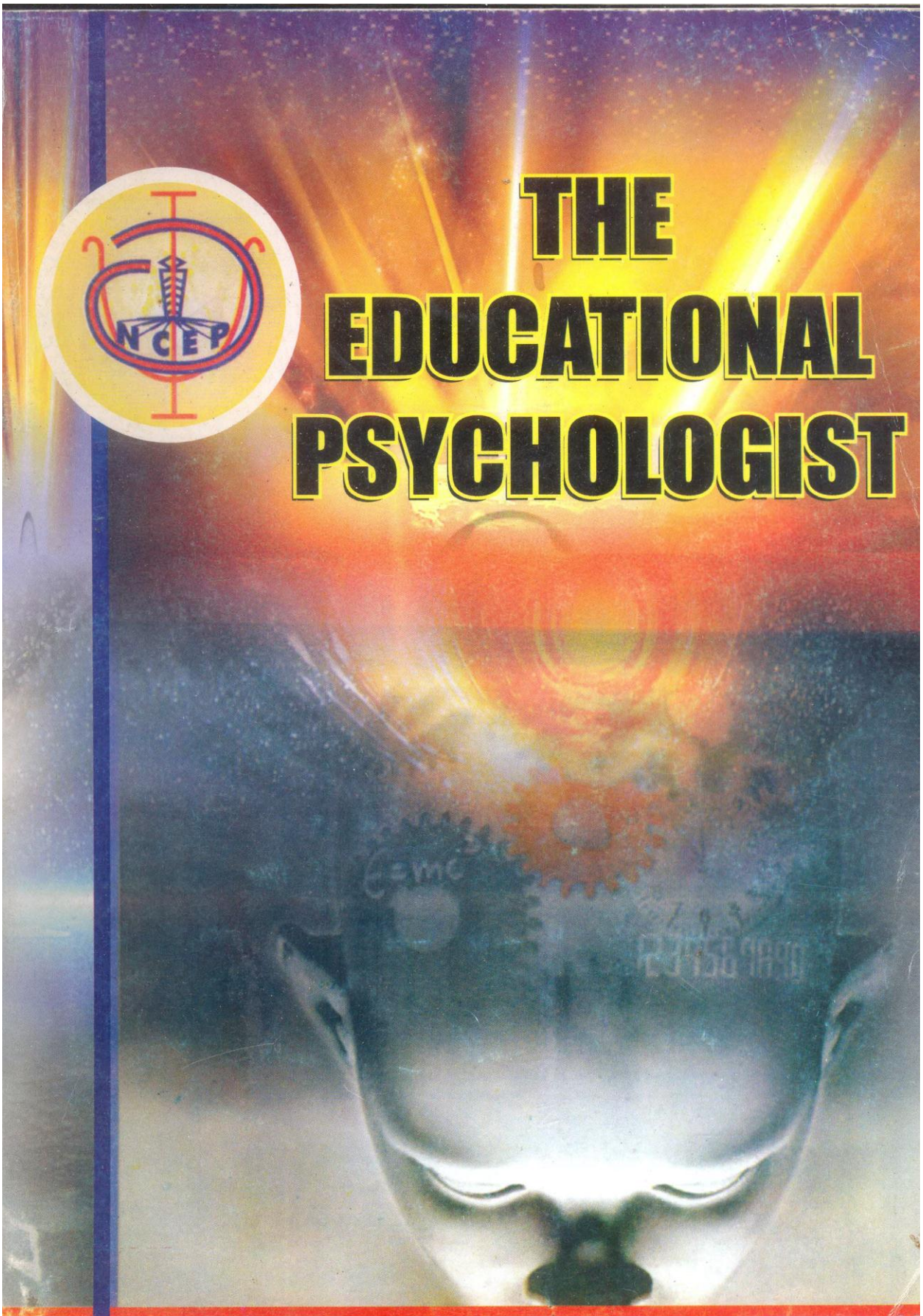


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Editorial Brief

This is volume seven, number one of the Journal. **The Educational Psychologist**, a publication of Nigerian Council of Educational Psychologist. This volume is devoted to providing information on and analysis of educational issues that deal with the Universal Basic Education in Nigeria. It is envisaged, that such information and data will be of immense benefit in making educational policies that are aimed at proper implementation of the universal basic education which no doubt will bring about the betterment of the lot of the society.

