

STYLES AS CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG GIFTED UPPER BASIC STUDENTS IN NORTH CENTRAL, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated the relationship between parenting styles and academic achievement of gifted upper basic students in North central, Nigeria. Correlational research design was adopted. The population of the study was 1237 gifted students in the study zone. A sample of 555 gifted upper basic students was used for the study. Parenting Style Questionnaire and Students Academic Achievement Proforma were face validated and used for data collection. Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions while simple linear regression was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings show there were significant: high positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students; moderate positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students; and moderate positive relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. It was recommended among others that the schools should be adequately provided with facilities to encourage gifted students' academic achievement and that seminars and workshops be organized for parents to address the implication of parenting styles on the academic achievement of their gifted children.

Keywords: Parenting, academic achievement, giftedness, students, north central Nigeria

Introduction

Parenting styles have been widely documented as important correlates of students' academic achievement in Nigeria and across Africa. The issue of poor academic achievement of students in Nigeria has been of much concern to the government, parents, teachers and even students themselves. The quality of education not only depends on teachers' but also in the effective coordination of both home and school environments. For gifted upper basic students in North Central Nigeria, the pattern of findings in comparable populations strongly suggests that authoritative/democratic parenting is the most beneficial style for academic outcomes, while permissive styles are least favourable (Adeyeye, 2024; Kumo & Hansa'u, 2025; Nosakhare & Nnamdi, 2024; Meremu & Idoko, 2021).

Academic achievement is the level of grade or scores that a student obtains in class test or internal and external examination after due process of evaluation. Academic achievement refers to the extent to which students meet short- and long-term educational goals, reflecting the level of knowledge, skills, and competencies they have gained through formal schooling and assessments. In educational research, achievement is typically measured using grades, standardized tests, or other valid evaluative tools that indicate the degree to which learning objectives have been accomplished (Houtman & Lent, 2023; Berkley & Chang, 2022). Houtman and Lent (2023) define academic achievement as the attainment of students' educational goals, most commonly evaluated through tests, examinations, or course grades. This perspective situates achievement as an outcome of the learning process that demonstrates a student's mastery of curriculum standards. Similarly, Berkley and Chang (2022) describe academic achievement as the degree to which students,

teachers, or institutions have attained targeted learning outcomes, emphasizing that achievement reflects success in meeting predefined educational standards or objectives. In summary, academic achievement is a multidimensional educational outcome that reflects how effectively learners fulfill curriculum goals through measurable performance indicators. It incorporates not only what students know but also how they apply learned knowledge within academic contexts, offering an overall snapshot of educational success. Academic achievement remains the yardsticks for the placement of students and promotion to different classes in the school system.

This worry has led the researcher to carry out this study to investigate the relationship between school factors and parenting styles of parents on secondary schools gifted students' academic achievement in North central geopolitical zone, Nigeria.

Parenting styles emanating from different homes could be impediments to issues of giftedness among upper basic students. Parenting style is a factor that may help to predict gifted student's academic achievement. Parenting styles are the typical strategies and responses that parents employ, reflecting a multidimensional latent construct that includes dimensions such as warmth, control, autonomy-granting, and discipline (Kassis et al., 2025). Parenting style in this study embraces all the ways parents adopt in order to carry out the parental care of their children. Whether parenting styles determine the relationship between gifted students' academic achievement in upper basic schools in North Central geo-political zone was the focus of this study. According to Pinquart (2016), there are three main types of parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting styles. Authoritative parents are attentive, forgiving and teach their children either gifted or not proper behaviour. For the fact that authoritative parents teach their students proper behaviour, they will equally guide them to develop literacy. In line with the above statement, Dewar (2013) posits that students of authoritative parents are more likely to succeed academically since their parents are guiding them. Authoritarian parents are highly controlling, stress obedience to authority without questioning and discourage discussion. Since such parents discourage discussion, it may be difficult for them to read aloud to their children or recite rhymes with them and this may have a negative effect on their giftedness and academic achievement. Thirdly, permissive parents allow their children to be self-regulated and so they lack boundaries and guidance. Such parents typically find it difficult to monitor and guide their children. Permissive parents allow their children to be self-regulated and so they lack boundaries and guidance. Such parents typically find it difficult to monitor and guide their gifted children's educational progress in school (Pinquart, 2016). These educational progress are referred to as academic achievement.

