyslexic readers.

Hamilton SS, et al (2006) in his research findings shows that reading difficulties are common and are associated with poor long-term academic achievement. Reading difficulties in children are often caused by environmental and organic risk factors.

Flanagan and Mascollo, (2005) a recent research has provided some evidence that discrepancy between formally measured IQ achievements is a clear indicator of learning disability.

A reading disability is believed to be the most common disability of all students with specific learning disabilities. 20% to 80% have deficits in reading (learning disability, Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia, 2007). However, many researchers assert that there are different types of reading disabilities of which dyslexia is one.

Anyachebelu and Anyaneme (2007) assert that because of the reading disability present in a child, the spoken language of affected children can be halting and disorganized and these children often lack effective ways of approaching academic task.

**Summary of the Reviewed Literature**

This chapter comprises of conceptual framework in which you will find the concept of students reading disability in a person’s life most especially students as an impairment or difficulty in reading and comprehension of written works. We can also see approaches to reading with its sub topics scanning and skimming, hereditary influence/environmental influence to reading, reading comprehension errors, phonological/orthographic processing deficit, effects of reading disability.

Theoretical framework using jean piaget and lev vygotsky’s theory of cognitive development to talk about the stages of child development from childhood to adulthood and relating it to reading disability and its effect on students academic performance.

Finally, empirical studies reviewed other author’s research finding on reading disability and its effect on student’s academic performance. Anyachebelu and Anyaneme (2007) assert that because of the reading disability present in a child, the spoken language of affected children can be halting and disorganized and these children often lack effective ways of approaching academic task. To sum it up, I will say that early diagnosis by the teacher or family is very important, so that students with reading disability do not become terribly frustrated and discouraged to pursue life goals.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter discusses the method used in carrying out the study. The methods are as follows: research design, area of study, population of the study the sample and sampling technique, instrument for data collection, validation of instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

**Research design**

This work adopted descriptive survey research design so as to aid for proper analysis of data. The study was used to identify the influence of reading disability on student’s academic performance. Researcher took careful study of the students in their natural settings hence chose quantitative approach (Creswell 2005)

**Area of the study**

The research was carried out in Owerri North local government area of Imo state. This researcher made use of government owned secondary schools.

**Population of the Study**

The population of this study comprises of 16 government secondary schools in Owerri North local government area. Some students were randomly questioned. The population of teachers in Owerri North local government area is five hundred and fifty (550) while the number of students is four thousand and fifty and one (4,051) thereby making it a total population of four thousand and six hundred and one (4,601). The source of this information is from secondary education management board.

**Sample and sampling technique**

Basically this section simply represents the sample and sampling technique which the researcher employed in determining the size of the sample on which the study was carried out. Five secondary schools in Owerri North local government area of Imo state were selected through, simple random sampling from (16) sixteen secondary schools in Owerri North were sampled. (40) students were selected through simple random sampling. Forty students were randomly selected from each school which gave a total number of 200 respondents.

**Instrument for data collection** (questionnaire)

The instrument used for data collection is a questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument was structured in form of a likert type of instrument of four scales. The questionnaire comprise of two sections A and B. A is personal information of respondent while b is the questions on influence of reading disability. Four research questions were used and there were 20 items in the questionnaire which covered the research questions. The response used is strongly agree (SA) agree (A), strongly disagree (SD) disagree (D).

**Reliability of instrument**

This is a measure of how consistent the result of a test should be. According to shanghvey (1997) reliability refers to the consistency of measurements and frequently assessed using the test –retest method. This researcher used the test –retest method in which case, same instruments were administered twice to same group of sampled subjects within a time gap of two weeks. This was to estimate the degree to which the same results could be obtained with a repeat measure scores were gathered and scored given and a percentage of 55 was received which is considered high enough to judge the instruments as reliable for the study.

**Validation of instrument**

The instruments were validated by two experts for measurement and evaluation all from Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu. The experts face validated the instruments ensuring that the item statements addressed the research questions and the adequacy of the constructs used in the questionnaire. They checked the instrument for item clarity, relevance, and content coverage language. All their corrections and criticisms were incorporated.

**Experimental procedure**

**Method of data collection**

The researcher administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents directly by hand for a month. A total of two hundred (200) copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents for the analysis and the whole copies were filled and returned to the researcher completely and used for analysis.

**Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected for the study from the respondents were carefully analyzed by the researcher using the frequency and mean score. The cut off point for an item agreed or disagreed will be determined respectively and the responses to each question or statement were summed up and the mean (x) obtained.

The four point scale used is:

Strongly Agreed (SA) 4

Agreed (A) 3

Disagree (D) 2

Strongly Disagree (SD) 1

The data collected from the respondents were carefully analyzed by the researcher. The responses to each question were summed up and the mean (x) with standard deviation obtained. If the mean is below 2.5, then the item is considered rejected. Any item that attracts a mean over 2.5 and above is then considered accepted.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**RESULT**

In this section the researcher analyzed her data by answering her research questions using descriptive statistics for the items. For each research questions, the researcher calculated the mean.

**Research Question 1**: How does school administration affect the reading disability on student’s academic performance?

Table 1:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/no** | **Items Descriptive** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **Mean** | **Decision** |
| 1 | School has no provision for guidance and counseling services | 85 | 58 | 35 | 22 | 3.0 | Strongly agree |
| 2 | Inadequate curriculum materials and equipment for guidance services | 70 | 65 | 45 | 20 | 2.9 | Strongly agree |
| 3 | There are enough quality teachers who can differentiate instructions | 30 | 45 | 35 | 90 | 2.9 | Strongly disagree |
| 4 | Inadequate library resources | 70 | 55 | 50 | 25 | 2.8 | Strongly agree |
| 5 | There is adequate information technology | 37 | 42 | 68 | 53 | 2.7 | Disagree |

In table 1, the respondent agreed on items 1 – 3 which is above 2.5 cutoff points which shows that school has no provision for guidance and counseling services to manage the reading disability of students academic performance.

**Research Question 2**: How does reading disability affect student’s academic performance?

**Table 2:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/no** | **Items descriptive** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **Mean** | **Decision** |
| 1 | Reading disability prevents individuals from reaching desired goals. | 76 | 54 | 48 | 22 | 2.9 | Strongly agree |
| 2 | Lack of participation in class activities | 82 | 68 | 32 | 18 | 3.0 | Strongly agree |
| 3 | Failure in class activities as a result of reading disability | 92 | 56 | 49 | 1 | 3.2 | Strongly agree |
| 4 | It makes students to pay attention | 36 | 57 | 46 | 61 | 2.7 | Strongly disagree |
| 5. | It creates behavior disorder | 83 | 62 | 45 | 10 | 3.0 | Strongly agree |

Based on table 2, the respondents agreed on item 1 , 2, 3 and 5 which is above 2.5 cut off points. It states that reading disability prevent individual s from reaching desired goals in secondary schools. While only item 4 disagreed.

**Research Question 3:** How does the school environment affect the reading disability of the students?

**Table 3:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/no** | **Items Descriptive** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **Mean** | **Decision** |
| 1 | Unconducive environment affects the reading disability of students | 93 | 84 | 15 | 8 | 3.3 | Strongly agree |
| 2 | Poor reading ability leads to lowered self-esteem | 88 | 72 | 24 | 16 | 3.1 | Strongly agree |
| 3 | Being ridiculed in school | 71 | 69 | 40 | 20 | 2.9 | Strongly agree |
| 4 | Robs students of the opportunity to read for pleasure and enjoyment | 66 | 59 | 44 | 31 | 2.8 | Strongly agree |
| 5 | Not being able to cope with other students during reading exercise | 55 | 55 | 45 | 22 | 2.9 | Strongly agree |

This result shows that the respondents agreed on item 1 – 5 on how school environment affects the reading disability of the students in the government secondary schools in Owerri North.

**Research Question 4:** How does the quality of teachers affect the reading disability of the students?

Table 4:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/no** | **Items descriptive** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** | **Mean** | **Decision** |
| 1 | The teachers good skills affects the reading disability of the students | 48 | 32 | 53 | 67 | 2.7 | Strongly disagreed |
| 2 | The teachers bad attitude towards the students affects the reading disability of the students | 79 | 62 | 50 | 9 | 3.0 | Strongly agreed |
| 3 | The teachers well observance affects the reading disability of the students | 3 | 41 | 69 | 87 | 3.2 | Strongly disagreed |
| 4 | The teachers lack of motivation and encouragement  affects the reading disability of the students | 60 | 55 | 47 | 38 | 2.6 | Strongly agreed |
| 5 | The teachers inappropriate use of words on the students affects the  reading disability of students | 59 | 48 | 53 | 40 | 2.6 | Strongly agreed |

The results in table 4 shows that the respondents in item 2, 4 and 5 which is above 2.5 strongly agreed that the teachers bad attitude affects the reading disability of the secondary school students affects their academic performance while items 1 and 3 strongly disagreed.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION, RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY**

In this chapter, the result of the study based on the data interpretations made in chapter four are examined and inference drawn from there.

