
Parents' Attitude towards Academic Performance of their Children: Implications for Societal Development

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Abstract: *The contribution of every sub-system in the entire system towards development of the whole society is of paramount importance. In this whilst, educational development of the state of mind of children or learners that are would-be future leaders could not be jettisoned. The aim of this study is to investigate the effect of provision of facilities for private reading and assistance with school work by parents on academic performance of their children. The study is based on a sample of randomly selected one hundred and forty Senior Secondary School Students of Abesan High School, Ipaja; Senior State High School, Mushin; Senior Secondary School, Ikeja; and Senior Secondary School Surulere; all in Lagos State, Nigeria. Two null hypotheses were generated and tested using descriptive measure in the treatment of the data; the scholastic achievement was ascertained with the help of report cards of students and other school records. The data revealed that students whose parents' provides them with facilities at home perform better than those whose parents do not. The impact of assistance with school work by some parents also shown in the positive academic performance of their children. Results therefore, showed that good quality of home environment as well as positive attitudes from the parents had significant correlation with high level of scholastic achievements.*

Keywords: *Attitude, Development, Achievement, Performance, Home Environment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education according to Okolo (2009) is a vehicle for social change and unavoidable means of physical, social, economic, political, religious, moral development for lifelong learning and survival. In the opinion of Edukugho (2002) cited in Imogie (2002), the prosperity of a country depends not on the abundance of its revenue, nor the strength of its fortifications, but on the number of its cultivated citizens, men and women enlightenment and of character.

Education according to Isichei and Olufowobi (2005) implies the skillful process of bringing out the innate potentialities in an individual. It develops human endowments and aims at the development of the entire personality of an individual.

Education to Structural Functionalism apostles takes effect from home, where young people learn things, knowledge and skills are learned informally by imitating examples provided by adults. Adults instructed their young ones such as boys following their fathers to the farm; girls assisting their mothers at home, knowledge of moral values on how to behave in the society were inculcated into the children, and they are being monitored and closely guided by the parents. The taking-over by schools of further preparation of the children for future moral and values training, and for future occupational roles is what the Parsonians' refer to as 'School as the Society in miniature'. It is the belief of the functionalists that there must be proper understanding between the home and the school, which is the representative of the larger society, as regards training of the children (Durkheim, 1961; Haralambos and Holborns, 2008). They further opined that the cooperation between the home and the school, and the existence of degree of homogeneity amongst his members that bring about essential similarities that collective life demands would lead to the survival of the entire society.

The home is the first agent of socialization and as a result, its significance cannot be over emphasized (Shrivastava and Chandiramani, 1995). The influence of home or even parents towards the academic performance of their children should be positive in order to ensure that students perform excellently well in their academic works. Shrivastava (1991) and Jong (1993) concluded that family environment plays a pivotal role in a child's academic achievement. On the other hand, a negative attitude will produce bad output from students. The students may become drop-outs, hooligans, cheats in school.

It has been shown by various studies that most of the children who are successful, great achievers, and well adjust come from the families where sustaining, wholesome relationship exists. So, it is home which sets the pattern for a child's attitude towards people and society, aids intellectual growth in the child and supports his aspirations and achievements. A highly significant, positive relationship between the variables of academic achievement and family scores has been assessed (Shasha and Shama, 1984).

The study carried out by Bansal, Thind and Jaswal, (2006) showed that good quality of home environment: had significant positive correlation with high level of achievement motivation among high achievers. Similarly, Paulson (1996) indicated that parental involvement had a positive effect on adolescent level of achievement while, Estrada, Arsenio, Hess, & Holloway(1987) critically reviewed the dimensions of home environment and reported that controlling and punitive home environment is essentially detrimental for cognitive development and thus academic achievement.

The expectation nowadays is that every individual should aspire to be an achiever, and the key criteria to judge one's level of potentialities and capabilities is perhaps through scholastic academic performance. It has become an index of a child's future, and it is therefore, putting much of a pressure on the minds of both the children and their parents. The scholastic performance is a function of cognitive and non-cognitive aspects of personality, and is the resultant of various factors like economic, political, social, personal and other environmental factors.

