HOME ENVIRONMENT AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ABAKAIKI EDUCATIONAL ZONE, EBONYI STATE.

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Abstract

This study examined home environment and academic performance of secondary scHool students in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. In carrying out this study, survey research method was employed in which questionnaire was used to collect data. The population of the study was 305 from five selected secondary schools in Abakaliki Education Zone, with a sample of 200 respondents. Four Research questions and four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The research questions were analysed using simple percentage and Chi-square for testing the hypotheses.The findings revealed that early enrolment of students by parents in a good school by parents enhances students academic performance. That family size and socio-economic status can determine academic performance of a student, while inadequate provision of educational materials by parents degenerates students academic performance and adequate parental resources enhances quality education, the study recommended that parents should provide necessary resources as it enhances academic performance.

Introduction

Background to the Study

A home is a place where one lives permanently, especially as a member of a family or household. It is a place of residence or refuge. A home is not a mere transient shelter. Home environment is the surroundings where one lives. Anene (2005) defined environment as the aggregate of all internal and external conditions affecting the existence, growth and welfare of organisms. It is an influence an Individual has been through the gene plasma. Anene further maintained that environment can be divided into physical, social and abstract environment. Physical environment are the materials found in the home, school or community. It includes parents, siblings and peers.

He explained that social environment is the social life, societies and clubs affecting the individual. Abstract environment is the reactions, feedback and the responses received on interaction with others. Environment can be classified as urban or rural. The focus of this study is on some of the home environmental factors affecting the academic performance of students. This therefore, entails the objects, family size, parents, siblings, peers and social life that exist in the home in which the student is born.

Academic performance on the other hand is the outcome of education. It is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved the educational goals. Bossaert et al (2011), academic achievement is commonly measured by examination or continuous assessment however, in some countries; it is measured by the academic index. In Nigeria, it is measured by the student's performance in external examinations like WAEC, NECO, both Senior and Junior WAEC and JAMB examinations.

Chukwudi (2013) discovered that Individual differences in academic performance have been linked to differences in intelligence and personality. The author explained that students with higher mental abilities as demonstrated by IQ Test (quick learners) and those who are higher in conscientiousness (linked to effort and achievement motivation) tend to achieve highly in academic settings.

Magnuson (2007) pointed out that parent's academic socialization is a term describing the way parents influences students academic achievement by shaping students skills, behaviours and attitudes towards school. The writer further explained that parents influence students through the environment and discourse parents have with their children. This means that academic socialization can be influenced by parents socio-economic status. Thus, highly educated parents tend to have more stimulating learning environment.

Ajila and Olutola (2000) stated that parents of all classes realized the importance of education. They also pointed out that different families create environment that influences children's intellectual growth and educational motivation in different ways.

Nanalee (2012) pointed out that as children grow beyond babyhood, a positive home learning environment provides social interaction, attention and activities which promote the development

of positive attitudes to learning, as well as the acquisition of physical, intellectual, language, social and emotional skills.

It is not out of place to imagine that the type of family, parent's level of education and other socio-economic background can have possible effects on the academic performance of children in school. Whatsoever, affects the development environment of children would possibly affect their education or disposition to it. Hill (2004) opined that parental status has some influence on the academic performance of children. Children from families with low socio-economic status are of greater risk of hunger, homeless sickness, physical and mental disabilities, violence, teen parenthood, family stress and educational failure. Students from low socio-economic background 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 factors accelerate academic success. Mario (2006), states that students from low socio-economic background tend to be below or just an average in their academic development particularly when this phenomenon is accessed in terms of scores or tests.

David (2012) also discovered that family size affects academic achievement of children. He notes out that children who come from small families are more likely to adopt adult values and attitudes than those who came from larger families. Thompson (2014) in his study points out that parents who have fewer children tend to adopt more time and attention to each individual child. They may also tend to expect more from each child than to parents who have many children. Having gone through the above views, one will understand that the home has a significant role to play in the academic performance of students.