The Journal is an annual publication. It is entirely devoted to reporting and explaining problems, characteristics and actions of individuals in educational psychology and related areas in Nigeria.

It's orientation is wholly empirical. However, very strong theoretical papers that seek to unravel problematics in the area of educational psychology may be entertained.

The editorial board conceives educational psychology to be all those areas within education that seek to understand, control and predict human behaviours. By this conception, such fields as educational psychology, guidance and counseling, special education, childhood education, measurement and evaluation and health education fall within the purview of this journal.

This volume has thirty six well researched and analysed articles. The articles investigated problems in the universal basic education. The editorial board acknowledges the sincere efforts of our team of editors the contributors and other well meaning Nigerians that contributed towards making this eighth edition a reality.

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FAMILY FACTORS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF ADOLESCENT BOYS AND GIRLS IN ALVAN IKOKU FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, OWERRI

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Abstract

This study is a descriptive survey design which aimed at investigating the influence of family factors on adolescents' academic achievement. Out of the total population of 13,149 students, nine hundred and twenty five (925) Alvan Students from three randomly selected schools (Arts, Natural Science and Education) constituted the sample for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled Family Factors, and Academic Achievement Questionnaire (FFAAQ). Two research questions were formulated guide this study. The instrument was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation. Using Pearson product moment correlation statistics, a reliability coefficient of 0.62 was obtained. Data collected were analyzed using percentages and rank order. The results revealed that marital happiness was found to be a prominent factor in the family that influence adolescents' academic achievement (98.37%). It was also revealed that high income caring parents pay their children's school fees as at when due than low income earners (88.97%) and that students whose parents abstain from drinking are more likely to perform better academically. It was recommended that parents should try as much as possible to keep their homes at peace because their happiness motivates their children in school. Parents should be hardworking and find something doing to earn a good living to take proper care of their child. Alcohol is dangerous to health and mental ability; therefore parents should abstain from taking it.

Introduction

This research work was prompted by the observation that many adolescent boys and girls in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri experience many obstacles when trying to perform their best academically. These problems could be attributed to poverty level among Nigerian homes, divorce, non challant attitude of the parents over their children's career, conflicts in the family, just to mention a few. Adegbenga (2010) observed that many Nigerian families are

beset with a lot of problems that could influence their children's performance in school. He noted that some are in abject poverty, divorce and conflicts. As a result of poverty level among Nigerian families, many parents cannot afford to sponsor their children's career in terms of paying their school fees, buying text books and other academic materials. Most of these students are sent out of examination hall for not paying their school fees. Sometimes, these actions can result to automatic carry over, drop outs and when this case is repeated, some will become involved in some social vices as: cultism, robbery, kidnapping, examination malpractices and others. James, Jurich and Estes (2001) asserted that without proper education, adolescents will encounter hardship such as: illiteracy, unemployment and shame.

It is of note that adolescents in their nature will not like to experience disgrace of being sent out of examination halls; as such they are depressed, frustrated and stressed up. This will make them feel inferior among their mates. It is equally important to note that a depressed, frustrated and stressed student cannot perform his or her best academically (Ipem, 2013).

Previous researchers on academic related issues have attributed poor academic achievement to stress (Ipem, 2013), teachers qualities and teaching facilities (Amao, 2008). However, the present study sets out to investigate the contribution of family factors such as parents' socio-economic status, marital happiness and parents' alcohol use on the academic achievement of adolescent boys and girls in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri.

Adolescence is an important period in the life of every individual that falls within the age of 12-20 years (Iwuama, 2000:19). It is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. Iwuama (2002;2) asserted that adolescent is a period of "storm and stress, which is surrounded with confusion, troubles, conflicts, changes and challenges. These adolescent boys and girls are found in various higher institutions and Alvan is one of them. Coupled with their critical situation, adolescents are also faced with family problems. The inherent problems from home background are other myriad factors that troubles adolescents' lives and career (Krystyn, 2012). Grant (2000) asserted that one in four children under the age of 18, live in a home in which alcohol use is present. Previous studies like that of Krystyna (2012) showed that parents' alcohol use is connected to maladaptive behaviours in children's development, health and academic success.