**Discussion of the findings**

In research question one, it was observed that no provision for guidance and counseling services, inadequate curriculum materials and equipment, inadequate library services are all part of school administration effects on reading disability towards students academic performance among secondary school students in owerri north local government area in Imo state. This in agreement with the findings of Karanja (2015) who states, that these issues are all part of the problems of reading disability among secondary school students.

Research question two shows that reading problems prevents individuals from reaching desired goal, lack of participation in class activities, failure in class work, and behaivour disorder reveals the extent of influence of reading disability on student’s academic performance. This finding is in agreement with that of Lerner (2000) who observed that student’s with reading disability exhibit this acts because of their reading disability.

Research question three points out the problems relating to reading habits, poor reading ability leads to lowered self-esteem, being ridiculed in school, robs students of the opportunity to read for pleasure and enjoyment, not being able to cope with other students during reading exercise are part of the environmental effects of reading disability among secondary school students. This finding is in agreement with Reid et al, (2009) who also found that most students with reading disability have low self-esteem and consider themselves less valued members of their class.

Research question four delves into the quality of teachers and how they affect the reading disability of the students in Owerri North Local Government Area. Discussing the findings in respect of this research question, it is observed that teacher’s bad attitude towards the students, the teacher’s lack of motivation and encouragement affects the reading disability of the students and the teachers inappropriate use of words on the students constitute to the problems of the students with reading disability. In other news, when these things continue the student eventually gives up hope.

**Implications of the Study**

It is a sad thing to see students with reading disability struggle with academic works and other social activities that requires reading. They go through the hurdles of life with little or no encouragement from family, teachers and fellow students yet try to exist instead of live. They are hardly seen which makes it almost impossible to help them. If this problem is well looked into by family, teachers and guardians then schools, states and the nation will benefit from it.

On the other hand, it is essential to assess reading fluency in addition to word reading because failure to do so may result in the under-identification of children with reading disabilities Meisinger EB, et al (2010).

Mercer and mercer (2010) ascertains that the influence of reading disability on student’s academic performance has crippled the academic effort of these students thereby portrays them as unserious or even unwanted in the academic sector.

**Recommendations of the Study**

On the basis of the results obtained from the research and the literature reviewed in the work, the following recommendations were made after examining the problem of reading disability in the life of students and how it influences their academic performances:

1. Awareness should be made to educate people who are ignorant of the fact that such psychological problem as reading disability exist, such awareness will help in identifying these problems early in the life of students and immediate solution proffered.
2. People suffering from reading disabilities should not be segregated, mocked at or called failures, instead they should be shown love, care, support and encouraged to help boost their self esteem and brace up to help improve their academic performances .
3. Team work should be encouraged more in class room situations as it helps in giving students with reading disabilities some sense of belonging and boost their self confidence.
4. Teachers in secondary schools should be trained and retrained so as to be adequately equipped with the technical knowhow on how to handle students with special needs like that of reading disabilities.
5. Parents should be encouraged to make the home conducive for learning as the activities in the home mostly affects the psyche of the students which equally affects the way the behave, interact and reacts to issues in school environment and people around them
6. Government through the ministry of Education and other stakeholders should come up with compulsory methods of enhancing reading skills such as, use of library lessons: they should come up with policy guide line on how to access reading comprehension in other to raise performance in public and private schools. They should ensure that reading /learning materials in schools are adequately provided and library resource well stocked

**Limitations of the Study**

The researcher encountered some challenges on the process of carrying out this study. They include:

1. The researcher encountered financial problems as regards to the production of the questionnaire and typing of work.
2. Some of the respondents were reluctant in completing the questionnaire.
3. When the researcher conducted a reading exercise some of the respondents declined.
4. There were also limitations in the study such as lack of time, due to

Management; the researcher had to cut down the scope of the study.

**Suggestions for Further Studies**

In view of the information to the study, the researcher suggests the followings for further studies.

