

ISSN:2616-1311



UNILORIN Journal of Lifelong Education (UJLLE)



**A JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF ADULT AND PRIMARY EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, ILORIN**

Volume 1 Number 1, 2017.

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CORRELATES OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND PUPILS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN ILORIN METROPOLIS, KWARA STATE

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Abstract

This study determined the correlation between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in literacy and numeracy in Ilorin Metropolis of Kwara State. The correlational survey design was adopted for the study. Three null hypotheses were tested. Three hundred primary five pupils were randomly selected from ten public and private schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Two instruments were developed by the researchers; Parental Involvement Questionnaire (0.86) and Proforma on Numeracy and Literacy were used for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and ANOVA. Findings showed positive and significant relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement of pupils in numeracy and literacy ($r = .669$ and $r = .592$). Based on the findings, it was recommended that schools should strategize on how they can facilitate better partnerships between schools and parents to enable parents play more active roles in their children's education. Also, that government and policy makers should exploit parental involvement as an initiative to improve pupils' achievement particularly in numeracy and literacy by making policies that will further encourage and strengthen parental involvement in children's education.

Keywords: Parent involvement, Pupils' academic achievement, Literacy, Numeracy

Introduction

In past decades, parental involvement in children's education has received considerable attention from many researchers. Involving parents in their child or children's learning provides many opportunities for success. Opportunities for parental involvement in children's learning signify possibilities for healthy children, families and communities. Parental involvement matters for children's achievement, motivation and well-being at school. When a special relationship between parents and professional educators is obtained, in terms of shared aims, good learning progress could take place even in the absence of good practice in the school.

According to Deforges & Alberto (2003) and Howard (2004), 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 behavioural and social adjustment. In all these ways, family involvement in education helps children to grow up to be productive, responsible members of the society. Hardie (2000); Hannon & Nutbrown (2001); Lee and Bowen (2006), observed that family makes critical contributions to student achievement, from earliest childhood through high school. Efforts to improve

children's outcomes are much more effective if they encompass their families. When schools engage parents and pupils, there are significant effects. When parents are involved at school, not just at home, children do better in school and they stay in school longer. Patel (2006) submitted that the most accurate predictor of a child's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which that child's family is able to create a home environment that encourages learning. Also, Marchant, Paulson and Rothusberg (2001); Ferguson (2007) concluded from their studies that parental involvement made a significant unique contribution to explaining the variation in children's academic achievement over and above the effects associated with family background. Regardless of social class, the more parents and children conversed with each other in the home, the more the pupils achieved in school. Jeynes (2007) reported similar findings in a study of high schools and further elaborated by equating very involved parents with very successful students. Children whose parent are involved in their lives shows greater social and emotional development, including greater self-direction and self-control, greater social adjustment, more supportive relationships, greater social competence, greater mental health and tolerance.

Epstein's framework of six types of parental involvement highlights different ways parents can be involved in their children's education to improve their achievements. The framework identified that parents must create home environments that support learning by providing for children's health, nutrition, discipline, and adolescents' needs. Also, school and parents can employ a variety of techniques for communicating about their children's progress, decisions affecting their children, and school programmes in general. These include parent-teacher conferences, phone contact and report cards. Parents' volunteering is also included. Parents who volunteer grow more familiar and comfortable with their children's schools and teachers. Volunteering efforts that tap parental talents enrich school programmes and, particularly in upper grades, facilitate individualized learning. Also, home learning is encouraged. Parents should assist and interact with their children at home learning activities that reinforce what is being taught in school. Schools should aim to increase parents' understanding of the curriculum and the skills their children need to develop at each stage in their schooling. Parental participation in school decision-making is also important. This may be strengthened by including parents in school site councils, parent-teacher associations, and other committees. The last but not the least is parents' involvement through collaboration. Children are provided with more opportunities for learning and for linking school knowledge with real world opportunities. They associate with individuals, other than their parents and teachers, who reinforce the importance of learning (Kohl, Lenga and McMahon, 2000; Edwards and Alldred, 2000; Ferguson, 2007).