Statement of the Problem:

It has been observed that the blames on poor performance of students in schoolare shifted to the teachers and the school authorities. Many homes in the 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 fulfil 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. While other people see socio-economic status of the family, family size as an influence to the child's academic performance. However, some research works have revealed that the performance

of students is a joint effort of both the school authorities and that of the parents in different home environment. This calls for further research to find out the causes of the poor performance of the students and then proffer solution to that. In Ebonyi State for instance, some students and parents have the notion that the factors responsible for the re-occurrence massive failure of students in Junior and Senior West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) is the factor emanating from the school authorities and the teachers alone. Some students even go to special centres while few enlightened parents maintain that there are some factors in students home environment which also contribute to that. It is on this premise that this study intend to identify some of the home environmental factors affecting the students' academic performances and to proffer solution to that.

Scope of the Study:

The research waslimited only to public secondary school students in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. The variables of the study are home environmental factors (socio-economic status, parenting style family size) on academic performance.

Purpose of the Study:

Education is the process by which a student acquires knowledge to live well in his or her environment. It is also the process which develops a student's mental, physical and social adaptation of the environment Home environment therefore play a vital role on academic performance of students.

This study intend to critically examine some home environment facts on academic performance of secondary students in Abakaliki education zone with the purpose of investigating the following factors:

1. Whether early enrolment in a good school by parents can enhance students academic performance.
2. To find out the effect of family size and socio-economic status on academic performance of a student.
3. Whether inadequate provision of educational materials by parents degenerates students academic standard.
4. To assess the effect of adequate parental resources for good education of a child.

Research Questions:

The following research questions wasraised to guide the study:

1. Can early enrolment in a good school by parents enhance students' academic performance?
2. Can family size and socio-economic status determine academic performance of a student?
3. Does inadequate provision of educational material by parents' degenerate students pace of study?
4. Does adequate parental resources enhance academic performance of a child?

Hypothesis:

The following null hypotheses was formulated to guide the study:

1. Ho_1: Early enrolment in a good school by parents cannot enhance students academic performance.
2. Ho_2: Family size and socio-economic status cannot determine academic performance of a student.
3. Ho_3: Inadequate provision of educational material by parents does not degenerate students academic standard.
4. Ho_4: Adequate parents resources for good education of a child does not project the academic performance.

Justification for the Study:

Certain home related variables like the educational background of the parents, family structure, family size, family type, socio-economic status of the family, birth order, parenting style and other environmental factors have been identified as having serious impact on the academic performance of the child. Considering the problems associated with these, this study will have some significance which will be helpful to students, parents, teachers, educational administrators, guidance counsellors and curriculum planners. The issues unveiled in the course of this research will assist the students to understand that causes of poor academic performance are traceable to their homes and also find a way towards adjustment on possible avoidance of such.

This research also helped curriculum planners and educational administrators to appreciate the importance of the family and parents in relation to academic development.

The teacher will be exposed to the basic home problems that could viciously affect academic performance of the child. Awareness of parents and siblings to the essence of parental involvement and support to the child's education and the impact of parental discord on academic motivation of the child will be enhanced from this research such would equip teachers in their bid to impact knowledge to students.

Finally, it is revealed that the educational status of parents have direct positive influence on the education a child; such great significance. Therefore, this study adds to the provision of information confirming that high educational aspirations of parents propel high aspirations in children, which also accounts for a significant part of the association of father-mother co-habitation.

Methodology

Research Design:

This study employed descriptive design. This is because, descriptive research design can provide information that could answer research questions. It outlines the variables involved in a particular problem and suggest ways of dealing with them in order to achieve desired objectives. In descriptive design, data are collected in order to test hypotheses and answer research questions raised in the study.

The researcher therefore, believe that descriptive design is suitable enough to provide candid information on home environment on academic performance of secondary school students in Abakaliki Education Zone coupled with the fact that the study is a survey method.

Population of the Study:

The population of the study comprised of four main groups of respondents namely JSS3 and SS3 students, parents and the principals of 5 selected secondary schools in Abakaliki Education Zone. The schools are: Twelve Apostles College Abakaliki, Urban Model Secondary School Abakaliki, Girls High School Azuiyokwu, Holy Ghost Secondary School Abakaliki and Ekumeyi Secondary School Okpuitumo.

