

## **Effects of Assertiveness Training and Self-Reinforcement on Poor Study Behaviour Among Secondary School Students in Anambra State.**

**Christopher A. NWANKWO and Francisca MGBIKE,**  
Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education,  
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, NIGERIA.

### **Abstract**

*This study focuses on the effects of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement on poor study behaviour among secondary school students in Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study and three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study employed quasi-experimental design, specifically, the non-randomization pretest, posttest design and control-group. The population of the study comprised all the SS 1 students in secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. There were 18 public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra state with population of 2,068 SS 1 students. The sample of this study comprised 93 SS I students identified with poor study behaviour from three (3) selected public secondary schools. Purposive sampling technique was used in identifying the three schools because they have the highest number of students with poor study behavior. The instrument for data collection was a Study Behaviour Inventory (SBI) by Akinboye 1985. The instrument is a 25-item inventory with response option ranging from least like me to most like me, with corresponding values of 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The Behaviour Study Inventory test was administered to the students in the three sampled secondary schools for the study by the researcher with the help of three trained research assistants that went round the secondary school to distribute copies of the inventory test. Data collected were analyzed using mean analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA) statistical tools. The findings of this study revealed that assertiveness training technique is effective in enhancing study behaviour of secondary school students. The study revealed that self-reinforcement technique is effective in modifying the poor study behaviour of secondary school students. The study specifically conclude that assertiveness training and self-reinforcement technique can be used to modify the poor study behaviour of secondary school students, as there is no significant difference in the effectiveness of the both techniques on secondary school students study behaviour.*

**Key words:** Assertiveness training technique, Poor study behaviour and Self-Reinforcement technique

### **Introduction**

Students' academic achievement thus occupies a very important place in education as well as in the learning process. It is considered as a key criterion to judge one's total potentialities and capacities which is used to pass judgment on quality of education offered by schools (Nuthana & Yenagi, 2009). It is frequently measured by examination results and since students occupy a very significant position in the teaching and learning, the type of

behaviour they exhibit towards their studies becomes an issue of utmost importance. Students need to demonstrate appropriate behaviour towards their studies for them to succeed academically. In essence, such students will be able to direct and control their actions in the learning process.

Aina, Oloke, Jonathan and Olawuyi, (2012) noted that the quality of students study behaviour is influenced by a wide range of factors like environmental factors, economic factor, teacher factor; reading culture, anti-Social factors and psychological factors within the students. Ogunjinmi, Salami and Oyedare (2015); Olajide, Okewole and Agboola (2015) found out that the factors that contribute to students' poor academic performance include lack of motivational orientation, poor self-esteem, emotional problems, poor study behaviour, lack of teacher consultation and poor interpersonal relationships among students. The general consensus amongst these scholars is that, acquired defects, innate and factors, psycholinguistic problem, physical and cultural factors, school environment, and culture of a school are significant factors influencing students' study behavior

Study behaviour demonstrate students' concept of how to accomplish learning goals (Mehraj & Qamar, 2012). Students with poor study behaviour are likely to avoid difficult tasks, lack persistence, and easily give up when faced with challenges while studying. The reason being that poor study behaviour is usually associated with students not being confident of themselves or not being able to assert themselves. In other words, being assertive is not only about being confident, it is also about understanding oneself and other members of the family and the empathy that one gives them as well as expressing their opinion on any matter (Niemezyk & Savenye, 2011) .

Assertive training program is a systemic approach to more assertive self-expression, based on a balance between achieving one's own goals and respecting the needs of others. It is a psychological intervention which could be of help to students in order to learn and integrate assertive behavioural skills into their daily lives. Such training according to Anakwuba (2018) deals with attitudes, beliefs, and cognitions about assertiveness as well as specific, overassertive behaviours. In addition, assertiveness training is a behavioural therapy technique which prepares an individual to stand up for himself or herself, to know and achieve his or her rights, and also take cognizance of the need to strike a balance between assertiveness and aggressiveness (Uba & Idigun, 2016). One goal of assertiveness technique is to increase people's behavioural repertoire so that they can make choice of whether to behave assertively in certain situation. Being assertive gives the individual enough confidence in communicating boldly, frankly, articulately, honestly, directly, authoritatively and spontaneously. Crescent (2016) used assertiveness training to reduce the level of stress, anxiety, and depression on high school students also, Akponye (2014) used assertiveness training to increase self-esteem of female adolescent from divorced homes.

