THE EXTENT FAMILY BACKGROUND AND PARENTAL WORK ENVIRONMENT AS DETERMINANT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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Abstract

The study investigated on *extent family background and parental work environment determine academic performance of secondary school students in Nsukka Local Government. The study adopted descriptive design. The population of the study made up of all 14,784 senior secondary school students (SSS 1and 2) in 16 public secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. A sample of 339 students which comprise of 174 male and 164 female were drawn from the population using stratified purposive random sampling technique. Two instruments were used for data collection; Family Background Questionnaire (FBQ) and parental work environment Questionnaire (PWEQ). The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha technique and the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.93 and 0.71 respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions. The study found that to a high extent family background and parental work environment determine academic performance of secondary school students in Nsukka Local Government. The study recommended among others that the students should be grouped based on their family background during teaching and learning process and appropriate teaching method that suit each of the group should be applied.*

Keywords: Family background, parental work environment, academic performance

Introduction

A large number of students have records below appreciable grades. This has slowed down the rate of education progress and development in the country. Parents, teachers, curriculum experts, school counsellor, opinion makers and relevant stakeholders have also expressed considerable concern about this poor performance in external examination. Many informed Nigerians, government, educationist, parent, teachers, curriculum, expert, evaluators and the public alike are deeply worried and have expressed considerable concern over the deteriorating students' performance in public examinations as well as poor performance in schools Nsukka Local Government inclusive (Agulana, 2019). The academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria is influenced by various factors. These factors include peer influence (Harup, 1996), community resources (Henderson & Berla, 2002), cultural background (Ogbu, 1992), class size (Krueger, 2003), teacher quality (Rivkin, Hanshek & Kain 2005), family structure (Amato, 2001) including family background and work environment. Families with higher socioeconomic statud tend to provide better educational resources which can enhance academic performance (Sirin, 2005). In the same vein, parents with jobs that require higher levels of education and skills tend to provide a more supportive learning environment and value education more (Parcel & Dufur, 2001). According to a report by Federal Ministry of Health, nutrition plays a significant role in academic performance. The report showed that a significant portion of primary and secondary school students in Nigeria are either undernourished, which can negatively affect the cognitive abilities and academic performance (Adebayo, 2018). Furthermore, parental background has also been found to be a key determinant of students' academic performance in Nigeria (Ajayi, 2006), Nsukka Local Government inclusive. This is supported by several studies, which have found that factors such as parental occupation, education level, and social status can have a positive impact on students' academic performance (Nnorom, Ezenwagu & Nwankwo, 2020).

These factors represent family background of the students. According to Majorbants (2016), family background varies in many aspects such as the parents' level of education, economic status, occupational status, religious background, attitudes, values, interest, parents' expectation for their children, and family size. Families with high socioeconomic status, do more in preparing their children for school because they typically have access to wide range of providing their young children with high quality child care, books and encourage children in various learning activities at home. They also have easy access to information regarding their children's health as well as social, emotional and cognitive development Ogbugo-Ololube (2016) stated that children with highly educated parents do fairly well in schools than those with less educated parents Academic performance is essential to get promoted to the next level in school. The extent to which students, parents and teachers actively engage in educational process predicts how likely the students will graduate (Burrus & Roberts 2012).

These highly educated parents sometimes find themselves in good work environment to give their children quality education. Quality education does not happen by chance, it is a product of an effective teaching and learning process, coupled with effort of the teacher, the school, students, parents and their various home environments (Elujekwute, 2019). Edith (2013) emphasized that a child is affected negatively if he/she comes from an economically disadvantaged family. Ogodo (2012) also agreed that family characteristics are major source of disparity in student's educational outcomes. Ahamad and Najeema (2013) asserted that students whose parents are educated score higher on standardised tests than those whose parents were not educated at secondary school level in a metropolitan city of Pakistan. Awodi (2017) noted that most Nigerian students at every level of education sponsor their education by engaging in various kinds of works like prostitution, keke driver, daily pay labourer, security guard, recharge card selling, fuel attendant and casual worker. Ogunsola and Adewale (2012) also agreed that educational qualification of parents is a significant factor that affects the academic performance of students. Lacour and Tissington (2011) who discovered that low achievement is closely connected with lack of resources.

The goal of every secondary school student is to have good academic performance in school. Academic performance as opined by Russon and Wanous (2016) refers to successful accomplishment or performance in a subject area. It is indicated by grades, marks, and scores of descriptive commentaries. Also, the academic performance of students can be measured by taking records of their grades after evaluation or final examinations. When a student scores an 'A,' such a student can be said to be performing well or better than when he or she scores 'E' or 'F.' Udoukpong, Emah, and Umoren (2012) pointed out some factors that are capable of determining the academic performance level of students in a particular subject or course of study. These factors include school factors, teacher's qualification, instructional materials, availability of learning facilities, student's characteristics, and availability of teachers, students to teacher ratio, and parental motivation, among others. Academic performance of students is key feature in education. According to Ogbemudia and Aiasa (2013) academic performance is considered to be centre around which the whole education system revolves.

