INFLUENCE OF FAMILY SOCIAL STATUS ON SECONDARY STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract
The study of the influence of family social status on secondary Students Academic Achievement, was aimed at determining the effect of parental involvement on student's academic performance. It is a descriptive survey. One hundred students were involved in the study. They were drawn from five (5) secondary schools in Gokana Local Government Area (GOLGA) of Rivers State. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentages. The overall result showed that: - There was correlation in student's academic achievement due to parental socio-economic status. There was correlation in student's academic achievement due to stimulating and non-stimulating environment at home. There was difference in pupil's academic achievement due to family size. was also made to the parents, teacher and government who are involved in children's upbringing and their learning processes for better academic achievements.

Background to the Study:
The problem of poor learning has been a re-occurring issue in the educational set-up. And this has been of concern to the Government, schools, teachers, parents, curriculum planners, educational authority's psychologist to mention but a few. Many research findings have generally attributed the causes to the home (Bakare, 2000) pupils experiential background (Hassan, 2006) lack of infrastructural facilities (Ezewe, 1999), government policies (Ogundeji, 2001) and poor motivation of pupils (Eriega, 1991).

Research Questions:
1) To what extent does parental involvement influence student's academic achievement?
2) To what extent does parental socio-status influence student's academic achievements?
3) What is the relationship between simulating and non-stimulating environment on student's academic achievement?

Design of the Study: This is a descriptive survey design. The descriptive survey design was chosen because it is economical and enables the use of inference and generalization from the total population which would have ordinarily been cumbersome and expensive to handle.
Influence of Family Social Status on Secondary Students’ Academic Achievement

Research question 1: To what extent does parental involvement influence student’s academic achievement?

Table 1: Parental involvement and student academic achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/NO</th>
<th>QUESTIONNIARE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do your parents visit you regularly at school?</td>
<td></td>
<td>80 (80%)</td>
<td>20 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Do they monitor your reading and ensure that you do your home work?</td>
<td></td>
<td>85 (85%)</td>
<td>15 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>If your answer in 1 &amp; 2 above is yes, does that encourage you to do better in your academic activities?</td>
<td></td>
<td>90 (90%)</td>
<td>10 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Was your last term performance above average in all your subjects?</td>
<td></td>
<td>75 (75%)</td>
<td>25 (25%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question 2: To what extent does parental socio-status influence students’ academic achievement?

Table 2: Parental socio-status and student’s academic achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/NO</th>
<th>QUESTIONNIARE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Are your parents educated?</td>
<td></td>
<td>60 (60%)</td>
<td>40 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Do you always tell your parents about your school needs?</td>
<td></td>
<td>80 (80%)</td>
<td>20 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Does your parents respond to this needs?</td>
<td></td>
<td>90 (90%)</td>
<td>10 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>If your answer in 6 &amp; 7 above is yes, does that improve your academic performance?</td>
<td></td>
<td>82 (82%)</td>
<td>18 (18%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 1 above, 80% of the respondents agreed that their parents visit them regularly at school while 20% of the respondents, are of the view that their parent does not visit their school regularly. Also, 85% of the population studied agreed that their parents monitor their work at home while 20% out of the total respondents do not. Furthermore, 90% of the respondents are of the view that their parents’ involvement encourages them to perform better in their academic activities while 10% do not. In addition, 75% of the respondents performed above average in all their subjects while 25% do not pass above average due to lack of parental involvement in their academic activities.

From table 2 above, 60% of those interviewed are of the opinion that their parents are educated while 40% are uneducated. Also, 80% of the respondents always
informed their parents about their academic needs while 20% do not. Furthermore, 90% of the study population agreed that their parents respond to their needs while 10% do not. Again, 82% are of the view that their parents respond to their academic needs improve their performance.

