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PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS CO-RELATES OF PUPILS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS IN AWKA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AUTHORITY

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ABSTRACT

The study determined how Parental Involvement Correlates pupils' academic achievement in Mathematics in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Education Authority in Anambra State. Co-relational research design was adopted for the study, three (3) research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprised of 2,377 primary five pupils in 42 public primary schools in Awka South Local Government Education Authority. A sample of 414 primary five pupils was drawn using Multi stage sampling procedure. An adapted and validated parental involvement questionnaire was used for data collection. Cronbach Alpha method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument which yielded coefficients of 0.83. Primary five pupils' academics achievements score in Mathematics were obtained for the study. Pearson product moment correlation and multiple regression analysis were used for data analysis. SPSS version 23.0 was used to analyse the data collected. Findings revealed that a high and positive correlation exists between parental involvement and academic achievement of pupils in Mathematics. The study concluded that the quality of pupils' parental involvement has powerful influence in their academic achievement in Mathematics. The study recommended among others that parents should regularly visit their children in school to observe their children's progress more closely, in other to create a comfortable interaction with teachers for a clear understanding of their children's academic needs in Mathematics.

Keywords: Parental involvement, Academic Achievement, Mathematics, Primary school.

Introduction

Home and its' environ is the first teaching and learning platform for children before going to pre-primary and primary schools. In the Nigerian setting, the home is made up of parents, children, and sometimes extended family members. Parents are the primary facilitators of a Childs 'self-concept, interpersonal skills and sex role behaviour. Operationally, parents are not only earthly caretakers of children but are also home educators who build the character formation of children in their custody; thus parents shape the character and personality of their children through the process of parenting. In the opinion of AI-Barwan, AIbeely and AI-Suleimani (2012), parenting encompasses the provision of children's needs, religious training, and sound education by parents. Also in the same vein, Ahmadu, Emmanuel and Yakubu (2019) view parenting as an act of child up-bringing, child education and parenthood which involves the process of grooming children from infancy to adulthood. According to Vasilyeva and

Sheherbakov (2016) parenting is the act of fostering social norms and certain cultural benchmark in the process of upbringing of a child according to the traditions of a family.

In the context of this study, parenting is a lifelong journey of rearing children, and ensuring their well-being through parental roles and functions. The core principle of parenting is essentially achieved through parental styles and involvement that seeks to promote, monitor, support, protect and encourage children's development and adaptation. Parental involvement refers to a situation where parents are directly involved in the education of their children. Parents get themselves involved intentionally or get involved by the school and the teachers in the learning process of their children as much as they possibly can. In the opinion of Clinton and Hattie (2013) parental involvement does not just refer to parents enquiring about the performances of their children in school, but also taking a role in communicating with their children with the aim of having a healthy relationship with them so that the process of encouraging, mentoring, leading, and inspiring may be genuine.

Before school age, children have the home as their first learning environment, they spend more time with their parents at home coupled with the fact that a child's education starts at birth also underlines the importance of parents' involvement in the academic foundation of their children. One can then infer that, parental involvement comprised parental attitudes, actions style, and events that happen within or outside the school environment to support children's academic development. Parental involvement can also be referred to as the energy effort and actions of parents on the overall being of their children at home or in school.

Parental involvement could be home base or school based. Home –based parental involvement refers to the extent in which parents are involved in their children's education outside the school environment. Vellymalay (2012) opined that parental involvement includes helping the children with homework, talking with them about school activities, encouraging them to attain academic success, and providing structures that are conducive for learning; providing the necessary support and creating the structure for repeating what has been learned at school and home.

In home - based parental involvement, participation of parents in the home work activities of their children is paramount as it is often believed that homework exercises help to retain what children have learnt at school. This is called school based parental involvement; it describes the action of parents towards fostering a partnership with the children's school by attending and participating in the functions and events of the school that can enhance the academic growth of their children. According to Jeynes (2012) school based parental involvement refers to the extent in which parents and teachers collaborate with one another in attempt to improve children's academic outcomes it includes parents volunteering at school functions, participating in school events as well as communicating with teachers and school staff through the Parents Teacher Association, (PTA).This regular communication between parents and their children breeds another type of parental involvement called academic socialization.