This study therefore, was envisaged to assess the effect of provision of facilities as well as assistance with school work on the academic performance of the children.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Essentially, the difficulty in ascertaining whether provision of facilities for home reading and assistance with school work is the problem underlying this study. In an attempt to provide possible solutions to this stated problem, the following questions were raised:

Does provisions of facilities for private reading has any significant relationship in the academic performance of the students?

Does assistance with school work by parents has any significant relationship in the academic performance of the students?

3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In order to provide solution to the problems of the study, the following hypotheses were set:

There is no significant relationship between the availability of facilities for private reading and academic performance among selected Secondary School Students for the study

There is no significant relationship between parental assistance with school work and academic performance among the selected Secondary School Students for the study.

4. PURPOSE/SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study sought to find out whether relationship exist between parental assistance with school work as well as provisions of facilities for home reading and students' academic performance in the sampled schools

5. SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

By its nature, this study presupposes a population of all Nigeria's Secondary School Students'. Four Senior Secondary Schools were carefully surveyed from four Educational Districts in Lagos State. These are Abesan High School, Ipaja; Senior State High School, Mushin; Senior Secondary School, Ikeja; and Senior Secondary School, Surulere, all in Lagos State. It is acknowledged that Lagos being cosmopolitan in setting, would be domicile to people from various ethnic and geographical backgrounds.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a survey research, which involves the assessment of opinion using questionnaires and sampling methods in which case a representative sample of the population of interest was used to provide the data need for the study. The subject was determining the significant relationship between provision of facilities for home reading as well as assistance with school work by parents and the students' academic performances. The descriptive measure using percentage was adopted while comparing the variables.

7. SAMPLE AND THE SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A total of 140 (male/female) Senior Secondary School Students drawn from four Educational Districts in Lagos State in Nigeria were subjects for this study (Abesan High School, Ipaja, 35; Senior State High School, Mushin, 35; Senior Secondary School, Surulere, 35; and Senior Secondary School, Ikeja, 35). The selection of the schools was in part purposive. Apart from being popular with long standing reputation for academic excellence, they were selected because they are situated in the cosmopolitan State and in the four prominent Educational Districts in Lagos State.

8. DATA ANALYSIS/HYPOTHESES TESTING AND RESULTS

A careful analysis of the data based on the approach clarified by the stated null hypotheses formed the basis of the generated results of the study.

The hypotheses of this study stated that:

- There is no significant relationship between the availability of facilities for private reading and academic performance of students in Secondary Schools.
- There is no significant relationship between assistant with school work by parents and academic performance of students in Secondary Schools.

In order to test these hypotheses, the data collected for the study are analyzed and presented in the following tables below:

9. FACILITIES FOR PRIVATE READING

Information on the availability of facilities for private reading in the homes of the respondents were sought for. The findings of the investigations are presented thus:

Table I. *Reading of Periodicals*

ENCOURAGEMENT TO READ PERIODICALS	NO OF STUDENTS	%
Students whose parents encouraged to read periodicals	97	69.3
Students whose parents did not encourage to read periodicals	43	30.7
Total	140	100

Table I shows that 97 (69.3%) of the respondents' parents encourages their children to read periodicals, while 43 (30.7%) did not.

Another question was asked on whether the students' parents had regular supply of periodicals in their homes, 64 (45.7%) of the students had negative answers, while 76 (54.3%) reflect that their parents had. This is further seen in table II below:

Table2. *Supply of Periodicals*

SUPPLY OF PERIODICALS	NO OF STUDENTS	%
Students whose parents have regular supply of periodicals	76	54.3
Students whose parents do not have regular supply of periodicals	64	45.7
Total	140	100

Questions concerning whether the students were provided with libraries of collection of books and other educational materials in their homes are asked from the students. This is presented in Table III in relation to the performance of students.

