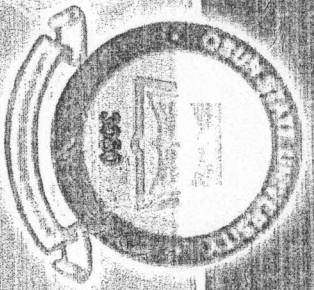


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PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN HOMEWORK AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of parental involvement in homework on academic performance of secondary school students in Ilorin, Nigeria. A total of one thousand one hundred and ninety-nine (1199) respondents participated in this study. Data were obtained through the use of structured questionnaires which were then analysed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The ANOVA results showed that there is a significant effect of parental involvement on academic performance of senior secondary school students. It was observed that students whose parents were highly involved in monitoring homework and participating in their academic revision at home, improved in their academic performances to a significant level. The findings of this study have implications for counsellors, educators, and parents to further involve themselves actively in the academic development of the students. Parents were encouraged to improve on the cordial relationships with their children, and to be much more involved in the academic work of such children. Educational counsellors were also encouraged to assist likewise in monitoring, supervising and mentoring of the students.

Keywords: Academic achievement; Parental involvement; Parenting style; Performance

Introduction

The relationship between a student and his or her parents has been noted to have an influential impact on not only the student performance in school but also in his/her life generally (Yusuf, Agbonna and Yusuf, 2009). Learning begins at home through interaction with one's family. Numerous studies in this area have demonstrated the importance of family interaction and involvement in the years prior to entering school (Bergsten, 1998; Hill, 2001; Wynn, 2002).

Negative parenting styles, such as permissive, authoritarian, and neglectful, have been found to contribute to adolescent misbehaviours, diverting them from performing well in their studies. Ary, Duncan, Duncan and Hops (1999), Fawole (2010), Mandara (2006) and Micki (2008), that the parenting style experienced by children contribute in no small measure to the shaping of the behavioural pattern generally and specifically, the performance of the children. It has been assumed that academic achievement of students may not only depend on the quality of schools and the teachers, rather the extent of parental involvement has vital role to play in academic achievement of their children. Research findings have also shown that a continued effort of parental involvement throughout a child's education can improve academic achievement (Driessen, Smit & Sleepers, 2005; Fan, 2001; Hong & Ho, 2005). Also, studies have shown that parents can

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have a powerful impact on their children's behaviour in the classroom and at other school based activities (Yusuf et al., 2009).

Pierson and Thomas, (2002) and Micki (2008) noted that the relationship between parenting styles and their children's performance has shown that parents can have a dramatic impact on their children's performance, often resulting in a vast improvement. Children are more likely to have higher academic achievement levels and improved behaviour when families are involved in their education (Bryan, 2005). However, parental involvement cannot work alone to influence school outcomes or performance, the cooperation of students with their parents and teachers can be very valuable. This indicates that, when parents participate in their children's schooling, students may experience more academic and social success. Parents' awareness and interest in their children's learning and school activities models for their children the importance of school, which may lead to positive behaviours. Several studies have been conducted on the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance of students solely with elementary school students (Baily, Silvern, Brabham, & Ross, 2004; Marjoribanks, 2005). Against this backdrop, this research tends to examine the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance of secondary school students in Ilorin, Nigeria.

Over the years, parents have been on the verge of sending signals to their children on the importance of good performance in school activities through rendering assistance and engaging their children. Parents' attitudes and behaviours towards the children's progress at school also have influence the children's performance. Over time, educators have frequently pointed out the critical role of the home and family environment in determining school success and that the earlier in a child's educational process parental involvement begins, the more powerful the effects will be (Gianzero, 2001). Attention of previous researchers Aremu (2000), Parker, Creque, Harris, Majeski, Wool & Hogan (2003) had been on the impact of home, school and government, demographic and socio-psychological variables on academic performance of students; parental involvement, interest in schooling and school environment as predictors of good academic among secondary school students (Adeyemo, 2005); the effects of parental socio-economic status on academic performance of secondary school students (Oni, 2007).

Parental goals, values, and aspirations has to do with socialization of the child. A primary way parents socialize their children is by communicating the goals they want their children to attain, the aspirations they want their children to fulfil, and the values they want their children to internalize. Parental goals and aspirations are best described as internal representations of desired states or outcomes that parents hold for their children. These, in turn, organize and direct parents' behaviours toward their children (Wentzel, 1998). Similarly, parents might communicate to their children their values with respect to school (i.e., importance of education), intending for their children to adopt these values and beliefs.

Academic performance of secondary school students has been largely associated with many factors. Most students in secondary schools in Nigeria are confronted with home environment. Educated parents can provide such an environment that suits best for academic success of their children. The school authorities can provide counselling and

guidance to parents for creating positive home environment for improvement in students' quality of work (Marzano, 2003). The academic performance of students heavily depends upon the parental involvement in their academic activities to attain the higher level of quality in academic success (Barnard, 2004; Shumow & Lomax, 2001).