Similarly, self-reinforcement in operant situation generally refers to those arrangements in which the subject delivers to himself a consequence, contingent on his behaviour (Nduka-Ozo, 2016). It is an event, act or stimulus, which tend to increase or reduce the frequency of occurrence of behaviour. Self-reinforcement occupies a pivotal place in learning theory account of behaviour change (Bandura in Zhou & Brown, 2015). Self-reinforcement is an invaluable link between the response and the outcome. The more

often that a person can pick out target behaviour and consistently give him/herself reinforcement for the behaviour, the more likely it will occur in the future.

Gender differences in the study behaviour of students are a recurrent field of research. Gender is related with how individuals perceive themselves in such a way that most people of the same sex identify themselves with certain attributes. These attributes according to Katrin and Marcus (2014) could affect children as they develop. For example, Men are more likely to describe themselves as independent, achievement oriented, financially oriented, and competitive than women. Women, on the other hand, describe themselves as sociable, moral, dependent, and less assertive. Although boys and girls report similar levels of study behaviour during childhood, a gender gap emerges during adolescence. For instance, Reilly, Neumann and Andrews (2019) found that gender differences exist in the learning behaviour of students.

From the foregoing, it could be attested to the notion that the use of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement to enhance students' maladaptive behaviours have been shown to have positive benefits for the participants. The techniques encompasses multidimensional aspects of human expression, including behaviour, cognition, and effect. The application of these techniques can likely increase the process by which individuals make behavioural decisions and rationalize their actions. Hence the motivation for this study to determine the effects of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement in enhancing poor study behaviour among secondary school students' in Anambra State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

One of the major challenges facing many academic institutions in Nigeria today is the issue of how to deal with students' poor study behaviour. It is thus an issue that has become more of serious concern to stakeholders in education in Anambra State. Assertive training and self-reinforcement are psychological treatment techniques which recorded successes in handling problems; both behavioural deficits and behavioural excesses. Assertiveness training has been used successfully to help individuals overcome interpersonal challenges. So it would likely be of help to students with poor study behaviour who could likely engage in negative talks or self-defeating statements, and who may find it difficult to express feelings easily, join groups or engage in group work. These students with poor study behaviour tend to not be active participants in the learning process, and may have low view of themselves, and these would likely hinder learning effectiveness, thereby lowering academic performances.

Moreover, self-reinforcement technique could be an instrumental link between students study behaviour response and outcome. This is because the technique tends to reinforce students to demonstrating good study behaviour thereby encouraging their autonomy. This could be achieved by establishing response criteria for reinforcement, discriminating the response when it occurs and administering the self-reinforcement either covertly or overtly. Therefore, through self-reinforcement, the guidance counsellor could guide students on how to reward themselves on each successful attempt to modify poor study behaviour and building natural rewards into their own work. This study took look at the techniques in order to probe deeper into modifying the study behaviour of secondary school students in the study area. Consequently, the researchers deemed it fit

to investigate, the effect of these techniques on poor study behaviour among secondary school students, and to determine which of the techniques is more effective.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement on poor study behaviour among secondary school students in Anambra State. Specifically the study determined: (a) Effect of assertiveness training technique in enhancing poor study behaviour of secondary school students' when compared to those in the control group. (b) Effect of Self-reinforcement technique in enhancing poor study behaviour of secondary school students' when compared with those in the control group using their pre-test and post-test scores. (c) Effectiveness of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement techniques on secondary school students poor study behaviour using their pre-test and post-test scores.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions: (a) What is the effect of assertiveness training technique on poor study behaviour of secondary school students when compared to those in control group using their pre-test and post-test scores? (b) What is the effect of self-reinforcement technique on poor study behaviour of secondary school students' when compared to those in control group using their pre-test and post-test scores? (c) What is relativeness of effectiveness of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement techniques in enhancing secondary school students poor study behaviour using their pre-test and post-test scores?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance: (a) There is no significant difference in the effect of assertiveness training technique on secondary school students study behaviour when compared with those in the control group who received conventional counselling using their posttest mean scores. (b) There is no significant difference in the effect of self-reinforcement technique on secondary school students' study behaviour when compared with those in the control group who received conventional counselling using their posttest mean scores. (c) There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of assertiveness training technique on secondary school students study behaviour when compared with those treated with self-reinforcement technique using their posttest mean scores.