Sample and Sampling Technique:

The sample size of the study was200 respondents and random sampling technique will be employed in the selection of 20 Junior secondary school students and their parents (40) and 80 secondary school students and their parents totalling of 200 samples randomly selected from the population of the study.

Instruments for the Study:

The instrument was 20 items structured questionnaire. The questions were developed after an extensive review of literature. Section A was on personal data of the respondents. Section B was designed to collect information on the academic performance of the students. Section C was designed to collect information on the home environmental factors affecting the academic performance of students.

Validation and Reliability of the Instrument:

The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest method. Twenty (20) copies of the instrument were administered to the same group of students who were not part of the study twice within a time lag of two weeks. The data collected from the two was correlated in order to determine the co-efficient of the reliability, using Spearman's correlation coefficient. The result yielded a coefficient of 0.67.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data collected from the respondents were presented and analysed using simple percentages for research questions and chi-square scientific methods for testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Out of 200 copies of questionnaire distributed to the respondents, 180 copies representing 90% were returned and used in the analysis of the study.

Data Presentation and Results

Research Question One:

Can early enrolment in a good school by parents enhance students academic performance?

Table 1: Home environmental factor affecting academic early enrolment of students in a good school.

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Agree	80	44
Agree	52	29
Disagree	48	27
Total	**180**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2023

From the data in the table above, it shows that majority of the respondents 80 representing 44% strongly agree that early enrolment of a student in a good school by the parents held to enhance students academic performance. The view is also supported by 52 respondents representing 29% who agreed on the view, while minority 48 respondents representing 27% indicated disagree. The implication is that majority of the respondents supported the idea of early enrolment of a student to a good school for academic enhancement.

Research Question Two:

Can family size and socio-economic status determine academic performance of a student?

Table 2: Home environmental factor affecting students family size and socio-economic status of academic performance.

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Agree	75	42
Agree	60	33
Disagree	45	25
Total	**180**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2023

The analysis above that 75 respondents or 42% of the total respondents strongly agreed that family size and socio-economic status can determine the academic performance of a student. 45 respondents or 25% disagree based on their knowledge of home environmental factor on academic performance of child.

Research Question Three:

Does inadequate provision of Educational Material by Parents degenerate students pace of Study?

Table 3: How environmental factor affecting student on inadequate provision of educational material.

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Agree	76	42
Agree	68	38
Disagree	36	20
Total	**180**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2023

From the data in the table above, it revealed that 76 and 68 respondents representing 42% and 38% strongly agreed and agreed that inadequate provision of educational material by parents

degenerates students pace of study while 36 respondents representing 20% disagree, showing that the ignorance of what inadequate provision of educational material can do to a student.

Research Question 4:

Does adequate parental resources for good education of a child project the academic performance?

Table 4: home environmental factor affecting parental resources for good education of a child.

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	109	61
No	71	39
Total	**180**	**100**

Source: Field Survey 2023

The analysis above in the table shows that 109 respondents or 61% responded 'Yes' that adequate parental resources for good education of a child projects the academic performance, while 71 respondents or 39% said No, that adequate parental resources for good education of a child does not project the academic performance. The analysis further shows that majority of the respondents are in support that a home environmental factor of a student with adequate parental resources for good education projects the academic performance.

Testing of Hypotheses:

The four null hypotheses formulated in the study are tested using chi-square statistical method. Chi-square test was used to determine whether expected frequencies fit the corresponding set of observed frequencies of the sample.

In testing the hypotheses, the study is guided by the decision rule of chi-square which states that, if the calculated value is greater than the table value, we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis, but if the table value is greater than the calculated value, then we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis.

The formula of chi-square is states below as:

$$x^2 = \frac{(0 - E)^2}{2}$$

Where   O = Observed frequencies

                   E = Expected frequencies

                   $\sum$ = Summation sign

1. H_0: Early enrolment in a good school by parents cannot enhance students academic performance

In testing the above hypothesis, the data collected and analysed in table 1 are used.