**Research question 3:** What is the relationship between stimulating and non-stimulating environment on students' academic achievement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/NO</th>
<th>QUESTIONNAIRE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Do you attend extra-moral class?</td>
<td>75 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Do you have enough reading materials at home?</td>
<td>86 (86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Do you have educational facilities like computer in your home?</td>
<td>70 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>If your answer in (10) and (11) above is yes, does that improve your performance?</td>
<td>89 (89%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that 75% of the respondents attend extra-moral classes while 25% do not attend. Also, 86% have enough reading materials at home while 14% of the respondents do not. Furthermore, 70% of the populations studied have educational facilities at home while 30% of the population studies do not. Again, 89% of the total respondents performed better when they have reading/educational materials at home respectively.

**Research question 4:** How does family size of hence student's academic achievement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>QUESTIONNAIRE</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Does your parent have a small family size of 1-4 children?</td>
<td>65 (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Are they all in school?</td>
<td>90 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Does your parent meet your school needs at the same time?</td>
<td>85 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Does that improve your academic achievement?</td>
<td>92 (92%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From 4 above, 65% of the respondents have a small family size of 4 children in their homes.

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Furthermore, 90% of the respondents are of the opinion that all the children in their home are in school while 10% are not. Again, 85% of the respondents are of the view that their parents meet up their school demands. While 15% of the population studied do not. Also, 92% of the studied population agreed that their academic activities are improved base on parents providing their school demands.

**Discussion of findings:** The discussion of the influence of family socio-status on secondary student's academic achievement, from the presentation of result from data collection from five secondary schools in Gokana Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The influence of family socio status on secondary school student's academic performance was itemized below:

1) The findings of this study reveal that students whose parents are involved in their academic activities perform better. This therefore conforms the studies of Griffith (1996) that high parent involvement resulted in children spending less time watching television and more time on homework.

2) It is clear from the findings that family socio status affects the student’s academic achievement directly or indirectly. These determine the number of books which a parent may be able to purchase for their children during the school year or otherwise.

3) The findings also show that there is variation in student’s academic achievement due to stimulating and non-stimulating environment in the home. Hence students from a can afford educational facilities like computer, Books, Magazine etc performs better than students from poor homes that can not afford them.

4) It is clear from the findings that family size has economic social and intellectual implications on the academic achievement of students. This is due to the fact that, parents find it difficult to give enough physical attention and time to their children when the family size is large. It also affects budgetary allocation to the individual child in the family.

The findings also reveals that parents with 1-4 children can conveniently interact frequently and provides basic academic needs of their children. Their parents with five (5) or more children.

**Summary:**
The assessment shows that students whose parents are involved in their academic activities performed better than students whose parents do not get involved in their academic work. The response is 82.5% as against 17.5% responses.

Table 2 it shows that family socio status influence students academic achievement with a percentage figure of 78% as against 22 percentage responses.

Table 3, content dealt with the summary of data analysis on influence of stimulating and non stimulating environment on student’s academic achievement. From the analysis the percentage of student’s whose environment are favourable performs better than those whom their environment are not favourable, which is 80 percent as against 20 percent responses.
In table 4, there was a clear indication based on the total number responses (i.e. 83%) as against (17%) who are of the opinion that a family of 1-4 children receives more attention and educational needs from that of many children hence they perform better than children of large family size. Hundred (100) students of both male and female were used as the sample for the study. The instrument used for the study was questionnaire designed by the researcher.

**Conclusion:** The findings of this study revealed that the family background really influences student's academic achievement in secondary schools. The study statistical analysis showed that there exists a significant relationship between family social status, family size, family environment and family instability and student’s academic achievement in schools. However, since it has become evident that these variables influenced pupils performance, it is necessary for parents, teachers and government to affectively perform their role in order to remedy the performance differential in schools.

