



Parental Involvement As A Determinant Of Students' Academic Performance In Agricultural Science In Selected Secondary Schools In Oyo Metropolis, Oyo State

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Abstract

This study was designed to examine parental involvement as a determinant of students' academic performance in Agricultural Science in selected secondary schools in Oyo Metropolis, Oyo State.

The sample for the study consists of eighty secondary school students ranging from junior classes to senior classes in eight randomly selected secondary schools from the four Local Government Areas in Oyo metropolis, Oyo State. For the purpose of data collection, questionnaire were designed for and administered on the students. Data collected were hitherto analysed through the use of frequency percentage and chi square (X^2) test method. The research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance and appropriate degrees of freedom.

The result of the study showed that parental involvement will significantly influence students academic performance, single parenthood will significantly influence students academic performance in Agricultural Science and that parental socio-economic status will significantly influence students academic performance in Agricultural Science.

Keywords: *parents, parental involvement, parenthood, urban, rural, emotion, socio-economic status.*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely recognized that if students are to maximize their potential from schooling, they will need the full support of their parents. Attempts to enhance parental involvement in education should include the parents, educators, governments, administrators and various educational organizations across the states in the country.

Despite the variation in perception of the term "parent" parent is derived from the Latin word "*parents*" which means a caretaker of the offspring in their own species. In humans, a parent is of a child (where child means an offspring of necessarily age) Biological parents consist of the male who sired the child and the female who gave birth to the child. However, some parents may not be biologically related to their children. Therefore, an adoptive parent on the other hand is one who nurtures and raises an offspring of the biological parents but is not actually biologically related to the child. Children without adoptive parents can be raised by their grandparents or other family members. (Wikipedia, the free online Encyclopedia).

Thesaurus, the free online dictionary, also defined the term, "parent" as

- A father or mother, one who begets, give birth to, nurtures and raises a child.
- An ancestor, a progenitor
- An organism that produces or generates offspring,
- A guardian; a protector
- Someone who causes something to come into existence; an originator and
- Material or source from which something is derived

However, the term parental involvement cannot be overemphasized

The definition of parental involvement according to the department of education in the United States, (2004) is, "the participation of parents in regular, two way and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education and are included as appropriate, in decision – making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child. Parental involvement also refers to parental interaction with the school and their children in order to encourage academic progress and offer support with school activities. (Hill and Tyson, 2009). Hoover–Dempsey *et al*, (2005) sees parental involvement as the initiation of home based behaviors such as monitoring home works as well as school based activities such as attending school events and communicating with teachers.

The issue of poor academic performance of students in Nigeria has being of great concern to the government parents, teachers and even students themselves. The quality of education not only depends on the teachers, also in the way at which the parents get involved in the education of their children either effectively or ineffectively. The

underperformance of students is an area of concern for many parents and educators. Although the study of students performing below expectation has a long educational history, it is more productive to consider what motivate students to do well. Students tend to be motivated when they find task meaningful, believe that they have the skills to do it and find their efforts supported by those around them.

Unfortunately, many students do not view their school experiences as meaningful. For instance, they may not find school intellectually stimulating because they have already master the contents as quick as possible, will master the content with time or cannot master it in case of the gifted students, average learners and the less privileged respectively in terms of quick assimilation and learning.

Chen, (2008) is of the opinion that research overwhelmingly supports that parental involvement enhances academic performances. He stressed that academic performance is enhance when parents are involved in their children's education. According to him, the more intensively the parents are, the greater the positive impact on academic performance, Christenson, (2006) also stressed that parental involvement leads to better classroom behavior. Parental involvement not only enhances academic performance but it also has a positive influence on student attitude and behaviour.

A parent's interest and encouragement in a child's education can affect the child's attitude towards school, classroom conduct, self esteem, absenteeism and motivation. According to Comer, (2006), parents' interest in, and support of their children's school help reinforce students' sense of belonging to school and their identification with teachers and other school personnel. Clark, (2003), also noted that parent-initiated contacts with their children's school help strengthen students' identification with teachers. In examining the interaction among parental involvement, teacher's support and students' sense of belonging to school, students whose parents are involved in their school activities are better able to take advantage if the benefits of supportive teachers or school environments for their academic performance.