Table 5: Calculation of chi-square in respect of Hypothesis One:

Response	O	E	O – E	$(O-E)^2$	$\dfrac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
Strongly Agree	80	60	+20	400	6.666
Agree	52	60	- 8	64	1.066
Disagree	48	60	- 12	144	2.4
Total	180	180			10.132

Detailed Calculation:

$$x^2 = \frac{(80-60)^2}{60} + \frac{(52-60)^2}{60} + \frac{(48-60)^2}{60}$$

$$x^2 = \frac{400}{60} + \frac{64}{60} + \frac{144}{60}$$

$$x^2 = 6.666 + 1.066 + 2.4 = 10.132$$

The study used 0.05 probability level and 2 degree of freedom.

∴ Table value $x^2 = 5.991$, df = 2, P = 0.05

Calculated valued $x^2 = 10.132$

Decision:

From the calculations done above, it shows that the table value $x^2 = 5.991$ at 2 degree of freedom with 0.05 probability level is less than the calculator value $x^2 = 10.132$. We therefore reject the

null hypothesis and accept the alternative, which means that early enrolment in a good school by parents can enhance students academic performance.

Hypothesis Two:

2. H_0: Family size and socio-economic status cannot determine academic performance of a student.

In testing the above hypothesis, data collected and analysed in table 2 are used.

Table 6: Calculation of chi-square in respect of Hypothesis two

Response	O	E	O – E	$(O – E)^2$	$\dfrac{(O – E)^2}{E}$
Strongly Agree	75	60	+15	225	3.75
Agree	60	60	0	0	0
Disagree	45	60	-	225	3.75
Total	180	180			7.40

Detailed Calculation:

$$x^2 = \frac{(75 - 60)^2}{60} + \frac{(60 - 60)^2}{60} + \frac{(45 - 60)^2}{60}$$

$$x^2 = \frac{3.75}{60} + \frac{0}{60} + \frac{3.75}{60} = 7.40$$

Decision:

Since the calculated value $x^2 = 7.40$ is greater than the table value $x^2 = 5.991$. We reject the null hypothesis accept and the alternative. This means that family size and socio-economic status can determine academic performance of a student in a home environment.

Hypothesis Three:

3. H_0: Inadequate provision of educational material by parents does not degenerate students academic standard

In testing the above hypothesis, the data collected and analysed in table 3 are used.

Table 7: Calculation of chi-square in respect of Hypothesis Three:

Response	O	E	O – E	$(O-E)^2$	$\dfrac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
Strongly Agree	76	60	16	256	4.266
Agree	68	60	8	64	1.066
Disagree	36	60	24	576	9.6
Total	180	180			14.932

Detailed Calculation:

$$x^2 = \frac{(76-60)^2}{60} + \frac{(68-60)^2}{60} + \frac{(36-60)^2}{60}$$

$$x^2 = \frac{256}{60} + \frac{64}{60} + \frac{576}{60}$$

$$x^2 = 4.266 + 1.066 + 9.6 = 14.932$$

The study used 0.05 probability level and 2 degree of freedom.

$\therefore$ Table value $x^2 = 5.991, df = 2, P = 0.05$.

Calculated valued $x^2 = 14.932$

Decision:

From the calculations done above, it shows that the table value X2 = 5.991 is less than the calculated value X^2 = 14.932 at two degree of freedom with 0.05 probability level. We reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative that inadequate provision of educational material by parents degenerates students academic standard.

Hypothesis 4:

4. H$_0$: Adequate parental resources for good education of a child does not project performance.

In testing the above hypothesis, the data collected and analysed in table 4: are used.

Table 8: Calculation of chi-square in respect of Hypothesis Four:

Response	O	E	O – E	(O – E)²	$\dfrac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
Yes	109	60	+19	361	4.011
No	71	90	- 19	361	4.011
Total	180	180			8.022

Detailed calculation:

$$x^2 = \frac{(109 - 90)^2}{60} + \frac{(71 - 90)^2}{60} = \frac{361}{90} \quad \frac{361}{90}$$

$$x^2 = 4.011 + 4.011 = 8.022$$

The study used 1 degree of freedom and 0.05 probability level.

