

IMPACT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ON STUDENT'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AWKA SOUTH LGA

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Abstract

This study investigated the impact of parental involvement on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Awka south L.G.A OF Anambra State. Four research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. From a population of 332 teachers, a sample of 200 teachers was drawn using a simple random sampling technique. A researchers' developed instrument which was validated by three experts was used for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using test-retest method and this yielded reliability coefficient of 0.87 for the entire instrument. The instrument was considered reliable in line with Nworgu (2015), who stated that if the co-efficient obtained for an instrument is up to 0.70 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for a study. The direct administration and retrieval method was used for data collection. Mean was used to answer the research questions. The findings revealed that the parental level of education, income, occupational status and participation in school related activities have positive impact on students' academic performance. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that, parents should set bench marks and create academic targets for their children. Parents should also adopt rewards and incentive methods to bolster their children academic performance.

Keywords: Parents, students, academic achievement, students' academic achievement

Introduction

Human beings are bestowed with numerous distinctive powers and abilities, Education aim to develop them for the progress of society (Jelilov, Aleshinloye, & Önder, 2016). It is a pursuit with unlimited effects on all aspects of a society (Kayani, Akbar, Faisal, Kayani, & Ghuman, 2017). Parents, teachers, students, administrators, community groups and media are key stakeholders in any education system (Martinez, 2015). Home is the first school for an individual and parents are first teachers (Chandra, 2013). Parents are one of the most significant factors in the development of the children. This is due to the authority and skill they have to shape and develop their children into motivated, inspired and adroit people with their explicit involvement in the process of learning activities. Contrarily, parents without involvement in their children's education process are merely considered to demotivate and demoralize their children through negligence.

Parent involvement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities including ensuring that (a) parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; (b) parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school; and (c) parents are full partners in their children education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their children (School). Barnes, (2018) reported that there are no specific effective parental involvement strategies, rather it is a widespread phenomenon.

Attending parent teacher meetings, participation in extracurricular activities, observing grades scored, assisting in completing homework, imparting moral values and motivating the children are various aspects of parental involvement in the academic performance of students (Martinez, 2015). When parents are involved in their children's education, it enhances commitment and interests (World Education Forum Conference, WEFC, 2000). Therefore, it is ideal for educationists to ensure all challenges that are thought to hinder parental involvement are worked through, particularly in senior secondary schools where currently students' academic achievement is declining.

Similarly, government should promote parental involvement through policy statements that allow formulation of parent-school association with the intention of enhancing children's education. The argument as opined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2003) draws strong support on how parents are vital in children's schooling in the way of demanding policy which acts upon constraints that limit parents in monitoring children education in senior secondary schools. This strengthens efforts towards achieving quality Education for All (EFA).

However, some variables have been attributed to influence parental involvement in their children's academic work, and these variables include:

Parental Level of Education: This means the level of formal education, and or academic qualifications of a parent. Since education influences parents' knowledge, beliefs, values, and goals about child rearing, it thus significantly influences their (parents') behaviours that are directly related to their children's academic performance. Thus, students whose parents have higher levels of education may have an enhanced regard for learning, more positive ability beliefs, a stronger work orientation, and they may use more effective learning strategies than children of parents with lower levels of education.

Parental Level of Income: This means the financial capacity of a parent, and wealth/riches accessed to. Parents with low income are often dealing with issues of complex, so also their children because of their low socioeconomic background struggle to see their needs met, and this affect them academically also. Most of the experts like Sheldon (2009), Lemmers (2014) argue that the low socioeconomic status of the family has negative effect on the academic performance of students because the basic needs of students remain unfulfilled and hence they do not perform better academically. On the other side of the coin, parents with high socioeconomic status tend to provide and pay more attention to their children needs academically as they can afford the financial requirements.

Parental Occupational Status: This simply means the type of work, profession; business and vocation a parent engage in to make ends meet. Most teachers and civil servants tend to be more involved in their children academic works, unlike bankers and traders that devote most of their times to their work.

Parental Participation in school related activities: This focuses on the interest of Parents to school related activities. Many parents distance or shy away from school related activities like; attending PTA meetings, Students inter house competitions and most importantly student's graduation ceremonies where academic excellence is rewarded.

Though Education policies and programmes in Nigeria like UNESCO (2000) and Lareau and Manoz (2012) recognize the roles of parents in education through decentralization, in which parents are involved in education of their children's. Experiences from schools indicate that parents are doing less to fulfill their responsibilities of paying school fees, attending parents-teacher meeting, and contacting school about students' academic progress and attendance which is contrary

to the expected aim of these policies. Abdul-El-Fattah (2016) argues that parental involvement has been seen as a mechanism for raising the level of students' academic progress. Attempts and efforts had been made by States and Federal governments in Nigeria in terms of programmes, policies, and practices like Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), School Based Management Committees (SBMCs); and the Whole School

Development Planning (WSDP) to encourage and facilitate strong parents school linkages. For Abdul-El-Fattah, PTA is an instrument of community participation in education. These programmes were aimed at providing platforms for parents, guardians, sponsors and teachers in primary, secondary, and tertiary educational institutions to meet, exchange views deeply, analyze issues and take and effectively pursue implementation of decisions on matters affecting education in Nigeria with the appropriate agencies.