Table III. Home library and performance of students

PROVISION OF HOME LIBRARY	EXCELLENT		VERY GOOD		GOOD		FAIR		POOR	
	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
Students from home which have libraries or collection of books and other materials (45)	18	12.9	7	5	5	36	9	6.4	6	4.3
Students from homes which do not have libraries or large collections of books (95)	-	-	4	4.2	14	14.7	56	58.9	21	22.1
Total	18	12.9	11	9.2	19	50.7	65	65.3	27	26.4

As table III indicates, 95 (ninety five) students indicated they came from homes without libraries or large collections of books and other educational materials while 45 (forty five) students claimed that they came from homes which have libraries or large collection of books and other educational materials. The table shows that 18 (12.9%) of the students who had library, and library facilities at home were academically excellent; 7 (5%) were academically very good; 5 (36%) were good; 9 (6.4) were fair academically and 6 (4.3%) were poor. However, none of those students that had no library and facilities at homes as shown in the table had an excellent performance; while 4 (4.2%) were academically very good; 14 (14.7%) were good; 56 (58.9%) were fair while 21 (22.1%) were poor compared to those who had the facilities. This data shows that provisions of necessary relevant educational materials and supply of periodicals; enhanced and contributes to the overall academic performance of the students. The hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between provision of facilities and library for private reading on academic performance of students is rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between assistance with school work by parents and academic performance of the students.

The respondents were also asked questions as regard assistance with their school work. In other words, the researcher wanted to know whether anyone helps the students with their school work at home

Table IV. Types of Assistance on Students' Home Work

CATEGORY OF HELPERS	NO OF STUDENTS	%
Parents alone	77	55
Siblings alone	28	20
Others	30	21.4
Nobody	5	3.6
Total	140	100

Table 4 shows that 77 (55%) of the students indicated that they do receive assistance from their parents at home, 28 (20%) shows that they were helped by their siblings alone. Others which shows the number at 30 (21.4%) claimed that persons other than members of their nuclear family gave them a helping hand, while only 5 (3.6%) indicated that they did not receive any assistance at all.

Table V. ASSISTANCE WITH SCHOOL WORK AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

This table shows the comparison between assistance with school work and student's performance

ATTENDANCE OF PRIVATE COACHING	EXCELLENT		VERY GOOD		GOOD		FAIR		POOR	
	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
Students who are assisted with school work at home	25	14.5	20	11.6	16	9.2	5	2.9	2	1.6
Students who receive no assistance	7	4	16	9.2	22	12.7	29	16.8	31	17.9

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The table shows that 25 (14.5%) of the students who attended private coaching classes were academically excellent; 20(11.6%) were academically very good; 16 (9.2%) were good; 5 (2.9%) were fair academically and 2 (1.6%) were poor. This data therefore, suggests that some level of relationship existed between attendance of private coaching classes and good performance at school. The hypothesis is rejected.

10. SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has provided that students whose parents provided them with a home library and other educational materials were high achievers as against those whose parents did not provide them with the facility for home library and other educational materials as shown in the results. The result further confirmed that students who received assistance from home on their school works such as in the area of coaching classes were academically better than those that did not receive such assistance. This corroborates the opinion of Bansal, Thind, and Jaswal(2006) that good quality of home environment had significant positive correlation with high level of achievement motivation among high achievers. Similarly, Paulson (1996) indicated that parental involvement had a positive effect on adolescent level of achievement.

Thus, it can be concluded that family environment plays a pivotal role in a child's academic achievement (Jong, 1993).

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper having explored the needed areas as regards the importance of necessary collaboration between home and school, and most especially the role of parents at providing the needed atmosphere for quality learning, thus suggested the following as additional measures that could assist not only students and parents, but, also society at large.

- That School administrators should find ways and means of keeping in close contact with parents and make it a point of duty to provide them with regular feedback on the activities of their children at school
- More library facilities should be made available all over the country and students be educated on how to make adequate and proper use of them.
- Parents should as of necessity intensify their efforts at monitoring, showing more of interest as well as creating needed time for their children's academic activities.
- Adult educators should provide counselling services to advise parents on the best ways of helping their children's academic progress or achievement.

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