### **Method**

The study employed quasi-experimental design, specifically, the non-randomization - pretest and posttest control group design. The population of the study comprised all the SS 1 students in secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. There were 18 public secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra state with population of 2,068 SS 1 students (sources: Anambra State post primary school service commission, 2017). The sample of this study comprised 93 SS I students identified with poor study behaviour from three (3) selected public secondary schools. The schools were selected from pool of 18 public secondary schools in Awka South

Local Government Area were students with the highest number of poor study behavior were identified. Purposive sampling technique was used in identifying the three schools because they have the highest number of students with poor study behaviour. The three schools with the highest number of students having poor study behaviour served as the experimental group I, II and control group III.

The instrument for data collection was a Study Behaviour Inventory (SBI) by J. O. Akinboye 1985. The instrument is a 25-item inventory with response option ranging from least like me to most like me, with corresponding values of 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. This inventory is set out to know some of the social, familiar, biological, personal, and educational factors affecting the behaviour of the Nigerian Adolescent. The instrument did not require revalidation since it has been validated before now. In data collection, the Behaviour Study Inventory test was administered to the students in the three sampled secondary schools for the study by the researcher with the help of three trained research assistants that went round the secondary school to distribute copies of the inventory test. Each participant was given the instrument to respond to. The researcher gave an introduction of the instrument on how to complete the inventory by the students. The senior secondary school students (SS1) WHO participated in the study forms the groups. The two experimental group were exposed to Assertive training and Self-reinforcement training techniques treatment respectively. The students participated in eighty (80) minutes session which held twice a week, for eight consecutive weeks. After eight weeks treatment and conventional counselling interaction, the Adolescent Personal Data Inventory was re-administered on all the participates in both experimental group and control group was regarded as post-test. The instruments were retrieved from the students immediately they were through with responding to the items and handed over to the researcher for determination of the statistical scores. Students that have scores above the norms of 112 were considered as having poor study behaviour and was assigned to experimental group and control group. The instrument was re-administered after 8 weeks of successful implementation of the treatment programme to get the posttest scores. The instrument –test items of the posttest were the same with that of the pre-test except that the items were reshuffled.

The experimental treatment took place at the school premises (counselling center) on treatment days, the participants were made to stay in a counselling clinic within the school. The treatment programme was held for eight weeks. The senior secondary school students (SS1) who participated in the study form the groups. The two experimental groups were exposed to Assertiveness training and Self-reinforcement training techniques treatment respectively. The treatment lasted for 8 weeks. It was held twice a week on 1 hour per session. After eight weeks treatment and conventional counselling interaction, the Adolescent Personal Data Inventory was re-administered on all the participants in both experimental group and control group which were regarded as post-test. The post-test scores was collected and given to the researcher for analysis and to determine the statistical difference between the experimental group and the control group.

The completed instrument was collected, scored, and analyzed following the scoring instruction provided in the Study Behaviour Inventory manual. The data relating to the research questions were analyzed using the mean. The null hypotheses were tested at 0.5

level of significance using the analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA). The reason for the use of ANCOVA was to isolate the possible distorting of extraneous variable as covariates.

**Results**

**Research Question 1** What is the effect of assertiveness training technique on students’ poor study behaviour when compared to those who received conventional counselling using their pretest and posttest mean scores?

**Table 1: PRETEST AND POSTTEST STUDY BEHAVIOUR MEAN SCORES OF STUDENTS TREATED WITH ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING TECHNIQUE AND THOSE IN THE CONTROL GROUP**

Source of Variation	N	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Gained Mean
Assertiveness training	31	94.42	126.74	32.32
Control	21	92.67	100.71	8.04

Table 1 indicates that the students treated with assertiveness training technique had pretest mean score of 94.42 and posttest mean score of 126.74 with gained mean 32.32 in their study behaviour, while the students in the control group who received conventional counselling had pretest mean score of 92.67 and posttest mean score of 100.71 with gained mean 8.04. Therefore assertiveness training technique is effective in enhancing study behaviour of secondary school students because the posttest mean score is higher than the norm of 112.

