



Impact of Single Parent on Child Education in Primary Schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to examine the impact of single parent on child education of primary school in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State. Two research questions and one hypothesis were formulated for the study. The study adopted survey research design. The target population consisted of four hundred and twenty three (423) secondary school teachers and two thousand five hundred and thirteen 2513 senior secondary school students. Stratified random sampling technique was to derive two hundred and forty (240) respondents which comprised eighty (80) teachers and one hundred and sixty (160) senior secondary school students. Data collected from respondents were obtained using structured questionnaire and analysed using mean and standard deviation. T-test was used to test the hypothesis. The results of the analysis revealed that children from broken faced emotional destabilization, negative social disposition, poor moral upbringing, laxity in assisting and guiding in academic activities from parent, poor sex education, financial difficulty in providing for academic activities from single parent, and no required time and attention is provided for the academic welfare of the children. Student from single parent homes experience low parental involvement in their academic activities compare with pupils from two parent families rather have a high level of parental participation in their academic work. The study recommended among others that there is need for personal social, group counseling and individual counseling in schools where students with single parents are counseled. And students should develop positive self concept in life to assist them in their academic performance.

Keywords: Single Parent, Child Education, Family

INTRODUCTION

The family is the child's first place of contact with the world. The child as a result, acquires initial education and socialization from parents and other significant persons in the family. Agulana (1999) pointed out that the family lays the psychological, moral, and spiritual foundation in the overall development of the child. Structurally, family/home is either broken or intact. A broken home in this context, is one that is not structurally intact, as a result of divorce, separation, death of one parent and illegitimacy. According to Frazer (2001), psychological home conditions arise mainly from illegitimacy of children, the label of adopted child, broken home, divorce and parental deprivation. Such abnormal conditions of the home, are likely to have a detrimental effect on school performance of the child he asserts.

In Nigeria, the existence of single parents which is as a result of broken home was formerly unknown and where they existed, they are ignored as exceptional cases. However, nowadays, they are the fast growing family patterns both inside and outside Nigeria (Nwachukwu, 2008). The child is morally upright and emotionally stable when the caring responsibilities are carried out by both parents. The family is the first

socializing agent the child comes in contact with. It has great influence on the child's physical, mental, and moral development. The family lays the foundation of education before the child goes to school and the personality that the child takes to school is determined by the home. Salami (2008) pointed out that both parents have roles to play in child education. The father is to provide the necessary tools for the educational advancement while the mother is supposed to supplement the father's efforts in this regard. When the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the basic needs as well as supervise the academic performance of the child, he/she (the child) will be backward or withdrawn. The same thing occurs when the mother is absent and the father is not privileged enough (Ortese, 1998). Life, in a single parent family or broken home can be stressful for both the child and the parent. Such families are faced with challenges of inadequate financial resources (children defense fund, 1994). Schultz (2006) noted that if adolescents from unstable homes are to be compared with those from stable homes, it would be seen that the former have more social, academic and emotional problems. Scales and Roehlkepartain (2003) are of the opinion that the family and its structure play a great role in children's academic performance. Levin (2001), also states that parents are probably the actors with the clearest undimensional interest in a high level of their children's academic performance. To some extent, there is simple evidence to show that marital instability brings about stress, tension, lack of motivation and frustration. Obviously, these manifestations act negatively on a child's academic performance. Johnson (2005) asserts that children of unmarried parents/separated families often fail and are at risk emotionally. However, this may not be completely applicable in all instances of broken homes. Some children irrespective of home background or structure may work hard and become successful in life. Moreover, Ayodele (2006) stated that the environment where a child finds himself/herself goes a long way in determining his learning ability and ultimately his academic performance in school. Abdulganiyu (1997), added that research have shown that children differs in various ways as a result of variables of their home background such as socio – economic status, parental attitude to school and child rearing practices. These home background variables are also found to be positively related to children's academic achievement, more especially science students that need care and love.

Similarly, Giwa (2007), investigated the factors within the students home background or family that affect their performance s in school, variables such as socio – economic status, family size, birth order, parental attitude, child rearing practices, parental absence or presence have been found to affect social and intellectual learning experiences of children in schools. This is so because children are born with some psychological, emotional and intellectual needs such as need for love and security, the need for new experiences, the need for praise and recognition and the need for responsibility. Many of these needs are not offered to the children of broken homes which will influence their performance in science. The extent to which these needs are met during the formative years of children between birth and the age of six or seven in the extent to which they enter school well equipped or ready to deal with the social and emotional aspects of schooling. The observation above and is in line with the assumption that economic and social future of many children in most localities is being undermined by cultural practices that promotes widespread divorce amongst couples and brought unnecessary hardship to the growing children.