In Anambra State, there has been decline in students' academic achievement in senior secondary schools over the years and efforts are always undertaken to address the problem. Among the factors that are suspected associated with the students' poor academic achievement is lack of parental involvement and unfavorable home environments. It is also observed that, in Awka south most public and private senior secondary schools are day schools and parental level of involvement is low probably due to their personal economic activities.

Although there are many factors that affect students' academic achievement, the factors related to parental involvements need to be considered for investigation to authenticate the cause of students' poor academic achievement in the study area. Hence, the need to investigate the effects of parental involvement on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Awka south Local Government Area, Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

The problem facing secondary school education today in Nigeria is how to involve parents in academic matters in order to enhance students' academic achievement. Parental involvement in the form of attending to students' educational need, interest and support has an influence on their academic performance and attitudes towards educational activities. Despite all these immense importance, many parents feel uninformed about some educational practices and how they can be more involved with their child's learning. A number of strategies have been implemented internationally to encourage parent-teacher involvement in educational practices. Studies by Sheldon (2009) and Lemmers (2014) revealed the impact of parental involvement on students' academic performance that enhance not students' academic performance but it also had positive influence on students' attitude and behavior and even that of their teachers. Undoubtedly, accumulation of these challenges can make students to become depressed and misbehave. It stands to reason that a study like this need to be conducted so as to ascertain empirically whether parental involvement affects public secondary school students' academic performance. Thus, this study set out to determine the impact of parental involvement on academic achievement of public secondary school students' in Awka south L.G.A., Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of parental involvement on students' academic performance in public Secondary schools in Awka south. Specifically, the study ascertained:

1. Ascertain the impact of parental level of education on their students' academic performance.
2. Find out the impact of parental level of income on their students' academic performance.
3. Determine if parental occupational status affects their students' academic performance.

4. Find out if parental participation in school related activities affect their students' academic performance.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the impact of parental level of education on students' academic performance in public Secondary Schools in Awka south LGA, Anambra State?
2. What is the impact of parental income on students' academic performance in public Secondary Schools in Awka South LGA, Anambra State?
3. What is the impact of parental occupational status on students' academic performance in public Secondary Schools in Awka South LGA, Anambra State?
4. What is the impact of parental participation in school related activities on students' academic performance in public Secondary Schools in Awka South LGA, Anambra State?

Method

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study which was carried out in public secondary schools in Awka South LGA of Anambra State. Four research questions guided the study. From a population of 332 teachers, a sample of 200 teachers was drawn using a simple random sampling technique. A researchers' developed instrument which was validated by three experts was used for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using test-retest method and this yielded reliability coefficient of 0.87 for the entire instrument. The instrument was considered reliable in line with Nworgu (2015), who stated that if the co-efficient obtained for an instrument is up to 0.70 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for a study. The direct administration and retrieval method was used for data collection. Mean was used to answer the research questions.

Results

Table 1: Mean score of Respondents on the impact of parental level of Education on students' academic performance in public Secondary Schools in Awka south LGA, Anambra State

	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Education background of the parents affect their children	3.55	.50	Agree
2. Students with educated parents perform better in their academics	3.45	.50	Agree
3. Educated parents set higher academic targets for their children	3.32	.49	Agree
4. Educated parents set higher academic benchmarks for their children	3.58	.53	Agree

Table 1 shows the mean ratings of respondents on the impact of parental level of Education on students' academic performance. The respondents agree that all the listed items are ways through which parental level of Education impacts students' academic performance.

Table 2: Mean score of Respondents on the impact of parental income on students' learning activities on their academic performance in public Secondary Schools in Awka south LGA, Anambra state.

	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Students from high income homes Perform better in schools	1.55	.52	Disagree
2. Parents with high income provide their children all the learning aids needed	3.39	.40	Agree
3. Students from low income homes are often engaged with other activities, like hawking which distract them from school work	3.18	.33	Agree
4. Parents with high income often employ home teachers for extra lessons	1.90	.69	Disagree
5. Accessing technological aids is difficult for poor parents	3.49	.58	Agree

Table 2 indicates the impact of parental income on students' academic performance. The respondents agreed that parents with higher income do not necessarily bring about high academic performance, hence the 1.55 mean which is below the 2.50 mean mark. However, with their income and wealth they provide learning aids, and access to technologies which in turn have great impact on their children academic performance hence the mean 3.39, 3.49 which is higher than the 2.50 mean mark.