Schroeder and Kelley (2008) in their study found that children whose parents had problem with alcoholism were less likely to achieve academically in reading and mathematics than their counterparts. A study by Zanati, Jeronymo and Carvalho (2005) revealed that children within this study whose parents abuse alcohol were at a nine times at higher risk for low school performance and were twice as likely to repeat a grade and twice likely to drop out of school. Lambie and Sias (2005) stated that children of alcoholic parents are more likely to have difficulty in hearing.

Marital happiness is another important factor that is investigated in this study. This deals with the degree of happiness among married men and women. For instance, divorce was highly associated with a child's inability to achieve higher within school (Potter, 2010). Children who come from families in which conflict and divorce are prominent, typically do worse in school than children who come from family without divorce (Potter, 2010). Study by Oloka (1992) revealed that children from large families were generally found to perform poorer than those from small families in English language. This is not unconnected with the fact that most large families

are found among low socio-economic status groups that are not capable of providing necessary academic needs of the children.

Ezere (1997) found that the divorce of a child's parents diminishes a child's well-being which negatively affects his/her ability to perform in school. According to Denga and Denga (2007:34) marital instability could be a disturbing factor in a child's academic performance. In a study by Ghazarian and Buchler (2008: 26), it was found that interpersonal conflict was correlated with academic achievement. More specifically, conflict between parents was related to a child not achieving in school. With this conflict, adolescents are more likely to experience stress and stress according to Ipem (2013) affect students academically.

Another variable investigated in this study is the parents' socio-economic status. Munez, Clarjo and Koven (1999) found that a more accurate predictor of students' academic achievement was their parents' socio-economic status. Desset and Munez (2000) found that parents' socio-economic status can be overcome by identifying and meeting the social needs of the students.

Demi and Lewis (2010) found that the effect of socio-economic status on the academic outcome and future life is significant, because children of low economic status are less likely to earn passing grades within school years than their counterparts within the middle and upper income class. According to Sirin (2005), the socio-economic status of the family determines the school the child will attend as well as the kind of classroom environment that will be available to that child.

Nwadinigwe (2006) asserted that the home environment and the materials around are medium through which the potentials in the child are expressed and developed. Adegbenga (2010) found that the socio-economic background of students predict students' achievement in English language better than attitude toward the subjects. Onwuamana (2000) stated that socio-economic status of the family affects the academic performance of the child in school and that there are several ways which extreme poverty exerts an influence on school performance. It is against this background that these researchers identified the influence of family factors on the academic achievement of adolescent boys and girls at Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education as an important area for investigation.

The main purpose of this study therefore, is to investigate the influence of family factors on academic achievement of adolescent boys and girls in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri.

Specifically, the study tried to:

- Investigate the perceived influence of parents' socio economic status on the academic achievement of adolescent boys and girls in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri.
- Find out whether parents' alcohol use influences students academic achievement.
- Determine the effect of parents' marital happiness on the academic achievement of adolescents in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education.

The study was guided by three research questions and they include:

- What are the perceived influence of parents' socio economic status on the academic achievement of adolescent boys and girls in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education?
- What are the perceived influences of parents' alcohol use on the academic achievement of students in Alvan Ikoku federal College of Education?

— Do parents' marital happiness affect the academic achievement of adolescent boys and girls in Alvan Ikoku federal College of Education?

Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. This enabled the researchers to investigate the influence of parents' socio-economic status, parents' alcohol use and parents' marital happiness on academic achievement of students in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri. All the students of the College constituted the population for this study while the target population comprised all the 200 level students within the ages of 19-20. The population comprised of five schools (i.e. Arts=1,354; Agricultural Science and Vocational studies=1,965; Education=765; Natural Sciences=2503 and Social Sciences=6,562) giving a total of 13,149 as at the time of this report. The sampling procedures used was a multistage sampling. Here, the College was stratified into 5 schools as mentioned above. For easy representation, 60% of the schools were sampled making a total of three schools. To get these three schools, simple random sampling technique was used. Here, the names of the five schools were written on piece of papers and picked at random. Based on this, school of Arts, Education and Natural Sciences were sampled. In each of the schools visited or sampled 20% of the students who were randomly selected, reacted to the questionnaire. Thus, a sample size of (Arts=271, Education=153 and Natural Sciences=501) 925 students participated in this study.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire by the researchers. The questionnaire was titled "Family Factors and Achievement Questionnaire (FFAAQ)". The instrument was divided into four sections. Section A contains demographic data of the respondents, section B has 4 structured statements on parents' socio economic status. Section C dealt with the factors on parents alcohol use and section D elicits information on parents' marital happiness.