Therefore, one can emphatically conclude that the effect of parental involvement in the academic performance of students cannot be overemphasized.

There has been many studies on the relationship between parental influence and students' academic performance, regrettably enough, there has been a very few available literature dealing specifically with a study of parental involvement as a determinant of students' academic performance in secondary schools in both rural and urban areas with particular reference to Oyo Local Government Areas.

It is expected that, with the growing body of literature and increasing number of researches on student academic performance and parenting, an agreed definition of parental involvement would be easy to come by.

Parental involvement refers to the amount of participation a parent has when it comes to schooling and her child's life. Some schools foster healthy parental involvement through events and volunteer opportunities, but sometimes it's up to the parent to involve themselves with their children's education.

On this same issue of parental involvement, Jeynes, (2007) studied one thousand, two hundred and five (1,205) united states children from kindergarten through to grade 3 in a 3 year longitudinal research programme. He rated four forms of involvement, namely; frequency if parent-teacher contact; quality of parent-teacher interaction, participation in educational activities at home and participation in school activities. These factors as well as family background variables were examined to find any relationship they might have with school environment as indexed by school grades.

Consistent with other studies, Jeynes, (2007) showed that all forms of parental involvement declined with child's age and that involvement in the home predicted the widest range of performance variance. In another longitudinal study, Paulson, (2004) showed that family support and the quality of parent/child relationships significantly predicted school adjustment in a sample of 159 young United States' adolescents (aged 10 to 12) followed in a two year longitudinal study.

Parental involvement clearly and consistently has significant effects on pupils performance and adjustment which for outweighs other forms of involvement. The question is, why is parental involvement so significant and how does it promote performance and adjustment. The broad answer to these questions seems to be that it depends on the age of the child. For younger pupils, parenting provides the child with a context in which to acquire school related skills and to develop psychological qualities of motivation and self worth. For older children, the specific skills component seems to be less salient and the motivational component assumes increasing importance.

Findings have demonstrated that parent's involvement in the education of the children has been found to be of benefit to parents' children and schools (Tella and Tella, 2003). Rasinki and Fredrick, (1988) concluded that parents play an invaluable role in laying the foundation of their children's learning; Zang and Carrasquillo, (1995) also similarly remarked that when children enjoy nurturing and moderate competitive kinship. A foundation for literacy is built with no difficulty.

Cotton and Wikelund (2005) ably capped it by asserting that the more intensively parents are involved, in their children's learning; the more beneficial are the achievement effects. Thus, it is believed that when parents monitor home work, encourage participation in extracurricular activities, are active in parents – teachers associations, and help children develop plans for their future; children are more likely to respond and do well in school.

Based on the result of sixty-six studies, Henderson and Berla, (1994) were of the opinion that repeated evidence had confirmed that the most accurate predictor of student achievement is the extent to which the family is

involved in the child's education, and not the family's level of income. As a matter of fact, Mc Millan (2000) noted that parental pressure has a positive and significant effect on public school performance. This becomes particularly obvious when the exactness of the parental pressure is brought to bear on the children's academic performance.

Similarly, Schickedanz (1995) also reported that children of passive parents were found to perform poorly academically. Valez in Ryan (2005), reported that academic performance is positively related to having parents who enforce rules at home. The obviousness of the research finding reported, in this study is that family involvement improves facets of children's education such as daily attendance, student achievement, behaviour and motivation.

It is on this note that it was expected that parent involvement would have a large role in children's performance. The foregoing, have shown that one of the greatest barriers to high academic achievement for a good number of students is lack of parental involvement in children's education. In sum, research has shown that parents do want to get along with their children's education knowing fully well that such involvement could promote better achievement. However, parents need a better little direction as to how they can effectively do this.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to affirm the enhancement of academic performances of students in agricultural science in secondary schools. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the influence of parental involvement on students' academic performance in Agricultural Science
2. Investigate the influence of single parenthood on the academic performance of students in Agricultural Science.
3. Examine the influence of parental socioeconomic status on the academic performance of students in Agricultural Science.

