



HOME ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS INFLUENCE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OWERRI ZONE II, IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Author SUN designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Authors ES and BCN managed the analyses of the study. Author BCN managed the literature searches. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The basic goal of this research was to determine some home environmental factors influencing the academic performance of secondary school students in Owerri Zone II, Imo State, Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted and two research questions guided the study. The population for the study comprises 1030 respondents made up of all the 64 principals and 966 teachers in the 32 public secondary schools in Owerri Zone II, Imo state. A sample of 206 respondents was selected randomly and this represents 20% of the respondents' population. The sample consists of 32 principals and 174 teachers in the study area. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. Face and content validity of the instrument was obtained after the appraisal and input made by two experts; One in Measurement and Evaluation, and another in Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. Corrections were made based on their observations before the instrument was approved for use. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.89 using Charles spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Spearman's ρ). The analysis of the data revealed that some families lack modern mechanical or electronic devices, educational materials and supervision at home to enhance a student's academic performance. More so, some parents are unwilling to be involved in the academic performance of their children due to their socio- economic status. Recommendations such as giving proper orientation to the parents no matter their educational development and background, should devote time with their children and check their children's academic work, direct them where necessary, discuss the academic problems of their children with their teachers or school guidance, counselors so as to detect the students problem early enough and tackle it before it affects the students.

Keywords: Education; home environment; academic performance family background.

1. INTRODUCTION

Good education does not happen by chance. It is a product of an effective teaching and learning process, coupled with the effort of the teacher, the school, the students, parents and their various home environments [1]. According to [2], students are exposed to three types of education; formal, informal and non-formal. In line with UNESCO, formal education is training typically provided by an education or training institution, structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and leading to certification. It is intentional from the learner's perspective. Non-formal education is training which takes place outside the formal system either on a regular or intermittent basis, while informal education is learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure. Informal learning is part of non-formal learning. Therefore, training and development of a child is naturally placed in the hands of the parents. This is congruent with the common assertion of sociologists [3] that education can be an instrument of cultural change whose foundation begins from home. The home environment means the family background of the child, which includes all the human and material resources present in the home, that affect the child's living such as the parent's level of education, occupation, social-economic status and the socializing facilities available in the house [4]. The home is the institution or a place where the child's earliest education and socialization begins. According to [5], the home is described as the primary and most important human institution for the socialization of the child. The child's experience within the family definitely influences his behaviours; they have provided the child the nature which he or she requires for normal physical cognitive and psycho to social development.

Home means an enjoyable, happy place where you can live, laugh, learn [6] and more so, it's where you are loved, respected, and cared for. The home environment entails; emotional warmth displayed by parents while interacting with their children; provision of stimulating and learning experiences in the home; and physical surroundings, such as safety of play areas and cleanliness. A healthy and safe home environment is essential for promoting and protecting health and development during childhood. The environment plays a very important role in one's personal growth [7]. Stated that parents who provide a warm, responsive and supporting healthy environment, encourage exploration, and learning materials accelerate their children's intellectual development. Children need stable, supportive social environments and access to resources within the home to enhance cognitive, emotional, and physical

development. Alternatively, unstable, noisy, chaotic home environments have negative effects on children's health [8] and development. Children are motivated to work on activities and learn new information and skills when their environments are rich in interesting activities that arouse their curiosity and offer moderate challenges.

The academic performance of any child cannot be separated from the home environment in which the child lives; a healthy home environment offers emotional security to a child. Academic performance of students is a key feature in education [9]. It is considered to be the centre around which the whole education system revolves. Academic performance [10] refers to the level of achievement or learning outcomes of students. According to [10] academic performance is the knowledge gained which is assessed by marks by a teacher and/or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specific period of time. They added that these goals are measured by using continuous assessment or examinations results. He opined that the academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution. [11] also argued that academic performance of students has an influence on the socio-economic development of a country. In the same vein, [12], asserted that students' academic performance serves as bedrock for knowledge acquisition and the development of skills. More so, [12] emphasized that the top most priority of all educators is academic performance of students. [13] asserted that performance tests are used to arrive at academic performance. Therefore performance tests are instruments used to measure learning abilities.