Upper basic students are learners enrolled in the upper basic level of formal basic education, typically corresponding to the junior secondary or junior high school stage of schooling. In many educational systems—particularly within the Nigerian Universal Basic Education (UBE) framework—this stage comprises three years of junior secondary education (often called JSS1–JSS3) following primary schooling, forming the final phase of the nine-year basic education cycle. Students at this level are generally between approximately 12 and 15 years old, representing early adolescence and significant cognitive, socio-emotional, and academic development. Upper basic students engage in a broad, subject-based curriculum that extends foundational literacy and numeracy skills gained in primary school and introduces more structured content across core academic areas such as English, mathematics, social studies, basic sciences, and technology. The curriculum is designed to foster critical thinking, communication skills, and subject-specific competencies that prepare learners for subsequent secondary education and future socio-economic participation (Akpan, 2021). In

educational research, upper basic students are often studied as a discrete group due to their distinct learning needs and transition challenges. This stage is associated with increased academic demands, as students encounter more abstract concepts and higher expectations for retention, reasoning, and performance across subjects (Arab American University, n.d.). The developmental characteristics of upper basic students include burgeoning cognitive, social, and emotional growth. These students are typically navigating the transition from concrete to more abstract thinking, enhancing metacognitive processes (such as planning and self-regulation), and negotiating complex social dynamics within peer groups—all of which impact their motivation, engagement, and academic achievement.

Gifted students, like those in North Central Nigeria, appear to thrive when parents combine high expectations with emotional support and autonomy granting. Research on gifted learners shows high prevalence of encouragement, reward, acceptance, attention and democratic involvement, and low levels of overprotection, a constellation that aligns closely with authoritative parenting (Wahsheh et al., 2024). Such environments foster self-regulation, motivation and resilience, which mediate the link between parenting and academic success (Adeyeye, 2024). A large meta-analysis of over 300 studies confirms that responsiveness, behavioural control and autonomy support (core features of authoritative style) are associated with better grades, while authoritarian, permissive and neglectful styles are linked to lower achievement, albeit with small effect sizes (Pinquart, 2016).

Statement of Problem

The increase in poor achievement in the sessions' results of gifted students in the study area is worrisome. It appears that gifted students in North Central geo-political Zone is performing below expectation. This was confirmed from the termly results of the junior secondary school section of the gifted schools in the study area. The preliminary investigation carried out in the schools revealed that the result is not wonderful as expected by the parents, school authorities and the ministry of education. The researcher's further enquiries from the teachers revealed that the teachers are also worried on the termly performances of the students. This situation is worrisome. The researcher is worried because of the fact that the students are the future hope of the country for technological advancement and more. The researcher is worried on what could be the reason for this situation in the gifted schools in the study zone. Could the poor achievement be as a result of the factors in the school environment where students spend most of their time? Could it be also the parenting styles parents' adopt in children's upbringing? This worry has led the researcher to carry out this study to find out the relationship between school factors and parenting styles on academic achievement of gifted students in North Central, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the school factors and parenting styles as correlates of academic achievement of gifted students in secondary schools in North Central-Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined the relationship between authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles and academic achievement of gifted students.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students?
2. What is the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students?

3. What is the relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.
- Ho₂:** There is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of students.
- Ho₃:** There is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Methods