1.2 Research Hypothesis

The following research hypotheses were generated to guide the study.

- H₀₁ Parental involvement will not significantly influence students' academic performance in Agricultural science.
- H₀₂ Single parenthood will not significantly influence students' academic performance in Agricultural science.
- H₀₃ Parental socioeconomic status will not significantly influence students' academic performance in Agricultural science.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Among the descriptive research type like case study and development study, survey type of research was made us of to select a very big faction of the system due to largeness of the target area. The survey was them made within the system concerning the opinions of secondary school students about the level at which their parents get involve in their education.

The study population was made up of all secondary school students in the four local government areas of Oyo town, Oyo State, Nigeria. It included all secondary school students ranging from both private to public schools in the rural and urban areas of the study area and from junior to senior secondary schools.

The sample for the study consisted of eight secondary schools randomly selected from the entire population. The name of the secondary schools considered for the purpose of this study in the study area in question was written on a separate sheet of paper. Separating schools in the rural area from the schools in the urban area, the sheets of paper were folded and mixed thoroughly. At a time, one school were picked from each pool (rural secondary schools' pool and urban secondary schools' pool) with replacement to ensure that all schools have equal chance or opportunity of being selected. As a result, four schools were selected from each pool resulting in eight secondary schools from the study area and these school serving as the sample for this study.

The sampling ratio for rural secondary schools to urban secondary schools is therefore one to one. That is, 1:1. This study also made use of ten students in each school implying that eighty students were involved in this research work.

The research instrument used for collecting data for this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of five sections with various items embedded in each section.

Section A is a demographic questionnaire with questions regarding the respondents' age, gender, school, religion e.t.c

Section B consists of ten items measuring the level of respondents' interest and achievement in Agricultural Science. Item such as "Do you have special interest in Agricultural Science" is typical of and example or representative of this section.

Section C is made up of ten items. The items in this section measure to what extent does the level of parental involvement influence the performance of students in Agricultural Science,

Section D is also made up of ten items measuring to what extent does single parenthood influences students' academic performance in Agricultural Science.

Section E, the final section contains ten items measuring to what extent does parental socio-economic status influence the performance of students in Agricultural Science. Item like 'I perform better academically because my

parents are gainfully employed” is a typical representative of this section.

Questionnaire for this study was administered to eighty students of Agricultural Science in the selected secondary schools through their class teachers. The teachers and the researcher informed the respondents that the purpose of the questionnaire was to know how influential parental involvement is in a child’s education. The respondents were also informed that the instrument had nothing to do with either personality or their academic performance and that all responses would be treated with all confidentiality hence implore them to fill the instrument frankly.

The questionnaires already filled were retrieved personally by the researcher. The completed questionnaires were analyzed through the use of simple frequency percentages and Chi-Square test to determine the performance of students in Agricultural Science.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 HYPOTHESES 1:

Parental Involvement will not significantly influence students’ academic performance in Agricultural Science.

Table 1

N	Table Value	Calculated (X^2)	Df	Level of significance
80	15.51	36.82	8	0.05

Source: Author’s Computation, 2015.

From table 1, it is evident that table value of 15.51 is less than the calculated value 36.82 at 0.05 level of significance and 8 degree of freedom. Therefore the hypothesis is rejected.

Thus, is parental involvement will significantly influence students’ academic performance in Agricultural science.

3.2 HYPOTHESIS II.

Single parenthood will not significantly influence students’ academic performance in Agricultural Science.

Table 2

N	Table Value	Calculated (X^2)	DF	Level of significance
80	9.49	10.67	4	0.05

Source: Author’s Computation, 2015.

From table 2, it is evident that the table value, 9.49 is less than the calculated value 10.67 at 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Therefore, single parenthood will significantly influence students’ academic performance in Agricultural Science.