Parents must schedule time to visit his/her child's school in order to make children happy and to get feedback from the teachers. Parents can get in touch with teachers in so many ways. Through phone calls, parents can ask teachers about the progress of the child and monitor the child's performance. It can be through SMS, parent can forward messages to the teachers concerning their children. Parent can also get in touch with teachers through Parents and Teachers Association Meeting and can also volunteer to teach or be a trainer or facilitator in his/her child's or children's school. Analysis showed that family social class was the only factor associated with attainment. In another study of parental involvement, Izzo *et al.*, (1999) studied 1205 US children from kindergarten through to grade 3 in a 3-year longitudinal research programme. Teachers rated four forms of involvement; frequency of parent-teacher contact; quality of parent-teacher interaction; participation in educational activities in the home; and participation in school activities.

Most children have two main educators in their lives, their parents and their teachers. Parents are the first teachers and role models for their children and as such, parents have a significant influence on their children's development. It can never be overemphasized that parental attitude and behaviour, firstly

notable at the home front, strongly influence the children's physical, intellectual and socio- emotional development as affirmed by Papalia, Olds & Feldman, Mitchell, 2003; Hill and Taylor, 2004; Sheldon and Epstein, 2005; Mercer, 2009; Konstantia, 2014). Although, most parents do not know how to help their children with their education, with guidance and support, they may become increasingly involved in home learning activities and find themselves with opportunities to teach, to become models for and to guide their children. They discovered that parents who spent time in the school developed relationships with school staff and felt more comfortable addressing teachers when their children were experiencing difficulties.

Early childhood professionals have long recognized the importance of language and literacy in preparing children to succeed in school. Literacy is not only the ability to read and write but also includes ability to view, design, speak and listen in a way that allows children to communicate effectively. Literacy plays a key role in enabling the kind of learning experiences that research shows are linked with academic achievement. For example, it reduces grade retention, increases graduation rates, shapes the future and enhances productivity in adult life (Hunt, 2003; Glickman, 2004). Dorothy (2009) acknowledged that children who fall behind in oral language and literacy development are less likely to be successful readers; and their achievement lag is likely to persist throughout the primary education and beyond. Literacy has been termed the "gateway" to all other knowledge and it has a critical role in the overall development of an individual and the nation at large and seen as an essential tool for lifelong learning (National Literacy Trust, 2001). The skills acquired in literacy can promote the learning of other subjects. Literacy is one of the main academic focus areas in the primary schools and that children must have a solid foundation in reading skills at an early age in order to read more complex books later and be proficient in their understanding. According to Kolawole and Ajayi (2004), parents should provide the enabling environment by playing supportive roles that will complement the classroom and supplying the necessary materials that will encourage the child to read.

When schools encourage children to practice reading at home with parents, the children make significant gains in reading achievement compared to those who only practice at school. An increasingly important view among educators and professionals today is that parents and schools must work in partnership with each other in order to enhance child's literacy ability to succeed, regardless of socioeconomic status or race (Aldred and Edwards, 2000). Also, Hannon & Nutbrown (2001) stated that children tend to develop larger vocabularies, become better reader and perform better in school when parents read to their children. When they tell them stories and sing songs with them, they learn vocabularies and how to use verbal and non-verbal communication pattern, including speech and sign language to express themselves. This can become a reality through a proactive and preventative approach.

Also, numeracy which refers to child's understanding of numbers and their relationship is very important. Numeracy skill is predictive of the acquisition of basic arithmetical skills and mathematical performance in primary education. Brooks & Hutchinson (2000) submitted that well before secondary education, children can learn the ideas and skills that support later, more complex mathematics understanding if the parents provide adequate support and learning experiences in mathematics. We use mathematics in every aspect of our lives at work and in practical everyday activities at home and beyond. The digital age presents us with more numerical data than ever before and puts a premium on numeracy

skills. Schleicher (2013) submitted that decisions in life are so often based on numerical information and that there is substantial evidence that low numeracy skills are associated with poor outcomes. He cited an example of United Kingdom where Pro Bono Economics estimated that poor numeracy cost the economy \$20.2 billion every year. A joint position statement of National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (2010) rightly pointed out that mathematics help children make sense of their world outside of school and helps them construct a solid foundation for success in school. Lee (2013) confirmed that in elementary school, children need mathematical understanding and skills for school success and other important life outcomes. Recognizing the increasing importance of mathematics, pupils need good numeracy skill. Providing children with extensive, high quality numeracy instructions can serve as a sound foundation for later learning in mathematics and also contribute to addressing long term systematic inequities in educational outcomes.