Academic performance of the student is what determines how well the student can perform both internally and externally in terms of examination. However, Obem (2015) observes that about 93% of secondary school leavers in any given year do not qualify to gain admissions into higher institution for university education. This is because according to Samase (2015) in Nigeria, yearly there is a below average performance of thousands of students in examination conducted by National Examination Council (NECO) and West African Examination Council (WAEC) where only 20% of the candidates pass at acceptable credit level. Yet, every parent wants his or her child to do well in their academics, imbibe acceptable norms, value and attitude of the society. No parent is happy to see his or her child live contrary to the norms of the society (Omoyajowo, 2019).

Theoretically, the study adopted social cognitive theory from Bandura 1977. The theory proposes that people learn and develop through observing, imitating and modelling

others behaviour. In relation to this study, parents' behaviour, attitudes, and values towards education can significantly influence their children academic performance. More importantly, children learn by observing their parents' behaviour, including their work ethic, study habits, and attitudes towards education. Parents therefore, serve as model for their children, and their behaviours and attitudes towards education can shape their children's academic aspirations and motivation.

Statement of the problem

The poor performance of secondary school students in external examinations like WAEC and NECO has become a concern to the teachers, parents and other education stakeholders. However, public secondary schools in Nigeria including Nsukka Local Government by its design do not take into consideration some factors before apportioning blames to the students in their performance. Such factors like family background and parental work environment are not considered before setting examinations to the students. Some students come from poor family background with low education value; some of these students have parents that are not working at all. Some parents do not place value to education which negatively may affect the performance of a student. Yet in time of examination, every student is placed at par where every student is expected to perform well without due consideration of the factors that can either positively or negatively affect the academic performance of the students such as family background or parental work environment. This study deemed it necessary to ascertain how family background and parental work environment determine academic performance of secondary school students.

Purpose of the study

The study aimed at investigating family background and parental work environment as determinants of academic performance of secondary school students. Specifically, the study has two objectives:

1. To investigate the extent family background determines academic performance of secondary school students.
2. To investigate the extent parental work environment determine academic performance of secondary school students.

Research Questions

Based on the specific purposes this study, the following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does family background determine academic performance of secondary school students?
2. To what extent does parental work environment determine academic performance of secondary school students?

Literature Review

Family background is the bedrock of children's psychological development, social relations, moral advancement, and socio-economic attainments. Family setting and background play important role in strengthening or upsetting student's academic performance (Akinleke, 2017). This is because children from home with low socio-economic status are at a greater risk of hunger, homeless, sickness, physical and mental disabilities, violence, family stress and educational failure (Khagendra, 2020). Family background affects children's learning behaviours and academic achievement in important ways, as they are the primary and most significant environments that the children are exposed to. Since the family is the original take-off point of any human being, it then indicates that the education of the child must start at the home and then extend to the larger society (Adubi, 2018). This larger society could be work environment.

Parental work environment have been shown to have an important influence on student's academic performance. Parental work environment refers to the physical, social, and

psychological conditions of the workplace that affect parents' ability to manage their work and family responsibilities, and ultimately, impact their children's well-being and academic performance (Parke, 2002). Dzever (2015) has pointed out that the academic performance of any child cannot be separated from the home environment. It was found that as the quality of home environment deteriorates the level of motivation as deteriorates and academic advancement is low (Thind & Jaswal ,2016). The home environment plays a very significant role in students' personal growth. Chukwudi (2013) states that parents, who provide a warm, responsive and supporting healthy environment, encourage exploration and learning materials accelerate their children's intellectual development. Students need stable, supportive, social environment and access to learning resources within the home to enhance cognitive, emotional and physical development. Alternatively, unstable, noisy, chaotic home environment have negative effects on children health and academic performance. Douglas (2012) states that children are motivated to work on activities and learn new information and skills when their environment are rich in interesting activities that arouse their curiosity and offer moderated challenges.

Academic performance, Akinsanya, Ajayi and Salomi (2011) refers to the level of achievement or learning outcome of students. Kang (2011) states that academic performance is the knowledge gained which is assessed by marks by a teacher and or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specific period of time. Eshetu further adds that these goals are measured by using continuous assessment or examination results. Khan, Begum and Imad (2019) opine that the academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution. Academic performance of students has an influence on the socio-economic development of a country. Akinleke (2017) states that in Nigeria, researches have shown that students' academic performance is declining at a disturbing rate.