The instrument was face and content validated by experts in the field of measurement and evaluation/psychology. It was subjected to test – re-test method and was found to have a reliability coefficient of 0.62 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistics. The total of 925 copies of the instrument was distributed to the respondents in their various schools by the researchers and all the copies of the questionnaire were retrieved after completion. Percentages and rank order answered the research questions 1, 2 and 3.

Findings

Table 1: Percentage response and rank order of students' response on the influence of parents' socio economic status on academic achievement.

S/N	Parents Socio Economic Status	No of respondents	% Agree	% Disagree	Rank order
1	Students from high status parents attend better schools than their counterparts from lower status parents	925	88.97	11.03	1st
2	Students from high income parents are provided with essential learning materials than others	925	66.16	33.84	3rd

3	Students from high income parents show more interest in academics than those of low income parents	925	60.43	39.78	4th
4	High income parents pay their children's schools fees as at when due than the low income earners	925	79.78	20.22	2nd

Table 1 shows the percentages and rank order of perceived influence of parents' socio-economic status on academic achievement of students in the study area. Ranking 1st on the table was that students from high status parents attend better schools than their counterparts from lower status parents. This is followed by the fact that high income parents pay their children's school fees as at when due than the low income earners. Ranking 3rd was that students from high income parents are provided with essential learning materials than others. Lastly (4th) is that students from high income parents show more interest in academics than those of low income parents. However, the result of the study on the table shows that all items on the table constitutes parents socio-economic factors that could influence students' academic achievement.

Table 2: Percentages and rank order of students' response on the influence of parents alcohol use on student's academic achievement

S/N	Parents' Alcohol Use	No of respondents	% Agree	% Disagree	Rank order
1	Parents' alcohol use affects students' academic achievement.	925	67.02	32.98	2nd
2	Parents' abuse of alcohol have significant negative effects on their children's mental ability.	925	61.62	38.38	4th
3.	Parents' alcohol use is associated with poor adjustment in schools.	925	59.46	40.54	5th
4	Students whose parents abstain from drinking are more likely to perform better academically.	925	74.59	25.41	1st
5.	Students whose parents use alcohol are more likely to perform poor academically	925	64.86	33.14	3rd

Table 2 shows the percentages and rank order of the influence of parents' use of alcohol on students' academic achievement. Ranking 1st was that students whose parents abstain from drinking are more likely to perform better academically. Followed the fact that parents' alcohol use affects students' academic achievement. Also that students whose parents use alcohol are

more likely to perform poorly academically ranked 3rd on the table. Ranking 4th, and 5th (last) is that parents' abuse of alcohol have significant negative effects on their children's mental ability and that parents alcohol use is associated with poor adjustment in schools. The result of the study on the table revealed that parents' use of alcohol can influence students' academic achievement.

Table 3: Percentages and rank order on the influence of marital happiness on students' academic achievement

S/N	Parents' Alcohol Use	No of respondents	% Agree	% Disagree	Rank order
1	Marital happiness is a prominent factor in the family that influence adolescents' academic achievement	925	93.37	1.63	1st
2	Degree of happiness among married men and women can influence their children's successes or failures in school.	925	88.65	11.35	2nd
3.	Interpersonal conflict in the family can influence adolescents' academic achievement.	925	61.08	38.92	4th
4	Marital instability (divorce) can be a major factor to adolescent poor performance in school.	925	84.32	15.68	3rd

Table 3 shows the percentages and rank order on the influence of marital happiness on the students' academic achievement. Ranking 1st was that marital happiness is a prominent factor that can positively influence students' academic achievement. This is followed by the fact that the degree of happiness among married men and women can influence their children's success and failure in school. Ranking last (4th) was that interpersonal conflict in the family can influence adolescents' academic achievement. The result also revealed that marital instability (divorce) can be a major factor to students' poor academic achievement. However, the summary of the result shows that all the items on the table constitutes factors on marital happiness and are strong determinants of students' academic achievement.