The level of parental involvement has important implications for children's academic performance. Social cognitive theory suggests that youth absorb messages about appropriate behaviour and socially accepted goals by observing and talking with important people in their lives (Bandura, 1986). Based on this assumption, parents have the potential to model positive attitudes and behaviours toward school, and research in developed countries such as the United States has shown that parental involvement contributes to youth academic success (Fan & Chen, 2001; Houtenville & Conway, 2008; Jeynes, 2007). In fact, children are more likely to apply themselves and perform better in school when their parents show an interest in their school work, are willing to assist them with homework, and are willing to hold their children accountable for completion of school assignments. Youths who are not working hard at school may begin to perceive school as valuable when parents actively demonstrate that they value school through involvement.

According to Henderson and Mapp (2002), students' perception of their parents' involvement and expectations are also highly effective and influential in their education. Moreover, students who feel their parents' support for their education and have good communication are more likely to continue their studies past secondary school. Hafiz, Tehsin, Malik, Muhammad and Muhammad (2013) stated that parental involvement may have very essential in school-based activities of their children. These activities may involve contacts with teachers, checking the attendance of children in school, monitoring their activities in school, checking their periodical academic progress reports. All these might be very helpful in higher level academic achievements of children. Parents become more concerned about the learning opportunities that secondary schools provide.

Statement of the Problem

Within the family, the strength of parental monitoring modulates children's behaviour patterns and attitudes to norms and values in society, including studying habits. When the family is unable to properly monitor or supervise, the child will not develop positive behaviours as well as show interest in studying. A lot of parents are not fully aware that they serve as teachers in the home and do not realize the influence they exert on their children, particularly to help develop studying habits. When supervision is not involved, a child may collapse under the pressure of the academics, losing interest in studying and learning negative and improper ways of achieving life goals. The harsh economic climate in Nigeria today has made the academic supervision and monitoring of children by their parents to reduce, as parents have to give less attention to family, but focus more on making ends meet. Each of these creates gaps in meaningful monitoring of the child by parents and obviates parental role models with attendant consequences of juvenile delinquency by the youth (Fawole, 2010). The continued low academic performance recorded by secondary school students in Nigeria is definitely a cause for concern among parents, teachers, researchers and the society at large. We must therefore

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find ways to totally understand this by examining the influences of parental monitoring as primary sources for motivating the child to study.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine parental involvement in homework of secondary school children in Ilorin and the effect on academic performance. Other specific objectives include:

1. The extent to which parents show interest in their children's homework.
2. The extent to which parents show interest in the academic performance of their children.

Methodology

Questionnaires were used to obtain data from the respondents. The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Ilorin South, Nigeria. Six (6) public secondary schools were selected in Ilorin South, along the axis of Sabo-Oke to Gaa-Akanbi namely: Saint Anthony's Secondary school, Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) College, Government Secondary School (GSS), Government Day Secondary School, Tanke, Government Day Secondary School, Gaa-Akanbi. The population of the study was a total 1500 students, in their 5th year (Senior Secondary II). purposive sampling was employed, in which the total population participated. However, out of the total number of questionnaires distributed, only 1199 were returned valid and found useful for the research. Data presented in frequency counts and simple percentage and were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the hypothesis formulated.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender of Students		
Male	545	45.5
Female	654	54.5
Total	1199	100
Mother's Education		
Low	239	19.9
Medium	623	51.9
High	335	27.9
Total	1199	100
Father's Education		
Low	137	11.4
Medium	700	58.4
High	362	30.2
Total	1199	100

Source: Researchers' Survey 2016

Note: Low (No Formal Education and Primary Education); Medium (Secondary and Post-Secondary); High (Degree Graduates and Postgraduates)

Table 1 above shows the demographic data of respondents under study. Based on gender of the respondents, 45.5% of the respondents were males while 54.5% of the respondents were females. Furthermore, on the level of mother's education, 19.9% of the respondents revealed that their mothers either had no formal education or primary education; also 51.9% of the respondents further revealed that their mothers had either secondary or post-secondary education; however 27.9% of the respondents revealed that their mothers had degree or postgraduate education. On the level of father's education, 11.4% of the respondents revealed that their father either had no formal education or primary education; 58.4% of the respondents indicated that their father either had secondary or post-secondary education while 30.2% of the respondents revealed that their father had either degree or post-graduate education. From the analysis above, it is however revealed that majority of the respondents were females, and the level of their parents' education falls in the medium category i.e. secondary or post-secondary level of education.

