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MOTHERS' EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND THEIR
DAUGHTERS' ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTATION/PERFORMANCE
IN SCHOOL.

By

Mowaiye, Olufunmilayo

Abstract

The mother as an agent of socialization, can exert great influence on children, especially her females. She can pass on to her female wards, her own values and she may for instance, inculcate in them the habit of work, and the need to excel in school. Some writers postulated that the socialization process for most females tend to assume that they will spend most of their adult life as mothers. An effect of this on a girl, is that her main objective may be to get married and to have children.

The socialization experiences of a girl can thereby affect her achievement orientation in school. However, it was also noted that the education levels of mothers affect their sex attitude. Women become less traditional as their educational level becomes higher.

It follows therefore that a mother's educational level may influence the achievement training she gives her daughter, and thus the achievement orientation of the daughter, which may reflect in a girl's performance.

The present study was therefore carried out to find out if secondary school girls whose mothers are literate differ in achievement orientation and academic performance as compared to those whose mothers are non-literate.

Introduction

In many homes, taking care of the children falls on the shoulders of the mother, and she may also spend more time with them. The mother therefore has the opportunity of exerting a great influence on her children. The home a child comes from can determine to a great length what a child's perception and orientation to achievement may be. This may invariably influence the child's performance in school (Pascarella, 1977).

The influence of achievement orientation on performance is well documented. Examples include studies by Cobb, (1972) Kinghness (1970) and Shanahan and Walberg, (1985). Also different studies have shown that mothers tend to have strong influences on and are role models for their children.

child, she can influence and determine significantly what her daughter's achievement orientation may be. She may train her positively or negatively, depending on her own perception of what a female role is. If she believes a woman achiever is unbecoming, she would not train her daughter to be achievement oriented. And how she trains her child towards achievement may also be influenced by her own educational background.

Literate and highly educated mothers who tend to give achievement training to their daughters have been found to be liberal and non-traditional in their perception of the roles of women (Astin, 1969; Fitzpatrick, 1978).

A similar report was made by Hoffman (1975) who postulated that there is the tendency for daughters to model their mothers. Other researchers such as Smith (1969) and Tangri (1972) have also reported similar findings. Hoffman (1977) believed that adolescent daughters of working mothers are more independent than daughters of non-working mothers. This, Hoffman attributed to the type of training given to the girls. The move from protector and nurturer to that of an independent trainer is said to be very difficult for the non-working mothers but the working mothers welcome such training as lessening to strain on them.

It was suggested that independence training improves the achievement behaviour of girls. In view of the above, the investigator assumed that literate mothers would most probably have daughters who are positively oriented towards achievement and who may thus perform better in school, as compared to their counterparts whose mothers are illiterate, and who may be negatively oriented towards achievement. Other studies by Nile (1981), Obeamkata (1976) and Ogunlade (1973) have lent credence to the viewpoint that the child's background affect the child's performance in school. Children who come from literate homes are said to perform better in school than children from illiterate homes. This has to be so since literate parents would most likely be able to help their children in their school work, and knowing the value of education, would be able to "push" and encourage their children to excel in their academic work. Mothers who are literate may be able to do this more than mothers who are not literate.

In view of the above, the present study was designed to find out:

1. if there is any difference in the achievement orientation of girls whose mothers are literate, vis-a-vis, those whose mothers are non-literate.
2. if there is any difference in the academic performance of girls whose mothers are literate as compared to those whose mothers are non-literate.

The following research question guided the investigator:

Do girls whose mothers are literate and those whose mothers are non-literate differ in achievement orientation, and academic performance?

Method

The research used the survey method and stratified random sampling technique for the selection of participants in the study. Of the fourteen local government areas in Kwara State, six are regarded as educationally disadvantaged. Samples were made of local government areas regarded as educationally advantaged and those regarded as educationally disadvantaged. Girls in S.S.3, at the Senior Secondary School level participated in the study. Sixty nine (69) girls from the educationally disadvantaged areas participated in the study while ninety-seven (97) of them participated from the areas regarded as educationally advantaged. The disparity in the number was as a result of factors beyond the investigators control. For example, some girls did not make a return of their questionnaire, while some did not complete the questionnaire fully. Moreover, in the educationally disadvantaged areas, getting the required number of girls to participate in the study was a problem because, as the investigator found out that children especially females, do not value the Western education as such, and so do not attend school regularly or do not even attend at all.