**Research Question 2** What is the effect of self-reinforcement technique on students’ study behaviour when compared to those who received conventional counselling using their pretest and posttest mean scores?

**Table 2: PRETEST AND POSTTEST STUDY BEHAVIOUR MEAN SCORES OF STUDENTS TREATED WITH SELF-REINFORCEMENT TECHNIQUE AND THOSE IN THE CONTROL GROUP**

Source of Variation	N	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Gained Mean
Self-reinforcement	27	99.07	130.85	31.72
Control	21	92.67	100.71	8.04

Table 2 reveals that the students treated with self-reinforcement technique had pretest mean score of 99.07 and posttest mean score of 130.85 with gained mean 31.72 in their study behaviour, while the students in the control group who received conventional counselling had pretest mean score of 92.67 and posttest mean score of 100.71 with gained mean 8.04. Therefore self-reinforcement technique is effective in enhancing study behaviour of secondary school students because the posttest mean score is higher than the norm of 112.

**Research Question 3** What are the relative effects of assertiveness training technique on students’ poor study behaviour when compared with those treated with self-reinforcement technique using their pretest and posttest mean scores?

**Table 3: PRETEST AND POSTTEST STUDY BEHAVIOUR MEAN SCORES OF STUDENTS TREATED WITH ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING TECHNIQUE AND THOSE TREATED WITH SELF-REINFORCEMENT TECHNIQUE**

Source of Variation	N	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Gained Mean	Remark
Assertiveness training	31	94.42	126.74	32.32	
Self-reinforcement	27	99.07	130.85	31.72	

In Table 3, it was observed that the students treated with assertiveness training technique had pretest mean score of 94.42 and posttest mean score of 126.74 with gained mean 32.32 in their study behaviour, while the students treated with self-reinforcement technique had pretest mean score of 99.07 and posttest mean score of 130.85 with gained mean 31.72 in their study behaviour. Therefore assertiveness training technique is slightly more effective in enhancing study behaviour of secondary school students because it has more gained mean.

### Testing the Hypotheses Null hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the effect of assertiveness training technique on secondary school students study behaviour when compared with those in the control group who received conventional counselling using their mean scores.

**Table 4: ANCOVA ON THE POSTTEST STUDY BEHAVIOUR MEAN SCORES OF STUDENTS TREATED WITH ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING TECHNIQUE AND THOSE WHO RECEIVED CONVENTIONAL COUNSELLING**

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	P-value	P ≥ 0.05
Corrected Model	17571.774	2	8785.887			
Intercept	2256.422 1		2256.422			
Pretest	9090.764 1		9090.764			
Treatment Model	7563.166 1		7563.166	160.47	0.000	S
Error	2309.457 49		47.132			
Total	722380.000		52			
Corrected Total	19881.231		51			

Table 4 shows that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 51df denominator, the calculated F is 160.47 with P-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected. So, the effect of assertiveness training technique on secondary school students study behaviour is significant.

### Null hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the effect of self-reinforcement technique on secondary school students study behaviour when compared with those in the control group who received conventional counselling using their mean scores.

**Table 5: ANCOVA ON THE POSTTEST STUDY BEHAVIOUR MEAN SCORES OF STUDENTS TREATED WITH SELF-REINFORCEMENT TECHNIQUE AND THOSE WHO RECEIVED CONVENTIONAL COUNSELLING**

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	P-value	P ≥ 0.05
Corrected Model	15294.887	2	7647.443			
Intercept	2165.739	1	2165.739			
Pretest	4565.913	1	4565.913			
Treatment Model	7331.058	1	7331.058	54.621	0.000	S
Error	6039.780	45	134.217			
Total	685916.000	48				
Corrected Total	21334.667	47				

In table 5 it was observed that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 47df denominator, the calculated F is 54.62 with P-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is rejected. So, the effect of self-reinforcement technique on secondary school students study behaviour is significant.