∴ Table value $X^2 = 3.841$, df = 1, P = 0.05

Calculated valued $X^2 = 8.022$

Decision:

The calculations above have shown that the table $X^2 = 3.841$ is less than the calculated value X2 = 8.022. We reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which means that adequate parental resources for good education of a child projects the academic performance.

Summary of Findings

From the hypotheses tested in this study, the following findings are made that:

1. Early enrolment in a good school by parents can enhance students academic performance.
2. Family size and socio-economic status can determine academic performance of a student.
3. Inadequate provision of educational materials by parents degenerates students academic standard.

4. Adequate parental resources for good education of a child projects to the academic performance.

Discussion of Results

Findings indicate among others that, the none provision of adequate educational materials/supervision of the students' academic work when returned from school can affect the student. This is in line with the findings of Ajila and Olutola (2000), Anene (2005) who supported that families should provide their children and wards with adequate educational materials as well as make out time to supervise or look into their academic work when they are back from school.

Result reveal that provision of adequate educational materials to the students, teaching and supervision of the students work at home by parents, enrolment of the students in a good school, the existence of cordial relationship, love and care in the students family, the academic level of the students, parents and positive attitude towards education, provision of modern gadgets at home and good modern communication network in the home among others, all contribute immensely to the students academic performance. In support of the above Nanalee (1997) stated that the provision of educational materials and stimulating environment can enhance the students academic performance. Chukwudi (2013) observed that parents with high educational background tend to motivate their children to have interest in their academic work; this also enhances the performance of students in school. Magnuson (2007) pointed out that siblings and peer group influence at home and provision of modern electrical gadgets at home like television, radio, home videos, tape recorders, computer systems and so on also promote academic performance of the students.

Findings show that the home has a great influence on the student's psychological, emotional, social and economic state. Ajila and Olutola (2010) stated that the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life. They also pointed out that other aspects of parental environment such as the family structure have been grossly neglected yet they have great influence on the academic performance of the students. Ichado, (1998) noted that parent's constant disagreement affects children emotionally and this could lead to poor academic performance in school.

The family lays the psychological, moral and spiritual foundations in the overall development of the child. Agulanna, (1999) observed that parenthood is a responsibility requiring the full

cooperation of both parents who must ensure the total development of their offspring(s). Structurally, a family is either broken or intact. A broken family in this context is one that is not structurally intact for various reasons like death of parents, divorce, separation, dissertation and illegitimacy in which case, the family was never completed. Conkline (1996) added that life in a single parent family can be stressful for both the child and the parent. Such families are faced with the challenges of diminished financial resources which is not conducive for effective parenting because when the single parent is overburdened by responsibilities and their own emotional reaction to their situation, they become irritable, impatient and insensitive to their children's needs thus resulting to poor academic performance of the child.

Conclusion
A child for excellent academic performance requires in addition to other factors a good home environment because inadequate provision of the student's educational materials/ supervision of his/her work at home, non-challant attitude of parents towards education of the student's socio-economic level of the family and others, influence the academic performance of the students.
Academic performance of the students can be enhanced through adequate provision of the student's educational materials, proper supervision of their work at home, maintaining good cordial relationship among children and members of the family, provision of modern gadgets at home including others, could lead to enhanced academic performance among students.
Recommendations:
Based on the result of the findings of the study, the following recommendations among other are made:
1. Parents should provide their children/wards with essential materials that will help them improve their academic performance.
2. The principals of post primary schools in the area, should discuss/educate parents on the importance of providing adequate learning materials as well as creating learning environments in their home to their children. This could be discussed in the Parents/Teachers Association meetings.
3. The three tiers of government in Nigeria should establish and equip more adult education centres for the training of illiterate parents, this will improve the academic level of some illiterate parents so that they will know the necessary rites they should play enhancement of their children's academic performance.
4. Parents should endeavour to encourage and give their children/ward adequate time to read and do their homework at home rather than engaging them with domestic works and watching of non-educational movies most of the time.
5. Literate parents/busy parents should squeeze out time out of their tight schedules to stay with their children and check their academic progress.
6. Parents should make out time to reach out with their children's teachers from time to update them with their children's academic progress. This will help identify the student's academic problems so as to handle it promptly before it affects the student.

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