**Recommendations:** Having identified that academic differential capacity is significantly influenced by family background, it becomes necessary to advance the following recommendations to the parents, teachers and government who are involved in children's upbringing and their learning processes for better academic achievement.

i. Teachers, pupils and sometimes educational authorities had shared the total blame arising from pupils poor academic performance in secondary schools. This might be the result of ignorance on the part of the parents.

ii. In this regard, the problem of parents had been the inability to finance the education of their children; to expose their children to very stimulating environment by providing them educational facilities like radio, textbooks, television, etc.

iii. These variables affect academic performance of the students in school.

iv. It is being suggested that parents should now know that the education of the child demands concerted effort. Parents should therefore demonstrate in practical terms their concern over their children's education. Not only accepting their proportional share of the blame in good faith, but adjust parental care and treatment with a view to ensure physical and psychological family environment that are less deficient in satisfaction and stimulation to their offspring.

v. The primary aim of teacher education is to provide better teachers. This demand not only academic competence (knowledge), but how to put theory into practice. Teachers should avoid selfish conceptualized and discrimination which culminated into a total negligence of certain essential aspect of their role as teachers. Hence, the kinds of teacher a child has will determine in great measure whether his school experience will foster his overall development or simply increase his difficulties and frustrations. (Mussen, Conger and Kaga, 1990). The right helps the child to overcome handicaps and make the most of his talent and interest.
vi. In addition to these, teachers should use appropriate teaching methods and instructional materials to identify family environmentally disadvantaged students. The teacher should have enough information of his students, such as parental socio-economic status, family size, family instability, growth and development. The teacher should try and understand the individual student problems, and adjust teaching techniques accordingly to reduce performance differential to a minimal.

vii. Students from poor families complain of lack of reading materials and educational facilities; noisy homes and most often reading hours are being interfered with parents and visitors. Such problems would be reduced if government can provide good libraries in all secondary schools with enough educational facilities and textbooks.

viii. Most parents have good intentions towards their children, but do not know how to effect such intentions in practical terms in order to achieve positive patterns of behaviour expected of the children.

The study, therefore, implores the government to provide special agencies (that is ministry of education or other bodies, to organize compulsory seminars in all Local Government Areas where parents and guardians will be made to understand the short and long-run effect of family unhealthy physical and psychological environment on children education. This should include among other things, the type of parental care and treatment that are necessary for proper upbringing of their children.

Implications for Education: The educational implication of the influence of family social status on secondary school students academic achievement, therefore demands that the teachers, parents and government looks beyond the internal environment of the child in order to understand his behaviour. Thus, it is not enough to provide the 'learning facilities in the school or at home, it is also necessary to help the child perceive these facilities as aids to learning. If this perception is not made, no amount of learning aids available in the school or at home will help to improve the child’s academic achievement. This is so because without this perception, the child will not even be motivated to utilize the facilities in his learning process. Therefore, in order to achieve the appropriate perception in the child, the teacher will need to be involved in attitude formation and/or attitude change in the child.

Limitations of the Study: The conduct of the study had some shortcomings. Such limitations were potent enough to have effect on the general result in the conduct of the study in particular. They includes:

1) The non-availability of related studies made locally, such that most of the reference materials available were based on foreign findings and examples.

2) Another problem was the difficulty to get in touch with parents who are mostly farmers and fishermen.

3) The study requires enough financial funding to make for wide coverage of larger population in order to be able to remedy the problem.
4) There is the question of time which was definitely too short. This kind of study should span over a period of one year to make for adequate collections of data and analysis.

5) Another major constraint is that there has not been any clearly defined social class system, in consequences; it is difficult to accurately classify farmers, fishermen and contractors. This is due to serious variations and seasonality in consistent family behaviour and financial capacities over years.
Suggestions for Further Studies:
In view of the several inevitable constraints that limited the scope and depth of the study, it is suggested that further studies on the causes of variations in pupils' academic performance be carried out in other Local Government Areas of Rivers State. Similar researches should be conducted in Gokana Local Government Area to find out other determinates of students performance, since the result of this study prove that family social status is not the only cause of academic differential capabilities. We are hoping that if this is done, educationalist and parents will have better performance in schools as against the present situation with visible performance differential.

References

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