Discussion

The study investigated the influence of the family factors (parents' socio-economic status, parents' use of alcohol and parents' marital happiness) on the academic achievement of adolescent boys and girls in AIFCE, Owerri.

The findings revealed that students from high status parents attend better schools than their counterparts from low status parents (88.97%) which ranked 1st on the questionnaire items on parents' socio-economic status. The study discovered as shown on table 1, section 'A' that high income parents pay their children's school fees as at when due than their counterparts from low status parents (79.78%) which ranked second on the items on the questionnaire influence academic achievement. It was also indicated that students from high income parents are provided with essential learning materials than others (66.16%) which ranked 3rd on the questionnaire items.

These revelations are in line with the discoveries made by Desset and Munez (2000), who found that parents' socio economic status was a good predictor of students' academic achievement. It was also in collaboration with the findings of Demi and Lewis (2011) who found a corroboration relationship between socio-economic status and students academic achievement. The findings are in agreement with Krystyna (2012) who also found that parents' socio-economic background and parents marital status is one of the major factors that influence academic performance. Reasons for this may be as a result of high poverty level among most Nigerian families which as a result cannot afford their children's school fees and other materials they needed for school.

The findings in section B on table 2 showed that students whose parents abstain from drinking are more likely to perform better academically ranked first with (74.59%). It was also the findings of this study that parents' alcohol use affects students' academic achievement (67.02%) rank the second on the items. The findings also indicated that students whose parents use alcohol are more likely to perform poorly academically (64.86%). Moreso, the study revealed that parents abuse of alcohol have significant negative effects on their children's mental ability and that parents' alcohol use was associated with poor adjustment in schools (61.62%).

These findings are in agreement with the findings of Lambie and Sias (2005) who found that children of alcoholics parents were more likely to have learning problem, drop out of school, practice truancy, exhibit disruptive behaviours in classroom and repeat grades. Students from alcoholic parents may become irresponsible in school because of their parents' non challant attitudes. In collaboration with this findings of McGrawth (1999) found that parents' alcohol dependence was associated with lower math achievement scores. Evidence also indicated that adolescents' task orientation mediated the relation between parental alcohol dependence and adolescent grades and between parental alcohol dependence and adolescent math achievement (McGrawth, 1999).

The findings in section C on table 3, showed that marital happiness was a prominent factor in the family that can influence adolescents' academic achievement and the first in the rank order with (98.37%) followed by the fact that marital happiness among married men and women influences the success and failure of their children. This ranked second with (88.65%). This study also revealed that marital instability (divorce) and interpersonal conflict in the family (84.32%) affects adolescents' academic achievement.

The result were in line with the finding of Esere (1997) and Denga and Denga (2007) who found that divorce of a child's parents diminishes his/her well-being which negatively affects his/her ability to perform well in school. It also agrees with Denga and Denga (2007) who found that marital instability could be a disturbing factor in a child's academic performance. The study by Ghazarian and Buchler (2008) supports the findings of this study that conflict was correlated with academic achievement.

Conclusion

Adolescents in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri experiences many problems which lead to academic failures. The result revealed that it was so because some parents cannot afford the sponsorship of their children in academics. Some of these alcoholic parents fail in their responsibilities of taking care of their children. This also affects their children's mental abilities. Some families lack marital happiness and this affect their children's concentration in school. Thus family factors were adjudged to be strong determinants of academic achievement among adolescents Boys and girls in Alvan.

Recommendations

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

1. Parents should try as much as possible to keep their homes at peace because their happiness motivates their children to achieve high academically.
2. Parents should be up and doing to promote their socio-economic status. This will help them take proper care of their children in all areas of life.
3. Alcohol is dangerous to health and mental abilities therefore, parents should abstain from taking it.
4. Government, philanthropists and stakeholders in education should encourage and promote scholarship boards to assist brilliant children whose parents cannot afford the sponsorship of their education.
5. School administrators should establish guidance and counseling services in schools to help those students that have academic and family problems.

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