Previous research showed a strong relationship between children's academic performance and parental involvement (Epstein, 2001; Fan and Chen, 2001; Angelis; Theophanuou; Leigh, 2006). The higher the parental involvement, the more children's school performance is better. Perhaps, those studies could not predict the relationship between parental involvement and achievement in particular subjects, there is need to investigate the variable in relation to different subjects offered at primary school level. Numeracy and literacy being core subjects that lay foundation for other subjects should be given more attention and this has necessitated the need to specifically look into the parental involvement in relation to pupils' achievement in numeracy and literacy.

Numeracy and literacy have been seen to be the best protection against unemployment, low wages and poor health. Research confirmed that a country needs a numerate and literate population in order to build a strong economy and compete globally. Also, studies confirmed the complexities of teaching literacy and numeracy and their status as core and foundational subjects to learning of other school subjects. Poor numeracy and literacy are problems that can affect pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Improving pupils' achievement in numeracy and literacy directly contribute to success in school and work, growth in personal and social confidence. Studies have shown that children's motivation and achievement improve when their parents are involved in their education (Lee and Bowen, 2006; Patel, 2006; Konstantia, 2014). Appropriate numeracy and literacy learning objectives have been developed, one of the ways for achieving these aims may be to look into the relationship between these subjects and parental involvement and make use of this to improve the performance of pupils in numeracy and literacy. Although, a wide body of research has demonstrated the beneficial effects of parental involvement on children's school achievement, the available literature did not show investigation into parental involvement and pupils' achievement in numeracy and literacy, specifically, in Kwara State. This research therefore examined the relationship between parental involvement and pupils' achievement in numeracy and literacy in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in numeracy in primary schools in Ilorin Metropolis.
2. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in literacy in primary schools in Ilorin Metropolis.
3. There is no significant influence of educational qualification on parental involvement in pupils' education.

Methodology

This research was a correlational survey type. Correlational study was considered appropriate in

this study as it involved measuring the extent or degree of parental involvement and its relationship with pupils' academic achievement in numeracy and literacy. The population for this study was all public and private schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Ten (10) schools in Ilorin Metropolis were randomly selected. A total number of three hundred (300) primary five pupils were randomly selected from the ten selected schools to participate in this study. A researchers' designed questionnaire titled Parental Involvement Questionnaire (PIQ) was used to elicit information on the degree or extent of parental involvement in education of their pupils. The questionnaire PIQ consisted of five sub-divisions measuring material/emotional support, home discussion, home supervision, school communication and school participation. Each division has five items making 25 items in all. The 4-point Likert scale of Never (N), Sometimes (S), Often (O) and Very Often (VO) pattern was adopted. Also, a proforma was designed to collect scores of pupils in numeracy and literacy. This comprised of school records in numeracy and literacy for three consecutive sessions. The instruments were given to lectures in the College of Education, Kwara State University for face and content validity. Their suggestions were used to improve on the choice of items. PIQ was further subjected to test of reliability by using it on twenty children in one school that has the same characteristics with the target population but was not part of the selected schools in the real study. Using test-re-test, the data were collected within the time interval of two weeks and analyzed with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient, the reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. The data collected for the study were analyzed using Pearson Product Movement Correlation (PPMC), ANOVA analysis, and Scheffe's Post Hoc. All hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance

Results

Research Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in numeracy?

Table 1: Table showing the significant relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in numeracy.

Variable		Parental Involvement	Achievement in numeracy
Parental Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.669
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	350	350
Achievement in numeracy	Pearson Correlation	.669	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	350	350

Table 1 shows the relationship between parental involvement and pupils' achievement in numeracy. It is evident that there is significant relationship ($r = .669$) between parental involvement and pupils' achievement in numeracy. In the light of this result, the hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Research Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in literacy.

Table 2: Table showing the significant relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in literacy

Variable		Parental Involvement	Achievement in literacy
Parental Involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.592
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	350	350
Achievement in literacy	Pearson Correlation	.592	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	350	350

Table 2 shows the relationship between parental involvement and pupils' achievement in literacy. It is evident that there is significant relationship ($r = .592$) between parental involvement and pupils' achievement in literacy. In the light of this result, the hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant influence of educational qualification on parental involvement in pupils' education.