The study adopted the correlational research design. It enables the researcher to find out the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. The area of study was North Central, Nigeria comprising Benue, Kogi, Nassarawa, Niger, Plateau, Kwara and Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. The North Central comprises 119 local government areas as follows: Benue 23, Kogi 21, Nassarawa 13, Niger 25, Plateau 17, Kwara 16 and Abuja Federal Capital Territory 6. North Central Nigeria was purposely selected for the study because the area has the highest concentration of gifted schools in the country. The researcher is motivated to carry out this study because based on the internal and external examination results of these gifted schools, for 2017/2018 academic session, the students did not measure up to expectations. The population of the study comprised 555 gifted students in the upper basic schools in the two gifted schools in North central Nigeria. According to available records from the schools for 2020/2021 academic session; Federal Government Academy, Suleja has a population of 200 students for upper basic while School for the Gifted, Gwagwalada has a total of 355 students for upper basic respectively (Federal Unity School Abuja) (Secondary school Unit, 2020/2021 academic session). The sample of the study was the entire population of upper basic students in the study area totaling 555. This is because of their homogenous nature and the population is manageable hence there was no need for sampling (Nworgu, 2015). The instruments for data collection were Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) and Students Academic Achievement Proforma. The questionnaires were developed by the researcher with much insight drawn from literature materials reviewed. The questionnaires that were used for data collection were face-validated by three experts, two from Educational Foundations and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all in the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Cronbach Alpha method was used to compute the reliability coefficient of the instruments that yielded 0.88 for PSQ and was deemed reliable. The researcher and two research assistants used direct method to administer the questionnaire to the students. The research assistants were adequately briefed by the researcher on the modalities for administering and retrieval of questionnaire from the students. The use of research assistants ensured accurate collection of the questionnaire by the respondents. In all, a total of 555 questionnaires were administered and collected giving a 100 per cent return rate. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions. Simple linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlation coefficients of 0.80 and above was regarded as high positive relationship, 0.30 to 0.79 was regarded as moderate positive relationship, while 0.01 to 0.29 was regarded as low relationship and a correlation coefficient of 0.00 was regarded as no relationship (Nworgu, 2015).

Results

Table 1: Relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.974	.949	.949	2.72968

Predictor: Predictors: (Constant), Authoritative Parenting Style

Results in Table 1 show the relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The result shows that the correlation coefficient between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students was 0.974. This means that there was a high and positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Regression	76711.232	1	76711.232	10295.232	.000	S
Residual	4120.481	553	7.451			
Total	80831.713	554				

$\alpha = 0.05$, S = Significant

The result in Table 2 shows the regression analysis of the significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. Result shows that an F-ratio of 10295.232 with associated exact probability value of 0.00 was obtained. This exact probability value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students is therefore rejected. Inference drawn is that, there is a significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Table 3: Relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742	.550	.549	8.10951

Predictor: Predictors: (Constant), Authoritarian Parenting Style

The result in Table 3 shows the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The result shows that the correlation coefficient between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students was 0.742. This means that there was a high and positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The coefficient of determination associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.742 is 0.550. The result indicates that 55.0% of the academic achievement of gifted students is attributed to authoritarian parenting style. This is an indication that 45.0 % of academic achievement of gifted students is attributed other variables order than authoritarian parenting style.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Regression	44464.168	1	44464.168	676.116	.000	S
Residual	36367.545	553	65.764			
Total	80831.713	554				

$\alpha = 0.05$, S = Significant

The result in Table 4 shows the regression analysis of the significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. Result shows that an F-ratio of 676.116 with associated exact probability value of 0.00 was obtained. This exact probability value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students is therefore rejected. Inference drawn is that, there is a significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Table 5: Relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.813	.662	.661	7.03356

Predictor: Predictors: (Constant), Permissive Parenting Style

The result of the study as presented in Table 5 shows the relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The result shows that the correlation coefficient between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students was 0.813. This means that there was a high and positive relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The coefficient of determination associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.813 is 0.662. The result indicates that 66.2 per cent of the academic achievement of gifted students is attributed to permissive parenting style. This is an indication that 33.8 per cent of academic achievement of gifted students is attributed other variables order than permissive parenting style.