In some countries, academic performance is measured by the academic index. In Nigeria, academic performance of students in secondary school is majorly measured by the student's performance in external examinations like WEAC, NECO, and JAMB examinations. [14] discovered that individual differences in academic performance have been linked to differences in intelligence and personality. He explained that students with higher mental abilities as demonstrated by IQ tests (quick learners) and those who are higher in conscientiousness (linked to effort and achievement motivation) tend to achieve highly in academic settings. However, a number of factors contribute to such students. Such factors emanate from the school environment, curriculum planning and implementation, siblings/ Peer group influence, home environment, parents, socialization patterns in the home, location of the home, modern gadgets at home and so on.

Ajila and Olutola [3] pointed out that parent's academic socialization is a term describing the way

parents influence a student's academic achievement by shaping students skill, behaviors and attitude towards school. He further explained that parent's influence students through the environment and discourse parents have with their children. This means that academic socialization can be influenced by a parent's socioeconomic status. Thus highly educated parents tend to have more stimulating learning environments. Parental socioeconomic characteristics to a greater extent determine a student's performance in school and their adjustment to life [15]. Family financial resources, which are associated with parents' occupation and educational attainment, often imply increased opportunities both at home and in school. Indeed, family background is the foundation for children's development, as such family background in terms of family types, size, socio-economic status and educational background play an important role in children's educational attainment and social integration [4]. The home has a great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state.

In the view of [16], the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life. Home environment affects academic development in many ways; for example, parents with higher socio-economic status are able to provide their children with the (often necessary) financial support and home resources for individual learning [17]. They are also more likely to provide a more stimulating environment to promote cognitive development. At this level of educational providers, students from high Socioeconomic status (SES) families are also more likely to attend better schools, particularly in countries with differentiated educational systems, strong segregation in the school system according to neighbourhood factors and/or clear advantages of private over public schooling [18]. [17], further opines that parents' socio-status could be defined more objectively by using such indices as occupation, income and education. Permissive parenting on the other end of the spectrum is characterized by little control over children, aiming for high levels of warmth but undemanding. Unlike authoritarian parents, punishment is very rarely used in permissive homes and children are commonly given greater opportunity to make their own decisions in life [19]. They often take a very casual and easy-going approach [5] toward their children, opening up conversations and subsequently developing warmer relationships between them. However, children raised by permissive parents are less likely to be intrinsically motivated, thus lacking persistence in approaching learning tasks [19].

Again parents who attained a high level of education, might have known the importance of education, and would not like their children to be left behind in the quest for education since these parents would also like their children to enjoy the benefits of attaining a high educational level. According to [20], the high socio-economic status parents are able to provide their books and toys to encourage them in their various learning activities at home. Parents face major challenges when it comes to providing optimal care and education for their children. However, the challenges are acutely devastating among the poor income families struggling to provide the basic needs to sustain the family. Families with low socio-economic status often lack the financial, social and educational supports that characterized families with high socio-economic status. Many students from low-income homes are kept away or sent out from school or excluded from certain activities for lack of money to provide the prescribed equipment or materials. On the contrary, [21] in their study on social and educational background pointed out that those students who mostly come from deprived socio-economic and educational backgrounds performed relatively better than others coming from higher socio-economic and educational areas.

Pedrosa, et al. [22] family size is the total number of people consisting of parents and their children. It is worthy to mention that family size is one of the factors that determine educational developments.

Large family size creates in the upbringing of their children an identified problem of insufficient food, poor clothing, insufficient funds, disciplinary problems and malnutrition. Students need nutritious food and regular medical care. These things help them get a good start in life and lessen the chances that they will later have serious health problems and troublesome learning. Nutrition plays a vital role in the educational development of students. If a student is hungry in school he/she is less likely to concentrate. This idea dates back to early psychological finding that before one can be complete, basic needs must be met. [23] asserted that children from families with low socio-economic status are at a greater risk of hunger, homeless, sickness, physical and mental disabilities, violence, teen parenthood, family stress and educational failure. Students from low socio economic backgrounds that encounter these environmental factors are four times more likely to have learning disabilities than students from high socio economic background while a combination of these environmental factors accelerate academic success.