Table 2: Parental involvement in students' academic activities

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
My parents review my school assignments		
Always	760	63.3
Often	339	28.3
Sometimes	80	6.7
Never	20	1.7
Total	1199	100
My parents show interest in my academic performance		
Always	879	73.3
Often	300	25.0
Sometimes	20	1.7
Never	0	0.0
Total	1199	100

Researchers' Survey 2016

Table 2 above shows the information of parental involvement in students' academic activities. It shows a vast majority (63.3%) of the respondents indicated that their parents always review their assignments compared to (28.3%, 6.7%, and 1.7%) of them who revealed that their parents often, sometimes and never review their assignments. On the hand, a significant majority (73.3%) of the respondents revealed that their parents always show interest their academic performance at school whereas (25.0% and 1.7%) of the respondents stated that their parents often or sometimes showed interest in their academic performance. This showed that majority of the respondents' parents are more interested in the academic performance of their children at school.

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Table 3 Summary of Students' Performance in Previous Promotional Examination

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	394	32.9
Pass	657	54.8
Failed	148	12.3
Total	1199	100

Researchers' Survey 2016

Table 3 above reveals the summary of students' performance in previous promotional examination as collated from the research areas. It is evident that overwhelming majority (87.7%) performed better in the previous promotional examination compared to (12.3%) of them that failed in the promotional examination. This performance may be traced to the involvement of their parents in their assignments and academic progress at school.

Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis for this study states that there is a significant effect of parental involvement in homework on academic performance of senior secondary school students

Table 4: ANOVA Results Comparing Parental Involvement in Homework and Students' Academic Performance

Source	Df	Sum of Square	Mean Square	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio	Sig.
Between groups	2	152.33335	76.1667	4.9639*	3.00	.013
Within groups	1197	183671032	15.3443			
Total	1199	18519.4367				

Further Discussion of Findings

The ANOVA results of the hypothesis tested revealed that there is a significant effect of parental involvement in homework on academic performance of senior secondary school students. This is evident where F-ratio (4.9639) with degree of freedom (2, 1197) is greater than the critical F-ratio (3.00) i.e. ($p < 0.05$). Research has indicated that there are positive academic outcomes stemming from parent involvement ranging from benefits in early childhood to adolescence and beyond (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Patrikakou, Weissberg, Redding, & Walberg, 2005). Parent involvement remains a strong predictor of academic achievement even for high school students. It is important to debunk the popular myth that parents' influence over their children withers as they enter puberty. Furthermore, Trothman (2001) pointed that parent involvement was designed to create a partnership that allowed for greater collaboration between home and school for the expressed purpose of improved student outcomes. It was intended to enhance the school's capacity to understand and appreciate values and cultures of families and be more effective in meeting student needs. Parents' involvement in education is important

because it adds value to the educational development of students of all ages and populations (Montesinos, 2004).

The outcome of this study is also supported by the findings of Fan (2001), Driesseen et al., (2005), Hong and Ho (2005) and Micki (2008), who revealed that a continued effort of parental involvement throughout a child's education can improve academic achievement and the relationship between parenting styles and their children's performance has shown that parents can have a dramatic impact on their children's performance, often resulting in a vast improvement. In same vein, the Shumox and Lomax (2001), Barnard (2004) also pointed that the academic performance of students heavily depends upon the parental involvement in their academic activities to attain the higher level of quality in academic success. This is achievable when their parents show interest in their school work; willing to assist them with homework, and willing to hold their children accountable for review and completion of school assignments. As a result, students who are not working hard at school may begin to perceive school as valuable when their parents actively demonstrate that they value school through involvement. Furthermore, UNICEF Office of Research (2013) revealed that parental involvement in their children's learning not only improves a child's morale, attitude, and academic achievement across all subject areas, but it also promotes better behaviour and social adjustment. It further says that family involvement in education helps children to grow up to be productive, responsible members of the society. Pinantoan (2013) pointed out the influence of parental involvement on a student's academic success should not be underestimated. The article stressed the importance of support system that a student gets from home is equally important as his brain power, work ethics and genetics which all work in the accomplishment of his goal in life. Morin (2013) conversely pointed that the best tip for school success is to make sure that parents and teachers are working together as allies. Parents play a crucial role in both the home and school environments. In general, parental involvement is associated with children's higher achievements in language and mathematics, enrolment in more challenging programs, greater academic persistence, better behaviour, better social skills and adaptation to school, better attendance and lower drop-out rates (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). In another research conducted by Yusuf et al, (2009) on influence of parenting styles on junior secondary school students' performance in social studies in Ilorin revealed that parenting style did influence students' performance in social studies.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, parental involvement in the academic activities of students is seen as one of the impetus for their academic excellence. Parental involvement is known to be a very important factor in improving the academic performance of students and has been proved in this research to be a determining factor of the academic performance of students in Ilorin public senior secondary schools. Students whose parents are academically driven are likely to have good grades due to their parents' involvement in their school activities. In the light of the outcome of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. There is the need for parents to improve on the cordial relationships with their children, which includes high involvement in the academic work of such children.
2. Educators, counsellors should also involve themselves, as well as encourage parents to do likewise in monitoring, supervising and mentoring of the students.
3. Stakeholders such as Government, parents and educators should also encourage students' involvement in social creative programmes such as clubs and societies within the school curriculum would keep them occupied and not distracted from their individual goals of achievement.

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