Table 3: Summary of ANOVA analysis showing the influence of educational qualification on parental involvement in pupils' education.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	44662.049 ^a	3	14887.350	255.974	.000	.689
Intercept	209235.265	1	209235.265	3597.607	.000	.912
Educational Qualification	44662.049	3	14887.350	255.974	.000	.689
Error	20123.211	346	58.160			
Total	885359.000	350				
Corrected Total	64785.260	349				

a. R Squared = .689 (Adjusted R Squared = .687)

Table 3 reveals that there is a significant influence of educational qualification on parental involvement ($F_{(3,346)} = 255.974$; $P < .05$; partial $\eta^2 = .689$). The hypothesis is therefore rejected in the light of the result. Educational qualification has the influence of about 69% of the total variance in parental involvement in pupils' education (Partial eta square = .689).

Discussion of Findings

The study examined the relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in numeracy and literacy among primary pupils in Ilorin Metropolis. The result showed a correlation between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in numeracy and literacy. This corresponds with the findings of Crosnoe (2001); Hannon, Nusbrown (2001); Hardie (2001); Angelis et al (2006) Jeynes (2007); Hill and Tyson (2009) that found positive associations between parent involvement and academic achievement. Desforjes (2003) emphasized that even after all other factors shaping attainment have been taken out of the equation, the parental involvement has a positive effect on children's achievement. The finding is also in conformity with Fan (2001) who reported similar findings in his study of high schools and further elaborated by equating very involved parents with very successful students.

This significant relationship between parental involvement and pupils' academic achievement in numeracy and literacy also corroborated the findings of Burcu and Sungur (2009) who reported improved academic achievement in students that enjoy parental involvement. This is also in agreement with Hannon & Nutbrown (2001) who found that parental involvement was significantly related to achievement in both mathematics and reading. On the other hand, the result is not in conformity with Domina (2005) result which indicated that parent involvement is associated with lower levels of achievement or has no effect on achievement.

This indicates that one of the most important things that parents can do is to support the goals and the process of education in their children's schools. It is important that there is a real partnership between the schools and the families. When parents take interest with their child(ren) at home about what is important and energizing to the children at school, it reinforces the notion that school is a great place to be (Marchant et al 2001; Mitchell 2003; Patel 2006; Lee and Bowen 2006; Konstantia 2014). As parents become more involved in their child's school, they begin to develop more confidence in the school.

The result also showed significant relationship in parental educational qualification and parents' involvement in their children education. The finding is in not conformity with Adedigba (2015) who found that the education of the parents do not determine the care and attention parents will give to their children. This result does not agree with the observation of Sclafani (2004) that parents who have gone beyond a high school education are found to be more involved with their infants and children than those who did not finish high school. The assumption here is that many less educated parents simply have more unmanaged stress in their lives, and this stress interferes with ability and opportunity to interact with their child while parents who have obtained further educational opportunities have less stress and most likely making more money with less stress unlike, Also, that the parents with less education do not participate as often in their children's education to some effect because they do not realize the importance of their interaction with schools and they are probably intimidated.

Conclusion

Parental involvement is a major force in shaping pupils' school achievements. The result revealed positive relationship between parental involvement and pupils' achievement in both literacy and numeracy. This study now affirms that parental involvement works for an improved academic achievement and that there are links between parental involvement and pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy. From the earliest years, everything that adults do to support children's language and literacy really counts. Children may have capability to learn and become competent in mathematics and literacy, if the adequate support from their parents is absent, they may not attain these.

Recommendations

In the light of the discussion and conclusion of this research, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Early childhood education professionals can form partnership with the practitioners especially school administrators and classroom teachers so that they will be better equipped to work together in encouraging school-family relationship to improve children's achievement in numeracy and literacy.
2. Also, schools can facilitate better collaboration between schools and parents to foster closer ties between parents and teachers so as to better involve parents in the schooling environment and educate them about the roles they should play in their pupils' education.
3. Government and policy makers should grapple parental involvement as an initiative to improve pupils' performance by making policies that will further encourage and strengthen parental involvement in children's education.

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