



Influence of Family Social Status on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary Students on Nsukka Education Zone, Enugu State in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This work aimed at ascertaining the influence of family social status on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Nsukka Education Zone. It is an ex-post facto study. This research explores the issue of family social status on students' academic achievement in senior secondary school. The population for this research consists of all the senior class two (SS 2) students in Nsukka Education Zone. The sample size for the study comprised four hundred and thirty two (432) students from the schools in the study area. The research instrument for data collection was questionnaire. The work revealed parental level of education may influence students' reading habit. It recommended that parents should diversify their sources of income so that they can provide for their children in schools

Keywords: Academic performance, social status, family

INTRODUCTION

Education is the best legacy a nation can give to her citizens especially the youths. This is because education is very important in the development of any nation or community. Education is the process of transmitting what is worthwhile to members of the society. According to Okafor (1981), Education embraces all those experiences of the individual through which knowledge is acquired and intellect enlightened. For Nwabachili and Egbue (1993) education is what goes on from one generation to another generation. In this context, education is the process of socializing the child to grow up as a fulfilled member of the society through informal, formal and non-formal process. Informal education is the process of acquiring knowledge about the environment and beyond through living with one another. According to Nwabachili and Egbue (1993), formal education is a consciously planned form of socialization in a formal setting such as school. They stressed that non-formal education involve all those systematic programmes and processes of education and training that is done outside formal education setting. All these forms of education cannot be achieved without the influence of the, family. Family is the first social environment the child finds itself. According to Clifford (1998) family remains the primary environment of the child. The author emphasized that family environment has more chances of increasing or decreasing the intellectual performance of the child. Akubue and Okolo (2008), defined family as a small kinship structural group with the key function of natural socialization of the new born. Similarly, in Okunniyi (2004), family is defined as a primary social group of parents, offspring and possibly other members of the household.

The socio-economic status of parent's influence the academic performance of their children through school influence in low socio-economic status (SES) schools, there are higher concentrations of less skilled, they tend to have limited skills and fewer economic resources than high socio-economic status (SES) children, which makes it difficult for children to grow in their reading ability. Low (SES)

students are more likely to have less qualified teachers, which is associated with their reading growth rates bring significantly lower than the growth rates of their high socio-economic status.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study was carried out using ex-post facto as the researcher does not have direct control on independent variables because they are inherently not easy to manipulate. The purpose of ex-post facto research design is to find out factors that seem to be closely associated with certain behaviours, occurrences, prevalence or conditions. Expost facto design is considered suitable for this study because it is practical and versatile. The design enables the researcher to collect original data from the respondents themselves and describe the present conditions as they exist in their natural family settings.

Research Question 1: *What influence does parental level of education have on the reading habit of senior secondary school students?*

Table 1: Parental educational level and its influences on the reading habit of senior secondary school students

| S/N | Items | SA 4 | A 3 | D 2 | SD 1 | Total | \bar{X} | Remark |
|-----|---|---------|--------|--------|---------|-------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | Educated parents always want their children to be educated. | 208 | 104 | 72 | 32 | 1317 | 3.21 | Accepted |
| 2 | Parents who are educated provide most of the recommended textbooks and other learning aids for their children. | 224 | 112 | 52 | 28 | 1364 | 3.31 | Accepted |
| 3 | Parents who are educated encourage their children to study subjects which are pivotal for good university courses. | 280 | 106 | 20 | 10 | 1488 | 3.58 | Accepted |
| 4 | In homes of educated parents, there are conducive environment for studies. | 200 | 100 | 82 | 34 | 1298 | 3.12 | Accepted |
| 5 | Educated parents arrange for supportive teachers for the subject/ subjects which their words/children find difficult in the school. | 180 | 70 | 109 | 57 | 1205 | 2.91 | Accepted |
| 6 | Parents who are educated guide their children in school assignments and homework | 160 | 180 | 46 | 30 | 1302 | 3.13 | Accepted |
| 7 | Educated parents always demand for progress reports of their children to know the children's academic and social progress | 80 | 212 | 82 | 42 | 1162 | 2.80 | Accepted |

Table 1 reveals that 1 – 7 have mean scores that are above the cut-off mark of 2.50 that was regarded as acceptable limit as indicated.

Therefore, all items under parental level of education were considered acceptable. This is an indication that the respondents considered that parental level of education influenced student's reading habit of senior secondary school students.