The literature on academic performance among children suggests that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively involved in their education (Nyarko 2007; Nyarko and Vorgelegt, 2007). Some studies seem to neglect the issue of single- parenting as a variable. Generally such studies have tied academic performance of children to socio-economic status, parents' educational level, student attitudes to learning, school environmental factors, housing and residential experience (Donkor, 2010; Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq and Berhanu, 2011; Mahama and Campion, 2011; Insah, Mumuni and Bowan, 2013). What these studies failed to realize is that the variable family structure (particularly single parenting) is crucial in determining a person's academic performance. However, studies that seemed to have focused on assessing the role single parenting on the academic performance of children have mostly used respondents from senior secondary schools and universities without taking time to consider pupils from the basic schools (Fry and Scher, 2004; Krein and Beller, 2008; Salami and Alawode, 2000;

Eweniyi, 2005). The basic school pupils are nonetheless the most fragile because they are still in their formative years meaning any disruptions could have everlasting result on them. This creates a knowledge gap. Also, studies in Nigeria have basically focused on the parental involvement in children's school activities (Nyarko, 2011; Chowa, Ansong and Osei-Akoto, 2012) but not on how the family structure (e.g., single parenthood) affects their academic performance which equally is lacking in Delta State. It becomes imperative to examine the effects of single parent on child education in primary schools using primary schools in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State as a case study.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of single parents on child education of primary schools in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. identify the effects of broken homes on the academic performance of secondary school students in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State; and
2. find out the impact single parenthood have on the academic performance of primary school students in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study

1. What are the effects of broken home on academic performance of secondary school students?
2. What impact does single parenthood have on academic performance of primary school students in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State?

Hypotheses

The hypothesis was formulated to guide the study:

HO₁: There is no significant difference between male and female students from single parents on the impact of single parenthood have on academic performance of primary school students

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research approach. Ngwogu (2006) explained survey approach as one in which the respondents' view, perception and position are considered on an issue with objectivity. The design is adequate as it will help in obtaining the views of respondents.

The population of the study comprised of 2936 respondents. The population consists of four hundred and twenty three (423) secondary school teachers and two thousand five hundred and thirteen 2513 senior secondary school students from sixteen (16) public secondary schools in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State (Ministry of Education, Asaba, 2015).

The sample is two hundred and forty (240) respondents which comprised eighty (80) teachers and one hundred and sixty (160) senior secondary school students. Stratified random sampling technique was used to obtain the sample. Five teachers and ten students were randomly drawn from the each of the 16 public secondary schools in Oshimili LGA to make up the sample.

Structured questionnaire was used for data collection in this study. The questionnaire was generated from review of literature. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part A elicited the personal information of the respondents while part B was divided into sections A-B based on the specific purpose of the study. Section A elicited the socio-economic status of students' parents in Oshimili South LGA; Section B elicited the impact single parenthood have on academic performance of primary school students in Oshimili South LGA. Four point scale response questionnaire was used as follows: strongly agreed; agreed; disagreed; strongly disagreed. Two experts from Department of Educational Administration, Delta State University, Abraka were requested to review the questionnaire items. The corrections were incorporated in the final version of the instrument.

Data for testing the reliability of the instrument were generated through a single administration of the instrument to a sample of the respondents comprising ten (10) secondary school teachers and thirty (20) senior secondary school students from Oshimili North LGA of Delta State. Split-half technique and Cronbach alpha statistical package were used to test the reliability index of the instrument. A coefficient value of 0.797 was obtained. The high coefficient suggests that the instrument was reliable for the study.

Data were collected from the respondents with the help of two research assistants who were trained in distribution and collection of instruments from respondents. The researcher and the assistants collected the questionnaire from the government secondary schools where the instruments were administered. All the copies distributed were duly retrieved.

Data collected from the field were analyzed using the statistical tools: Mean and standard deviation were used for the research questions. SPSS 16 statistical package was used to analyse the data. Items with mean value of 2.5 and above were accepted while items with mean value of less were rejected. The hypothesis was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance to determine acceptance or rejection. Hypothesis was rejected when the calculated t-value is greater than the table value at 0.05 level of significance; otherwise the hypothesis was accepted.

RESULT

Table 1: Demographic information of respondents (N=240)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	68 (44)	42.5 (55)
Female	92 (36)	57.5 (45)
Family Type		
Single parent	51	31.87
Both parent	109	68.13

Note: Figures in bracket are for teachers

The result in Table 1 showed that most (57.5%) of the students were female while 42.5% were male. The result also showed that among the teachers, 55% were male while 45% were female.

Research Question 1

What are the effects of broken home on academic performance of secondary school students?

Table 2: Mean responses of Teachers on the effects of broken home on academic performance of secondary school students in Oshimili South LGA Delta State (N= 80)

S/N	Statement items	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	Broken homes emotionally destabilize children	3.73	0.62	Agreed
2	Broken homes affects negatively on social disposition of the child	3.59	0.74	Agreed
3	Moral upbringing is usually poor	3.43	0.77	Agreed
4	Laxity in assisting and guiding the adolescents in academic activities	3.68	0.68	Agreed
5	Poor sex education for their children at home	3.78	0.81	Agreed
6	Financial difficulty in providing for academic activities	2.91	0.86	Agreed
7	No required time and attention is provided for the academic welfare of the children	3.01	0.83	Agreed

The result in Table 2 showed that statement items had a mean range of 2.91 to 3.78. Most of the means were above the cut-off points of 2.50. The respondent agreed that the identified items were effects of broken home on academic performance in secondary schools in the study area. The standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.62 to 0.86. This indicated that respondents were unanimous in their responses.