3.3 HYPOTHESIS III.

Parental Socio-economic status will not significantly influence students academic performance in Agricultural Science.

Table 3

N	Table Value	Calculated (X^2)	DF	Level of significance
80	15.51	36.81	8	0.05

Source: Author’s Computation, 2015.

From table 3, it is evident that the table value, 15.51 is less than the calculated value 31.38 at 0.05 level of significance and 8 degree of freedom. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Therefore, parental socio-economic status will significantly influence students’ academic performance in Agricultural Science.

The analysis of this study shows varied results regarding the influence of parental involvement on students’ academic performance. It was found out that the level of parental involvement will significantly influence students’ academic performance in Agricultural science. Students whose parents are involved in these education tend to perform better academically compared to students whose parents are not involved in their education. This is in line with the opinion of Chen (2008) who opined that parental involvement enhances academic performance. He also stressed that academic performance is enhanced when parents are involved in their children’s education and that the more intensively the parents are, the greater the positive impact on academic performance. The first research objective which aimed at examining the influence of parental involvement on students’ academic achievement revealed that parents’ contributions like helping to develop good study habit, encouraging to get good grades, checking to see if the child had homework, attending parents–teachers association meetings and demonstrating support for Agricultural practical activities; all have positive influence on the academic achievement of students in Agricultural Science.

Also, the second research objective which aimed at investigating the influence of single parenthood on students’ academic achievement revealed that single parenthood have a negative influence on students’ academic achievement as students raised by both parents tends to perform better academically compared to those reared by a single parent or those raised outside wedlock. Ortese, (1998), affirmed that a child from homes where the father and

the mother are present will be taken care of, socialized in the best way possible and achieve better academically. It was also found out that humiliation comes upon a child as a result of single parenthood.

Moreover, the last research objective examining the influence of parental socio-economic status on students' academic achievement in Agricultural Science showed that students with high socio-economic status performs more better academically compared to those with low parental socioeconomic status. It is also found out that parents with high socio-economic status tends to assist their children in acquiring or procuring the needed educational resources, equipments or materials such as practical notebooks, writing pads, textbooks, farming equipments e.t.c. These resources are difficult to acquire by parents with low socio-economic status thereby posing significant problems on the students' academic achievement. This also correlates with the opinion of Henderson and Berla (1994) who concluded from their study that higher income families tend to do better at school.

In conclusion, parental socio-economic status as well as single parenthood has an important role to play in the academic achievement of a child but the level of parental involvement has more roles to play in the academic performance of a child. Irrespective of the child's background and socio-economic status, the more involved the parents are in a child's education, the greater the academic performance of the child.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

It is of great importance to note that parental involvement policies must be developed jointly with schools and parents. Parental feedback about the parental involvement policies has to be encouraged and parents must have a say in the use of the parental fund. Undoubtedly, parental involvement in a child's education is an advantage that money cannot buy. All parents, regardless of economic status, race, or primary language, can do simple things like asking a child about school or attending a parent – teacher meeting. Being involved in your child's education not only helps your child to achieve more academically but it also lifts teacher's morale and provides you with the satisfaction of making a difference in your child's education.

In line with Adelodun's (2013) opinion, parents who wish to get involved in their children's education should note that decoding and imbibing one or two of the following recommendations would help make a difference in their children's academic performances.

- Help your children work on homework assignments
- Organize and monitor a child's time.
- Tutor a child with materials and instructions provided by teachers.
- Read with your children and talk with them about the books and stories you read.
- Attend and actively support school activities.
- Attend parent-teachers' association meetings.
- Talk with your child about school on a daily basis
- Be an advocate for your child to make sure that the child's needs are being met.
- If a problem arises, address it quickly by requesting a meeting with the teacher.
- Advise the teacher of any issues at home that may affect the child's school performance.
- Encourage your child on successes and support them on poor performances.
- Participate in PTA or other parent organizations, school advisory councils, or committees

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