Similarly, it is believed that factors such as malnutrition, lack of motivation in homes, spousal violence, and single parents as well as impoverished home environment affects the development of intellectual ability negatively [24]. This means that students from low socio-economic backgrounds tend to be below or just an average in their intellectual development particularly when this phenomenon is assessed in terms of scores or tests. The target of this study is on home environmental factors that influence academic performance of students. It is against this background that the researchers are interested in investigating the home environmental factors influencing academic performance of secondary school students in Owerri zone II Imo state, Nigeria. The researcher intends to investigate the variables in the family background with a view of assessing their relative influence on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Owerri zone II, Imo state of Nigeria.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Most families in our society seem not to give adequate attention to the education of their children. It appears some of the parents have erroneous notion about the performance of their children, they do not know and seem to fulfill their role of guidance and encouragement in the child's performance in schools. Some people also have the notion that the mass failure or success in schools could be traced back to the teachers and the school authorities. Most students in Nigerian secondary schools are in greater risk of poor academic achievement in both internal and external examinations (WAEC and NECO). For instance, the available records of WAEC and NECO result analysis of 2018-2019 show a continuous decline in students overall performance in school certificate examinations. Parents, teachers, students and government, hold accountable for students' poor performance in schools. Parents blame teachers for lack of dedication to duties. The teachers blame the government for poor salaries hence they are poorly motivated, parents also accuse the government for not equipping the schools with learning materials, government blame parents for not doing good homework and the students are blamed for lack of discipline and dedication to their studies. Based on the above issues, the relevant question is; what is the influence of the home environment on academic achievement of secondary school students?

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to find out the home environmental factors influence on academic performance of students in Owerri zone II, Imo state, Nigeria. Specifically, the study will find out

1. How socio-economic factors of home influence students' academic performances in Owerri zone II.
2. How home structure/background influences students' academic performance.

1.3 Research Questions

The study will provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the socio-economic factors of home influence on a student's academic performances?
2. What are the home structure/background influences on a student's academic performances?

1.4 Hypothesis

The null hypothesis formulated was tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the study.

H₀1: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of socio-economic factors and structural background influence on student's academic performances in Owerri zone II Imo state.

2. METHODS

The research design adopted for the study was descriptive survey. The population for the study comprises 1030 respondents made up of all the 64 principals and 966 teachers in the 32 public secondary schools in Owerri Zone II, Imo state. A sample of 206 respondents was selected randomly and this represents 20% of the respondents' population. The sample consists of 32 principals and 174 teachers in the study area. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. It was titled "Home Environmental Influence on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students" (HEIAPSSS). Face and content validity of the instrument was obtained after the appraisal and input made by two experts; One in Measurement and Evaluation, and another in Educational Management and Policy. Corrections were made based on their observations before the instrument was approved for use. Thirty copies of the instrument were distributed to thirty respondents that were chosen from secondary schools in other zones that were outside the study area on two occasions within the space of one week for reliability. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.89 using Charles spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Spearman's ρ). On the spot administrative method was adopted, although those that could not respond immediately were given a day interval. This is to ensure 100% return of the questionnaire. The

method of data analysis adopted was that questionnaire items that have weighted mean scores that are equal to or above 2.50 are considered “agreed” while those whose weighted mean score was below 2.50 are considered “disagreed”. Z-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that items 1, 2, 3... and 10 have mean scores that are greater than 2.50. Sequel to this, it

therefore follows that the respondents agreed that all the home factors itemized can influence the student’s academic performance. All the items were rated above the cut-off point value of 2.50 in a four rating scale.

Data on Table 2 showed that the items 11, 12, 13...and 18 have mean scores that are greater than 2.50. It revealed that the entire home structure/background influences student on Academic Performance of the Students with all the items rated above the cutoff point value of 2.50.

Table 1. Mean ratings of the socio-economic factors of homes influence students academic performances?

S/N	The socio-economic factors of home influence on students academic performances	Principals	SD	Teachers	SD	Decision
1	Late admission of the student in a school.	3.2	1.12	3.2	1.06	Agreed
2	Failure of parents to follow up on children’s school work.	3.2	1.05	3.2	0.32	Agreed
3	Poor Parents and students enter relationships at home.	3.2	1.05	3.2	1.00	Agreed
4	Lack of stationery e.g. pens, exercise books, geometrical sets/ educational materials/ supervision of the students’ academic work at home.	3.1	1.11	3.2	1.2	Agreed
5	Family Socio-economic status has influence on the students’ academic performance.	3.4	0.88	3.3	1.08	Agreed
6	The family income tells the type of the school the child enrolls.	2.8	1.16	2.8	1.64	Agreed
7	The home structure of the student can influence the academic performance of the student.	3.1	1.23	3.2	1.13	Agreed