Research Question 2

What impact does single parenthood have on academic performance of primary school students in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State?

Table 3: Mean responses of the students on the single parenthood have on academic performance of primary school students in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State (N= 160)

S/N	Statement items	Mean	S.D	Remark
1	Single parent bears the financial burden alone of children's academic activities	3.51	0.63	Agreed
2	Physiological needs of children are not properly met	3.31	0.72	Agreed
3	Children are easily influenced negatively in the society	3.06	0.74	Agreed
4	Single parents cannot provide all the sexual educational needs children of both sex	2.31	0.78	Disagreed
5	Children from single parents are not well disciplined and less academically productive	3.61	0.68	Agreed
6	Stigmatization of single parents in my community affects the institution and indirectly manifest itself on their children	3.03	0.54	Agreed

Field Work, 2017

The result in Table 3 showed that the respondents agreed that most the identified statement items were the impact of single parenthood on academic performance of primary school students in Oshimili South LGA in Delta State. The statement items had a mean range of 2.31 to 3.61. Most of the means were above the cut-off points of 3.00 while item 4 was below the cut-off point. The standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.54 to 0.78. This indicated that respondents were unanimous in their responses.

Hypothesis

HO₁: There is no significant difference between male and female students from single parents on the impact of single parenthood have on academic performance of secondary school students

Table 4: t-test analysis of the mean ratings of male and female students from single parents on the impact of single parenthood on academic performance of secondary school students

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	t-tab	Decision
Male	21	3.06	1.08	1.79	1.96	Accepted
Female	30	2.89	0.98			
Total	51					

Field Work, 2017

Table 4 presents the t-test summary analysis of the mean responses of male and female from single parents on the impact of single parenthood on academic performance of secondary school students. The result revealed that the t-value was lesser than the t-tab at 0.05 level of significance. With this result; the null hypothesis (HO) is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female from broken homes on the impact of single parenthood has on academic performance of secondary school students in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Effects of broken home on academic performance of secondary school students

The responses from the teachers in Table 3 indicated that children from broken faced emotional destabilization, negative social disposition, poor moral upbringing, laxity in assisting and guiding in academic activities from parent, poor sex education, financial difficulty in providing for academic activities from single parent, and no required time and attention is provided for the academic welfare of the children. This implies that broken home influenced academic performance of their children negatively. Life, in a single parent family or broken home can be stressful for both the child and the

parent. Such families are faced with challenges of inadequate financial resources (children defense find 2004). Schults (2006) noted that if adolescents from unstable homes are not to be compared with those from stable homes, it would be seen that the former have more social, academic and emotional problems. Rochlkepartain (2003) is of the opinion that the family and its structure play a great role in children's academic performance. Levin (2001) stated that parents are probably the actor with the clearest un-dimensional interest in a high level of their children's academic performance. To some extent, there is simple evidence to show the marital instability brings about stress, tension, lack of motivation and frustration obviously, these manifestations act negatively on a child's academic performance.

Impact of single parenthood on academic performance of primary school students

The result in Table 2 showed that the respondents agreed that single parent bears the financial burden alone of taking care of the children, physiological needs of children are not properly met; children of single parents are easily influenced negatively in the society; children from single parents are not well discipline and less academically productive; and stigmatization of single parents in my community affects the institution and indirectly manifest itself on their children. In support to the findings, Chowa *et al.* (2012) showed that parental involvement in the school environment appears high because most (87%) reported attending Parent Teacher Activities meetings, discuss expectations with their children, discuss school work and make sure that their children's do their homework. The results further showed that married parents are more likely to involve in their children's education than single parents. Also Topor, Keane, Shelton, and Calkins (2010) found that both parental involvements are positively associated with students' academic performance in school. This does not necessarily suggest that once both parents engage in a child's academic activities the child would be academically successful as the child's own abilities and the school environment also play critical roles in that respect. In a related way, Donkor (2010) indicates that parents noted that the poor performance of their children emanates from their lack of proper supervision of their wards' homework. For example Nwosu (1991) noted that some girls go after prostitution in a bid to also pay their school fees which may be difficult for their single parents. Boys also give in to robbery roistering in the school, joining criminal gangs and exhibiting all form of social vices. If both parents are involved in the educational welfare of their children these vices may not be there.

Hypothesis

The result found in Table 3 indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female from broken homes on the impact of single parenthood has on academic performance of secondary school students in Oshimili South LGA of Delta State. This implies that both sex of the student face the same difficulty associated with single parental upbringing.

CONCLUSION

Life as a single parent family or broken home can be stressful for both the child and the parent. Such families are faced with challenges of inadequate financial resources. It is clear from the study that most of the students from single parent homes experience low parental involvement in their academic activities. Evidence also suggests that single parenting has a negative effect on the academic performance of pupils.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Single parents should be enlightened on the need to stay together as husband and wife to raise a good family. They should persevere and tolerate each other in marriage.
2. There is need for personal social, group counseling and individual counseling in schools where students with single parents are counseled. And students should develop positive self concept in life to assist them in their academic performance.

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