Research Question 2: *To what extent can the financial statuses of parents influence secondary school students academic performance?*

Table 2: The influence of parent's financial status on student's academic performance

| S/N | Items | SA 4 | A 3 | D 2 | SD 1 | Total | \bar{X} | Remark |
|-----|---|---------|--------|---------|---------|-------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | Children from high-income status parents achieve better academically than those from low-income status parents | 116 | 144 | 98 | 58 | 1150 | 2.80 | Accepted |
| 2 | Parents on high income can afford to provide the basic necessities required for their children's education | 224 | 102 | 68 | 22 | 1360 | 3.31 | Accepted |
| 3 | Children from upper working class homes perform better academically than those from lower working class homes | 122 | 188 | 80 | 26 | 1238 | 3.01 | Accepted |
| 4 | Children whose parents are on high income status have higher career aspiration than children whose parents are on low income status | 177 | 124 | 70 | 45 | 1265 | 3.04 | Accepted |
| 5 | Only parents who are on high income status can train their children beyond school level | 108 | 101 | 10 4 | 11 1 | 1022 | 2.45 | Rejected |

The result presented on the above table 2 shows that only one item (item 5) has a mean score below the cut off mark of 2.50, while the remaining items have mean scores above the cutoff point. This shows that all the respondents considered that parental financial status influenced students performance but disagreed that only parents who are on high income status can train their children.

Research Question 3: *How can the influences of family size on secondary school students performance be examined?*

Table 3: The influence of family size on students

| S/N | Items | SA 4 | A 3 | D 2 | SD 1 | Total | \bar{X} | Remark |
|-----|---|---------|--------|--------|---------|-------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | Small size families enjoy more parental attention than those from large size families | 78 | 90 | 128 | 120 | 958 | 2.30 | Rejected |
| 2 | Students from small size families achieve better academically than those from larger size families | 90 | 78 | 126 | 122 | 968 | 2.33 | Rejected |
| 3 | Small size families facilitate the provision of recommended textbooks and equipment for effective learning. | 88 | 89 | 110 | 129 | 968 | 2.33 | Rejected |

The result on table 3 shows that all the items on influence of family size had mean scores below the cut off mark of 2.50. This shows that family size did not influence students' academic performance.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this work can be discussed and compared with empirical studies done previously by other researchers. These discussions are carried out based on the issues relevant with the research question on the reading habit of senior secondary students' performance. The focus of this research question was to establish the influence of parental level of education on the reading habit of senior

secondary school students' academic performance. The result of these findings as summarized in table 1 (one) showed that students (respondents) overwhelmingly agree that parental level of education is a contributory factor in students' academic performance. The findings of this study tend to agree with the opinions expressed by Onochie and Okpalla (1985) that educational level of parents which is an indicator of socioeconomic status has direct influence on child's value and academic performance in the school. The scholars further maintained that children from illiterate families may learn little or nothing from home that can help them to develop interest in academics. The result of the study also indicates that some educated parents provide conducive atmosphere for studies at home.

SUMMARY

The findings of the work showed that:

- i. Parents who are educated want their children to be educated.
- ii. Educated parents provide most of the recommended text books and other learning aids for their children.
- iii. Educated parents provide conducive atmosphere for their children's studies at home-

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The findings of the study showed that:

- iv. Students from high-income status parents achieve better academically.
- v. Parents on high income status can afford to provide the basic necessities required for students' education.
- vi. Students whose parents are on high-income status have higher career aspiration.

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The findings of the study include:

- vii. Students from small size families are not always better performers in academics.
- viii. The size of the family does not determine the ability of the parents to provide books and learning materials for their children's education.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that family social status factor influence academic performance of students in schools. Prominent among the family social status factors include parental educational level, parental income and parental motivation. Educational statuses of the parents and students' academic performance have a close relationship between them. This is because parents themselves having being to school realized the importance of being educated. They stand better chance to support their children for better academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the major findings of this study is that parental income level has a great influence on students' academic performance. For example, most cases, parental income is proportional to students finding which also determine to a large extent, the level of academic performance of students. In this case, it is recommended that parents as a matter of importance should diversify their sources of income so that they can be able to provide fund their children in school for better academic performance.

- 1) Parents should be made to realize the importance of motivation in determining their children academic performance in schools, especially the realization that most of the male students are abandoning school for business. Parents should be actively involved in encouraging students to learn and also in supervising student's academic work at home
- 2) Students' should give serious attention to studies at home, in addition to other various works done, since the amount of effort they put in their studies influence their academic performance.

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