Table 6: Regression Analysis of permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Dec.
Regression	53474.273	1	53474.273	1080.923	.000	S
Residual	27357.440	553	49.471			
Total	80831.713	554				

$\alpha = 0.05$, S = Significant

The result in Table 6 shows the regression analysis of the significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. Result shows that an F-ratio of 1080.923 with associated exact probability value of 0.00 was obtained. This exact probability value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students is therefore rejected. Inference drawn is

that, there is a significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Discussion

The result of the study showed that there was a high and positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The null hypotheses which stated that there was no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students was rejected. This study is consistent to the study of Owam et al. (2023) on measuring students' learning outcomes and the emergence of achievers and underachievers. The finding showed that the students whose parents were fully authoritative showed significantly better result than students whose parents were permissive in their action only. The study is consistent to the fielding of Nyarko (2011) on the influence of authoritative parenting style on academic achievement of gifted students in Ghana. The study revealed that authoritative parenting style encouraged the academic achievement of gifted students in the school. This study is in consonance with the study of Baji and Mohammed (2018) on the relationship between parenting study and academic performance of junior secondary school students in Niger State, Nigeria. The study showed that authoritative parenting style had positive relationship with students' academic performance. Thus, the significance of authoritative parenting styles cannot be overemphasized in relation to giftedness of students in schools.

Results in Table 2 showed that there was a moderate and positive relationship between authoritarian in parenting style and academic achievement of gifted student. The finding from test of hypothesis 2 showed that there was a significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students was rejected. The finding of this study is consistent with Khalida & Junaid (2017) on the relationship of authoritarian parenting style and academic performances in school students in Karachi, Pakistan. The study showed that authoritarian parenting style significantly hampers the educational functioning of children. This study is in line with the study of Zahedan et al. (2017) on the influence of parenting style on academic achievement and career path of students at Shiraz University medical sciences Iran. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and educational success. This study is also in tandem with the study of Odongo et al. (2016) on the influence of parenting styles on the adolescent students' academic achievement in Kenyan day secondary schools. The study found out that authoritarian parenting style significantly predicts academic performance of the adolescents. The result indicated that authoritarian parenting style among others did not significantly correlates with students' academic achievement. This goes a long way in painting the clearer picture on the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students.

Result in Table 3 showed that there was a significant moderate and positive relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The finding from the test of hypothesis 3 showed that there was a significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students. The hypothesis of no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement of gifted students was rejected. The finding of this study is in contrast with the study of Obiunu (2018) on the influence of parenting styles on the academic performance of upper basic students in Ethiope East local government area, Delta state. The finding of the

study revealed that there was no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic performance of upper basic students. The study aligns with the finding of Zehedani, et al. (2018) on the influence of parenting style on academic achievement and career path. The study found out that parenting style has significant influence on the academic of students. It further found out that permissive parenting style correlate negatively on students' academic achievement. The finding of the study Echedom et al. (2018) on the influence of authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved parenting styles on the reading attitudes of students in Anambra, State, Nigeria revealed among others that permissive parenting styles has a moderate and encouraging influence on the students reading attitude only if the child is naturally good in reading.

Taken together, the evidence indicates that for gifted upper basic students, warm, structured, and autonomy-supportive parenting is the style most consistently correlated with superior academic achievement. In Nigerian upper basic schools, authoritative parenting—marked by warmth, structure, and clear expectations—is consistently associated with higher achievement scores and better performance indicators (Adeyeye, 2024; Kumo & Hansa'u, 2025; Baji & Mohammed, 2018; Nosakhare & Nnamdi, 2024; Meremu & Idoko, 2021; Obiunu, 2018). Correlational studies in Niger, Benue, Abuja, Delta, Ogun and Cross River States report significant positive relationships between authoritative or democratic parenting and students' academic performance, whereas permissive parenting tends to correlate negatively with achievement (Ali et al., 2023; Kumo & Hansa'u, 2025; Baji & Mohammed, 2018; Nosakhare & Nnamdi, 2024; Meremu & Idoko, 2021; Obiunu, 2018). Some studies also find weak positive or non-significant effects for authoritarian and permissive styles, indicating that their influence is more context dependent and generally less robust than that of authoritative parenting (Kumo & Hansa'u, 2025; Baji & Mohammed, 2018; Obiunu, 2018; Boateng et al., 2020).

Recommendations

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

1. Schools should organize seminars and workshops for the Parents Teachers' Association (PTA) to address the implications of parenting styles on giftedness of students.
2. Stakeholders, government and non-governmental organisations should prioritize interventions that train parents in authoritative strategies (warmth + consistent expectations) and evaluate their impact on student performance.

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