### Null hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the effectiveness of assertiveness training technique on secondary school students study behaviour when compared with those treated with self-reinforcement technique using their mean scores.

**Table 6: ANCOVA ON THE POSTTEST STUDY BEHAVIOUR MEAN SCORES OF STUDENTS TREATED WITH ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING TECHNIQUE AND THOSE WHO WERE TREATED WITH SELF-REINFORCEMENT TECHNIQUE**

Source of variation	SS	df	MS	Cal. F	P-value	P ≥ 0.05
Corrected Model	9840.488	2	4920.244			
Intercept	6192.199	1	6192.199			
Pretest	9766.750	1	9766.750			
Treatment Model	445.095	1	445.095	3.235	0.078	NS
Error	7567.926	55	137.599			
Total	933686.000	58				
Corrected Total	17408.414	57				

Table 6 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance, 1df numerator and 57df denominator, the calculated F is 3.24 with P-value of 0.078 which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the third null hypothesis is accepted. So, there is no significant difference in the effectiveness of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement techniques on secondary school students' study behavior.

### Discussion of Findings

#### Effect of assertiveness training technique on students' poor study behavior

The findings of this study revealed that assertiveness training technique is effective in enhancing study behaviour of secondary school students. This finding shows that the assertiveness skills which the training offered to those in the experimental group significantly impacted on the students study behaviour. The students thus must have interacted and imbibed the skills acquired during the training period. This was depicted



through the mean score gained by those exposed to the assertiveness training over those in the control group who did not receive the training.

The reason for the observed difference between those who received assertiveness training and those in the control group that received conventional counselling could also be attributed to various skills of the technique which was actively practiced during the training and which the students must have imbibed. The students, who could not express themselves prior to the training, were able to improve in their expressive skills to make request without demeaning themselves or hurting the other person. The finding of the study agrees with the findings of Chikwe and Ugwueze (2012), Nnodum (2010), Onwuka (2008), and Osarencen and Ajaero (2013) whose studies on the effect of assertiveness training technique reported that the technique was effective and superior to the control condition in reducing behavioural problems of the participants.

The present finding is in consonance with the results of Nnodum (2010) who noted that the implementation of assertiveness training technique has a positive role in the development of good behaviour among students. Equally, the supportive atmosphere, respect for the beliefs of the students and their ideas, as well as the interaction of the researcher seem to have had a positive role in modifying the behaviour of the students.

The finding of the study further revealed that the difference in the effectiveness of assertiveness training technique on male and female secondary school students' study behaviour is not significant. This explains that assertiveness training was able to modify the poor study behaviour of secondary school students who were exposed to the experimental treatment. This findings is related to the findings of previous studies such as Agbakwuru and Ugwueze (2014) and Tannous (2015). The results of the studies show that both the male and female were affected equally by the assertiveness training.

Although the finding is contrary to expectation which is based on the notion that male and female differ in attitudes, feelings, and behaviours that a given culture tend to associate with gender. However, the findings show that the effect of assertiveness training was same across gender. The reason could thus be attributed to the training which provided opportunity for both male and female to be able to present suggestions in a direct, comfortable way, give and take criticism, assess the rights and responsibilities in a learning situation, and act on assessments in a thoughtful problem-solving way. From the findings, it was revealed that the first null hypothesis is rejected, which explains that the effect of assertiveness training technique on secondary school students' study behaviour is significant.

### **The effect of self-reinforcement technique on students' study behaviour**

Findings of the study revealed that self-reinforcement technique is effective in modifying the poor study behaviour of secondary school students. This implies that the treatment using the technique of self-reinforcement was able to modify the poor study behaviour of the secondary school students. The finding of the study agrees with previous research findings such as Agbaenyi (2008), Bonner (2003), and Isyaku (2015). The findings of Bonner's study indicated a positive decrease of all children's behaviors of out-of-seat and interrupting instruction when self-reinforcement treatment was administered. More so, the findings of Agbaenyi's study has resolute the efficacy of self-reinforcement treatment in the management of aggression among primary school pupils. These studies relates to

the current study and supports, that self-reinforcement technique is an effective technique in curbing maladaptive behaviour like poor study behaviour of students.