Methods
The study adopted the descriptive design. The population of the study made up of all 14,784 senior secondary school students (SSS 1and 2) in 16 public secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. A sample of 339 students comprising of 174 male and 164 female were drawn from the population using stratified purposive random sampling technique. Two instruments were used for data collection; Family Background Questionnaire (FBQ) and Parental Work environment Questionnaire (PWEQ). The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha technique and the reliability coefficient obtained was 0.93 and 0.71 respectively. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer research questions.

Result
1. **Research Question one**: To what extent does family background determine academic performance of secondary school students?

Table 1: Mean rating of the extent family background determines academic performance of secondary school students.

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Students' high Parental education background helps the students to perform better in school.	3.35	1.83	HE
2	When parents Fail to pay more attention to the student at home the performance of the student may become poor.	3.51	1.87	HE
3	Poor student – parent's relationship may results in poor performance of the students.	2.99	1.73	HE
4	When there is availability of social amenities at home academic performance of students improves.	3.15	1.77	HE
5	The Type of food (either balance or unbalance) affects students' academic performance.	2.90	1.70	HE
6	Parents with limited education may not be able to provide adequate support with homework.	3.71	1.78	HE

7	When children are constantly sent on errands instead of allow to read and study at home they may poorly perform as students	2.65	1.62	HE
	Grand Mean	3.18	1.75	HE

Table 1 revealed the respondents mean rating and standard deviation of the extent family background determines academic performance of secondary school students. The responses of item one to Seven in the questionnaire were analysed and the study revealed that family background determine secondary school students' academic performance in Nigeria. (The grand weighted mean was 3.18, and the SD stood at 1.75). This shows that to a high extent family background determines academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria.

Research Question Two: To what extent does work environment determine academic performance of secondary school students?

Table 2: Mean rating of the extent Parental work environment determines academic performance of secondary school students.

S/N	Item Statement	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The occupation of the parents determines academic performance of students.	3.71	1.78	HE
2	Income of the parents is the major determinant of students' performance.	2.65	1.62	HE
3	Parents who work long hours may have limited time to help with homework.	3.20	1.78	HE
4	Parents with unstable work schedules may have difficulty establishing a regular routine for their children.	3.51	1.87	HE
5	Sending students home by the schools because their parents fail to pay school fees on time also contributes to poor academic performance of students	3.37	1.83	HE
6	When parents are paid regularly in their work place, the students' academic needs are provided to improve their academic performance.	3.09	1.75	HE
7	Parents who experience high levels of job stress may bring their stress home, creating a tense and distracting environment that can negatively impact students' academic performance.	3.22	1.77	HE
	Grand Mean	3.24	1.80	HE

Table 2 revealed the respondents mean rating and standard deviation of the extent work environment determines academic performance of secondary school students. The responses of item one to Seven in the questionnaire were analysed and the study revealed that work environment determines secondary school students' academic performance in Nigeria. (The grand weighted mean was 3.24, and the SD stood at 1.80).

Discussions

The finding showed that the extent family background determines academic performance of secondary school students is to a high extent. This agrees with Ogbugo-Ololube (2016) who stated that children with highly educated parents do fairly well in schools than those with less educated parents Academic performance is essential to get promoted to the next level in school and the turning point of lives of the student is when they get into secondary level of schooling. It also agree with Burrus and Roberts (2012) who opined that the extent to which students, parents and teachers actively engage in educational process predicts how likely the students will graduate. This also is in line with Hill and Tyson (2009) who believed that students whose parents have higher levels of education tend to perform better academically. This is because educated parents are more likely to value education, provide a supportive learning environment and engage in activities that promote academic achievement.

From the findings, work environment to a high extent determines academic performance of secondary school students. This agrees with Dzever (2015) has pointed out that

the academic performance of any child cannot be separated from the home environment. It also validates the assertion of Douglas (2012) who states that children are motivated to work on activities and learn new information and skills when their environment are rich in interesting activities that arouse their curiosity and offer moderated challenges. The study agree with the finding of Heymann (2000) who stated that students whose parents work non- standard hours, such as evenings or weekends, may experience reduced parental involvement and support, leading to lower academic achievement. Conversely, parents who work standard hours may be more available to help with homework and attend school events, leading tp better academic performance.

Conclusion
The study concluded that Family background to a high extent determines the academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria. Again, parental work environment to a high extent determines academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:
1. The students should be grouped based on their family background during teaching and learning process and appropriate teaching method that suit each of the group should be applied.
2. The environment for teaching and learning should be made conducive for every student to learn.

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