1. This study covered only Owerri North Local Government Area. It will be suitable if similar studies are conducted to cover other local government areas.
2. Strategies for enhancing reading comprehension to help the students with reading disability.
3. A research on how guidance and counseling departments can be improved in order to alleviate socio-economical problems among students is highly suggested.
4. A study on in depth cause of social and emotional problems affecting students reading abilities in Owerri North are suggested where students are involved in giving out their view.

**Summary of the Findings**

This study has been able to expose or better still bring to the fore some of the major causes of reading disabilities in the life of students and how it influences their academic performances. The following are the summary of my findings

1. Dyslexia is the major cause of poor academic performance in the life of students with reading disabilities.
2. The environment affects the learning process of students with reading disability which in turn affects their academic performances.
3. Much has not been done in the Nigeria educational system to help students with reading disabilities.
4. Indolent teachers who do not know that such problem as reading disability exists, contributes to worsen the case of students suffering from this disabilities as they mostly compare the students with this problem to other brighter students in the class.
5. Reading disability affects the self esteem of the students suffering from it.
6. Male students have more chances of suffering from reading disability for a long period of time than the female because they mostly shy away from seeking for help and solution for their problem.
7. The competitive nature of the classroom situation makes it difficult for students with reading disability to cope and improve on their academic performances.
8. Unsettled home and crisis in the homes equally affects the performance of students with reading disability.

**Conclusion**

Based on the research carried out on the result of the analysis and summary, it can be concluded that most of the causes of reading disability on students academic performance is not only dyslexia which is the major issue but the environment, school administration, past academic background, teachers incompetency and unsettled home crisis are part of the influence. This has caused more harm than good to students with reading disability.

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**ENDIX**

**APP**

Faculty of Education

Department of Art and Social Sciences

English and Literary Studies Education

Godfrey Okoye University

Ugwu-Omu Nike Enugu

July, 2018.

Dear respondent,

**REQUEST TO COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS**

I, Onuigbo Goodness Agozirim, a student of the above named institution, is conducting a research project on the topic: “influence of reading disability on students academic performance in secondary school: A case study of Owerri North Local government Area.

The investigation is interested on the influence of reading disability on students’ academic performance in secondary school.

Kindly supply the correct information by placing (√) in the column to fill the blank space against each statement that appeals to you. Your answers will be confidentially treated.

Thanks for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

**Onuigbo, Goodness A.**

**(Researcher)**

Questionnaire for secondary school students on knowledge, reading capacity and attitude of secondary school students towards the reading disability encountered by secondary school students in Owerri North Local Government Area of Imo State.

**Section A:**

Respondent Personal Data

Please tick ( √ )

Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

Age: 11 – 15 ( ), 16– 20 ( )

Name of school ……………………………………………………………………………………

Location of school ………………………………………………………………………………...

Town ………………………………………………………………………………………………

**Section B:**

**Research Question 1:** How Does school administration affect the reading disability on students’ academic performance?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1. | School has no provision for guidance and counseling services. |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | Inadequate curriculum materials and equipment for guidance services |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | There are enough quality teachers who can differentiate instructions. |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | Inadequate library resources |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | There is adequate information technology. |  |  |  |  |

**Research Question 2**: How does reading disability affect students’ academic performance?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1. | Reading disability prevents individuals from reaching desired goal. |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | Lack of participation in class activities |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | Failure in class activities as a result of reading disability |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | It makes students to pay attention |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | It creates behavior disorder |  |  |  |  |

**Research Question 3:**  How does should environment affect the reading disability of the students?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1. | Unconducive environment affects the reading disability of students |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | Poor reading ability leads to lowered self-esteem. |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | Being ridiculed in school. |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | Robs students of the opportunity to read for pleasure and enjoyment. |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | Not being able to cope with other students during reading exercise. |  |  |  |  |

**Research Question 4:** How does the quality of teachers affect the reading disability of the students?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N** | **ITEMS** | **SA** | **A** | **D** | **SD** |
| 1. | The teachers good skills affects the reading disability of the students |  |  |  |  |
| 2. | The teacher’s bad attitude towards the students affects the reading disability of the students |  |  |  |  |
| 3. | The teachers well observance affects the reading disability of the students |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | The teachers lack of motivation and encouragement affects the reading disability of the students |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | The teachers Inappropriate use of words the reading disability of students |  |  |  |  |