Criterion Mean = 2.50

Table 2. Mean response of the home structure/background influence on student’s academic performances

S/N	Home structure/background influence student’s on academic performance of the students	Principals	SD	Teachers	SD	Decision
8	Home size and Parents interest towards the student’s academic activities helps the student’s academic excellence in school.	3.1	1.20	3.2	0.96	Agree
9	On time enrollment of students in school by the Parents encourage students to perform well.	3.0	1.16	3.1	1.20	Agree
10	Family’s that are together can also enhance a student’s academic performance.	3.2	0.94	3.3	0.97	Agree
11	Provisions of modern mechanical or electronic devices or tools at home enhance a student’s academic performance.	3.1	1.09	3.2	1.03	Agree
12	Sufficient provision of necessary school needs to the students can encourage the student’s academic performance.	3.1	1.02	3.1	0.63	Agree
13	Good interaction between Parents and children can enhance children’s academic performance.	3.1	1.14	3.0	1.17	Agree

Criterion Mean = 250

Table 3. Z-test on there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the response of the principals and teachers on the socio-economic factors and structural background influence on student’s academic performances in Owerri zone 11, Imo state, Nigeria

Respondents	N	‘X’	SD	z-tab	z-cal	Level of significance	Decision
Principals	32	3.1	1.09	1.96	2.31	0.05	Ho is not rejected
Teachers	174	3.2	1.03				

Hypothesis: Ho: There is no Significant Difference between the mean Ratings of the Response of the Principals and Teachers on the socio-economic factors and structural background influence on student’s academic performances in Owerri zone 11, Imo state, Nigeria.

Data on Table 3, showed Z-cal score (2.31) was greater than the Z-table score (1.96). Sequel to this, it was agreed that the null hypothesis has no significant difference between the mean ratings of the response of principals and teachers on the socio-economic factors and structural background influence on student’s academic performances in Owerri zone 11, Imo state, Nigeria was not accepted.

3.1 Discussion

The result of this study indicated that the home environmental factors affecting student’s academic performance in Owerri Zone 11, Imo state, Nigeria include all that was listed in the table above. This in line with the findings of [4] observed that Family financial resources, which are associated with parents “occupation and educational attainment, often imply increased opportunities both at home and in school. Indeed, family background is the foundation for children’s development, as such family background in terms of family types, size, socio-economic status and educational background play an important role in children’s educational attainment and social integration. Parents’ Educational Background has an enormous influence on their children’s education for several reasons, most importantly because they are their children’s first teachers.

Singh et al. [25] found daily study hours, social economic status of parents/guardians and age as factors that significantly affects academic performance. Similarly, [10] and [12] also found economic status of parents, their academic background and encouragement as factors that influence academic performance. Proper guidance from parents and teachers, communication skills, and learning facilities has also been found as a significant determinant to academic performance [11]. The findings also indicates a combination of home, school, students and teacher factors [10,12] as well as environmental, personal, social, psychological and

economic factors [11,25]. Other authors have also found that age, gender and parents’ level of education affects academic performance [26,27]. It should be noted that these findings differ among countries, different academic levels and the subjects involved.

4. CONCLUSION

Results from the study indicated that parents’ educational level, occupation, family size, economic status, and level of motivation are key variables of family background that significantly influences the academic performance in Owerri zone II in Imo State secondary schools. Also students’ from a sound family background naturally tend to perform better than their peers from a paltry family background. Based on this, the study advised that Students should be encouraged, monitored, motivated and supported by their parents and teachers. These results are vital information for all stakeholders in educational administration, practice and evaluation to note, especially parents of students who are at the home front should support their ward’s educational achievement by providing the right and most favourable home environment to enhance better school performance by the students.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents of students should yearn for higher educational qualification statuses since it will translate into better occupations and higher wages, that is, higher economic statuses; thus better educational choices and offerings can be provided for their wards.
2. Parents should endeavour to motivate and give their children adequate time to read and do their homework at home rather than engaging them in domestic and non educational activities.
3. Parents and all the significant others at homes should make home environments to be learning stimulatory and study friendly for students.
4. Similar study may be replicated at other locations, at any other level of Nigeria’s educational system in any part of the country.

5. Parents should provide their wards with essential materials that will enhance educational achievement.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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