Table 3: Mean score of Respondents on the impact of parental occupational status on student's learning activities on their academic performance in public secondary Schools in Awka south LGA, Anambra State.

	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Parents who work all day do not have enough time to assist their children in school activities.	3.41	.42	Agree
2. Parents that are teachers tutor their children at home	3.49	.67	Agree
3. Most traders find it difficult to follow up with their children's academic work, due to their academic ignorance	2.45	.54	Disagree
4. High skilled professionals invest more in their children's academic endeavours Academic works than others.	2.96	.59	Agree

Table 3 showed the impact of parental occupational status on their children's academic performance. Most respondents agreed that high skills professionals provide more support, and jobs that give time to the parents also allow them to impact more. The mean 3.41, 3.49, 2.49 is above

the mean mark. While majority of the respondents do not agree that traders do not follow up their children academic work hence the mean of 2.45 which is below 2.50.

Table 4: Mean score of Respondents on the impact of parental participation on school related activities on students’ academic performance in public Secondary Schools in Awka South LGA, Anambra state

	Mean	SD	Remark
1. Parents that relate with teachers creates impact on children academic performance	2.83	.66	Agree
2. Parents use of positive reinforcement enhances their children`s academic performance	3.24	.62	Agree
3. Parents that assist in home work, assignments and act as guides in project have children with better academic performance	2.90	.55	Agree
4. Parents that show no concern or remain indifferent to school activities have little or academic Performance	2.85	.51	Agree

Table 4 above shows that there is a very high level of affirmation to the impact of parent’s participation in school related activities on students’ academic performance. Parents that uses positive reinforcement, assist their children in home work and relate with teachers at all times were found to have more impact. The mean respondent of 2.96 proves this.

Discussion

The feedbacks from the respondents indicate that there is a positive impact of parental level of education, on students’ academic performance. The responses strongly indicate that educated parents have directly and indirectly, influenced their children academic performance by ways of setting benchmarks and targets and also by relating with their teachers. This was strongly supported by (Shah, Atta, Qureshi & Shah, 2012), who believed that those who have successful educational experiences and high cognitive abilities could build up the confidence level of their children and such parents were also found to be able to help in the development of cognitive skills of their children. While on other side of the picture, uneducated parents were found to be unable to help their children in developing cognitive abilities and building up confidence level.

In this technology age, parents must continue to develop and grow in knowledge in other to match their children’s quests and desire for knowledge. When parents use themselves as benchmarks, the children are challenged and work hard to match their parents. The only challenging factor is the “you cannot give what you don’t have” syndrome and hence the need for parents to be properly educated. When parents and teachers share information, cognitive learning is imbibed in the children and teachers feel more supported. The grand mean of 3.52 well above the decision rule 2.50 indicates that the research question was valid.

Furthermore, from the findings there is a reasonable impact of parental level of income on the children academic performance. The responses from the respondents indicated that “money cannot buy knowledge”, however, there are certain areas that money can actually aid learning. Vellymalay, (2012) stated that socio-economic status is positively correlated with higher levels of

parental involvement and, subsequently, higher levels of academic attainment. This is evident in the fact that high income parents can provide the children with necessary learning aids, and in most cases their children are more focused as they do little chores and devote more time to study. On the other side of the coin, the low income parents engage their children in hawking and other forms of child labour just to make end meet. A grand mean of 2.7 slightly above the decision rule showed that the question was valid.

Also, through the research it was agreed that parental occupational status was a factor of influence on the children's academic performance. The type and manner of job the parents do, also have a very strong impact on their children academic performance. The respondents strongly agreed that parents who are skilled professionals and parents that do white collar jobs, have greater impact on their children academic. Same position was held by Saifi (2011) who argued that good parental occupation has a positive effect on the academic achievement of students. It is a fact that families where the parents are privileged educationally, socially and economically, promote a higher level of achievement in their offspring who gives higher levels of psychological support for their children through enriched atmosphere that promote and encourage the development of skills required for success at school. The grand mean of 3.01 well above the decision rule of 2.5 showed that the research question was valid.

Finally, from the result of the analysis, parental participation in school related activities has positive impact on students' academic performance. It was agreed that parents that relate with teachers, attend Parents teachers' association (PTA) meetings and assist their children in home works and assignments bring about great academic performance in their children. (Bower & Griffin, 2011) in their research affirms that inadequate or no parental participation in school related activities contributes to low student achievement and engagement.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Parental level of education, income, occupational status and participation in school related activities have positive impact on students' academic performance.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents should participate in the learning process of their children, especially at home in order to improve their academic performance.
2. Parents should set bench marks and create academic targets for their children as this will inspire improved performance in them.
3. Parents should adopt rewards and incentive methods to bolster their children academic performance.
4. Parents should create good relationships with teachers, and ensure participatory roles on school related activities.

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