What this finding portends is that when a child experiences positive reinforcement, there would be a likely greater willingness to exhibit positive behaviour. Students who are encouraged to learn and allowed the chance to show off their learned skills through their preferred outlets would likely be more willing to develop good study behaviour and organizing skills, and of course continue their learning. This finding equally supports the works of Skinner, whose studies revolve around positive reinforcement. According to Skinner, when positive reinforcement is used to reward a desirable behaviour, the unwanted behaviour will eventually extinguish.

The findings of the study further revealed that the difference in the effectiveness of self-reinforcement technique on male and female secondary school students' study behaviour is not significant. This is to say that the observed difference between those exposed to assertiveness training and those exposed to self-reinforcement technique is not substantial. Hence, one could easily assert that the effect of the technique is same across gender. The finding is in consonant with the findings of Onolabi and Ojo (2011) whose study revealed a significant difference in male and female students' study behaviours. The finding is further in agreement with Agbaenyi (2008) whose study equally revealed that the difference in the effectiveness of self-reinforcement technique in the management of aggression among male and female primary school pupils. The reason for this finding could be attributed to the idea that irrespective of gender, students whose positive study behaviour are reinforced would tend to keep up the good behaviour and such students will most likely learn to reinforce themselves in their learning environments. From the findings of the study, it was revealed that the second null hypothesis is rejected, it then means that the effect of self-reinforcement technique on secondary school students' behaviour is significant.

### **Relative effects of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement techniques on students' poor study behaviour**

Findings of the study revealed that assertiveness training technique is more effective in enhancing study behaviour of secondary school students than self-reinforcement technique. This showed that, after conducting the program, the assertiveness skills improved a little bit in the treatment group more than did in the self-reinforcement treatment group. This efficacy of assertiveness training over self-reinforcement treatment technique could be attributed to its teaching and relearning procedure in which cognitive challenges, role-playing, and imagery occur, and new and different perspectives are offered to replace the old set of problems.

However, the difference in the effect of the techniques was not statistically significant. The finding agrees with Nnodum (2010) who observed that none of the treatment techniques used in the study was superior to the other. Similarly, Agi (2017) noted that counselling strategies were effective in improving student's study behaviour, on circumstances in which the assertiveness training and self-reinforcement treatment program took place. Findings of this study is in line with findings of above studies which shown that students who learn the social behaviours practice and apply their competence, will succeed in friends finding and maintain successful memberships of study groups,

have positive interactions with members of the study group and show a range of acceptable behaviours.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that assertiveness training and self-reinforcement techniques are both effective in enhancing study behaviour of secondary school students. The study specifically conclude that assertiveness training and self-reinforcement technique could be used to modify the poor study behaviour of secondary school students, as there is no significant difference in the effectiveness of the both techniques on secondary school students study behaviour.

### **Implication of the Study**

The findings of this study have numerous implications, among which includes the study Evidenced the fact that Assertiveness training and self-reinforcement techniques, are effective In enhancing study behavior of secondary school students. This implies that the guidance counsellors could use the both techniques (assertiveness training and self-reinforcement) in modifying the poor study behavior of students who are their primary client in secondary schools. Since assertive training border on thought and behavior change, secondary school students can be taught on how to use the technique naturally and in therapeutic settings in solving their day to day life challenges in the classroom situation and the circular world.

In addition, students will also learn through social cues of their counsellors, what acceptable and workable study behavior is and what is and what is not, and how to reinforce every step taking towards good study behavior. Hence, the school counsellors would employ the use of self-reinforcement technique in treating students identified with poor study behavior, so that such students do not lose interest in academics and therefore possibly drop out of school.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made that the guidance counsellor should use both the techniques of assertiveness training and self-reinforcement in modifying the poor study behavior of students who are their primary clients in secondary school. The school counsellor should employ the use of the technique in treating students identified with poor study behavior, so that such students do not lose interest in academics and therefore may be drop out of school.

Assertiveness training and self-reinforcement techniques should be applied in treating secondary schools students with poor study behavior irrespective of their age.