A questionnaire was designed for the study. Students were asked to tick where their mother belonged on the educational ladder, which ranged from no education, through the primary school level to the Ph.D. level. The achievement orientation questionnaire comprised questions such as:

1. I do not always take time to write assignments well
2. I do not have a complete note on my subjects
3. I usually attend prep

A test-retest method was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument and it was computed to be 0.93 through the Pearson Product Moment method of correlation. For the purpose of data analysis, the achievement orientation questionnaire which was on a four point scale was scored.

Students' continuous assessment scores in English language and Mathematics were collected from the schools for use. Before use though, the raw scores were converted to their standard scores.

Data analysis and Results

Mothers with at least primary school certificate were regarded as being literate, while those who never underwent the western type of education were grouped under the illiterate group. The t-test and analysis of variance were made use of, for data analysis and the results are as follows:

The mean score for female students ($N = 45$) whose mothers were non-literate (on the achievement orientation measures) was 36.4 with an S.D of 4.2. A mean score of 37.0 and an S.D. of 3.0 were obtained for female students ($N = 39$) whose mothers were literate. The observed t-value was $t(136) = -1.00$, $p > 0.05$, which is not statistically significant. Thus, no difference was found in the achievement

Table 1
Achievement orientation of girls with non-literate mothers (group 1) and girls with literate mothers (group 2).

Group	X	SD	t-value calculated	Df	t-table value
1	36.4	4.2	-1.00	136	1.960
2	37.	3.			

$P > 0.05$

Table 2
Duncan Multiple Range test showing Mathematics performance for the girls and their mothers' educational level.

Level of Education	N	X	MSE	DF	Critical Range
Degree	13	52.85			
OND/HND	20	50.25	147.78	108	7.34
Primary / Secondary	54	50.09			
No-Formal Education	46	42.63			

$\alpha = 0.05$

b. Findings from table 2 reveal that there is significant difference in the performance of girls in the two groups under study.

Further analysis with the aid of the Duncan Multiple Range test for English Performance with consideration for mothers educational level revealed a significant difference in the mean scores on English Language for Female students with literate mothers and those with illiterate mothers, in favour of those with literate mothers.

Table 3
Duncan Multiple Range showing English performance for the girls and their mothers educational level

Level of Education	N	X	MSE	DF	Critical Range
Degree	13	59.3			
OND/HND	26	51.4	84.4	108	5.72
Primary / Secondary	54	48.3			
No formal Education.	46	46.6			

$\alpha = 0.05$

Discussion and conclusion

The finding of this study does not show any difference in the achievement orientation of girls whose mothers are literate and those whose mothers are illiterates. It thus seems to suggest that a mother's educational qualification is not in any form related to the daughter's achievement orientation. However, further research in this area is no doubt still necessary. It would be necessary to find out if girls whose mothers have higher education, (like a university degree) differ in achievement orientation if compared with their peers whose mothers have the primary school certificate or the secondary school certificate. As could be seen from table two, a significant difference exists between the mean scores on Mathematics for girls with literate mothers as compared with girls whose mothers are non-literates, with girls whose mothers are degree holders, holders of the Ordinary National Diploma (O.N.D.), Higher National Diploma (H.N.D.) or holders of the primary and secondary school certificate performing better than girls whose mothers never had formal education.

Table 3 reveals a significant difference in the English performance of girls with literate mothers and those with illiterate mothers, in favour of girls with literate mothers

Further observations reveal that there is no significant difference in the mean score on English language for the girls whose mothers hold the OND or HND and those whose mothers hold the primary or secondary school certificate, while those whose mothers hold at least a University degree performed better than others in the literate group. The suggestion may be given that more women need to be trained at higher levels of education. Further, educated mothers will be better able to train their female children towards academic achievement goals and such children would therefore have a positive achievement orientation which could not only aid them in school and make them achieve better academically, but would also help in orienting them towards achievement values in the work force. They would, then be able to contribute better to the development of their country.

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