### **References**

- Agbaenyi, I. G. (2008). *Efficacy of positive reinforcement and self-control therapies in the management of aggressive behaviour among pupils*. Masters Thesis, Imo State University.
- Agi, C. (2017). Effects of group counselling and self-reinforcement on study behaviour of students in selected universities in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Evaluation*, 3(3), 1-7. Retrieved from [www.iiardpub.org](http://www.iiardpub.org)

- Aina, D. A., Oloke, J. K., Jonathan, S. G. & Olawuyi, O. J. (2012). Comparative Assessment of Mycelia Biomass and Exo-polysachande Production of Wild type and mutani strains of Schizophyllum commune grown in submerged liquid medium nature. *Journal of Science*, 10(10), 82-89.
- Anakwuba, C. (2018). *Relative effects of assertiveness training and academic values clarification on secondary school students late-coming to school* (Master's Thesis), Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.
- Corey, G. (2013). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy (9th ed.)* Canada: brooks/ cote engage learning.
- Haber, L. (2009). *The ten study habits of successful students*: Retrieved on FEB 14, 2017 from (hyperlink <http://how-to-study.Com/study-habit.Htm>)
- Hickliffe, K. (2007). Public expenditures on education: issues. *Estimates and Some implications*. Washington, D.C
- Isyaku, Y. (2015). *Effects of modelling and token reinforcement techniques on shy behaviour among secondary school students of Kano state, Nigeria*. (PhD Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria).
- Mehraj, U. D. S. & Qamar J. (2012). Study Habits of Higher Secondary School Students of Working and Non-working Mothers. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(12), 119-126.
- Nduka-Ozo, S. N. (2016). Counselling techniques as veritable tools for attitudinal change of Nigerian youths. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 6(24), 1-6.
- Nnodum, B. I. (2010). Relative effectiveness of assertiveness training, modelling and their combination in the reduction of isolate behaviour in children. *Edo Journal of Counselling*, 3(1), 121-133
- Nuthana, G. P. & Yenaga, G. V. (2009). Influence of Study behaviour and self-concept on students academic achievements. *Karnataka Journal of Agricultural scheme*, 22(51), 135-138.
- Nwamuo, A. P. & Ekwe, A. O. (2005). *Applications of therapeutic principles of behaviour modification*. Owerri: Career publishers.
- Ogunjinmi, O., Salami, T. & Oyedare, O. (2015). Parents and Students Interest as Determinants of Students Academic Performance in Agricultural Science in selected Secondary Schools in Oyo Metropolis, Oyo State. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 4(4), 11-20.
- Olajide, S. O., Okewole, J. O., & Agboola, O. S. (2015). Comparative study of academic performance of a group of undergraduate students in the Institute of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, 2(2), 1-13.
- Osarenren, N. & Ajaero, I. (2013). Effect of two treatment method on self-esteem and family relationship of victims of sibling maltreatment among junior student in Lagos State. *Research Journal in Organization Psychology and Educational Studies*, 2(3), 93-100.
- Ossai, M. C. (2012). Age and gender differences in study habits: A framework for proactive counselling against low academic achievement. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*,
- Parker, P. (2010). Ethical Issues and study skills for school counselors. Retrieved on March 26, 2012 from / [http://www.google.com/ethical/issues.2\(3\), 67-73](http://www.google.com/ethical/issues.2(3), 67-73).
- Uba M. B. & Idigun, O. B. (2016). Role of school counselor in development of reading skill in primary school pupils in Anambra Central Senatorial Zone. *International Journal of Tropical Issues*, 1(1), 43-62.
- Zhou, M. & Brown, D. (2015). *Educational learning theories 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Education open textbooks. 1.<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/education-textbooks/1>
- Yang, Y. (2011). AQ factor analysis of college undergraduate students' study behaviors. FIU Electronic Theses and Dissertations.

## Biographical Note

**Christopher A. NWANKWO**, *PhD*, is Professor of Guidance and Counselling, in the Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. He has published widely. Email : [ca.nwankwo@unizik.edu.ng](mailto:ca.nwankwo@unizik.edu.ng) Phone: 08065414433

**Francisca MGBIKE** is a post graduate student in the Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Email: [mgbikefrancisca@gmail.com](mailto:mgbikefrancisca@gmail.com) Phone:08035408631