Parental academic socialization could be referred to as the effort of parents on the cognitive development of children by identifying the mental capacities and needs of their children.

It is believed that when parents are actively involved in their children's academics, there may be the possibility of success the academic achievement of children in school. Academic achievement is the totality of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a subject matter obtained by learners in institution of learning. Academic achievement is the extent to which children make success in the various academic engagement in primary schools. According to Okoronta and Wadan (2014), academic achievement is the major of knowledge gained through instructional processes usually indicated by examination scores, grades points, average and certification.

In primary school, the academic achievement of a pupil is determined by the grades obtained from internal and external examinations. Academic achievement is the measurement of the mental level of pupils on subjects enrolled at the end of the term or academic session in primary school. In this research, academic achievement comprises of all the academic scores obtained by pupils in an evaluation exercise given to test their knowledge of classroom subject in primary schools and Mathematics is not left out. Core subjects taught at the primary school level include English studies, Mathematics, one of the Nigerian languages and the sciences such as Basic science and technology (BST).

Mathematics is the science of numbers and shapes. Mathematics is not only considered as an important subject in school but is regarded as the father of all quantitative inclined subjects. Mathematics is a practical subject that deals with the counting and measuring of numbers; a practical subject used to solve personal and social problems. Gouba (2008) define Mathematics as subject that deals with logical reasoning and quantitative calculations. Unodiaku (2011) described mathematics as a way of using information, knowledge or shapes and measures and ability to calculate relationships.

The inclusion of Mathematics as a core subject in the Nigerian education system is due to the key roles it plays in promoting science and technology, provision of trained manpower in the applied sciences and commerce and the acquisition of appropriate skills abilities and competence both mental and physical which citizens can use to contribute to the fact that today's society is driven by science and technology. Mathematics was given topmost priority in this study because it is a fundamental subject that has arithmetic and logical reasoning capable of preparing children for the world of innovation; thus it becomes very important to introduce Mathematics early enough in primary school.

Primary school is a school for children between the ages of about five and eleven (Oxford Language dictionary) A primary school, elementary school or grade school is a school for education of children who are between 2 and half to 11 years of age. Primary schooling follows pre-school and precedes secondary schooling. (Lmshero.com) identified primary school as the first kind of school that children go to upon their environment in educational system. Primary schools – also known as

elementary schools, primary schools, or grade schools – are the first tier of compulsory educational institutions designed to teach primary pupils basic education and prepare them for the more advanced level (secondary level). A primary school is where children go to learn the basics of reading, writing, counting, and language. It is where they learn how to interact with each other and with grown-ups and where they figure out what role they will play in life. Additionally, primary education aims to create self- awareness, well rounded, and independent individuals who learn the general knowledge necessary to succeed in secondary education. In this study, primary school is a level of schooling where knowledge is transmitted to young children through direct instruction, in which the teacher talks, demonstrates and the pupils listens and observes.

Having expatiated the related concepts, it becomes pertinent to state that parents' involvement in their children lives and academics can never be overemphasized, especially Mathematics it becomes necessary to investigate Parental involvement as co-relates of pupils' academic achievement in Mathematics in Awka South Local Government Education Authority.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine how Parental involvement as co-correlates of pupils' academic achievement in Mathematics in Awka South Local Government Education Authority. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. Primary school pupils' parental involvement scores in Awka South Local Government Education Authority.
2. Primary school pupils' achievement scores in Mathematics in Awka South Local Government Education Authority.
3. Relationship between pupils' parental involvement scores and their academic achievement scores in mathematics in primary schools in Awka South Local Education Authority.

Research Questions.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the primary school pupils' parental involvement scores in Awka south Local Government Education Authority?
2. What are the primary school pupils' achievement scores in Mathematics in Awka South Local Education Authority?
3. What is the relationship between pupils' parental involvement scores and their academic achievement scores in Mathematics in primary schools in Awka South Local Education Authority?

Research Method

The study adopted co-relation survey design to determine how pupils' parental involvement correlates their academic achievement in Mathematics in Awka South Local Government Education Authority in Anambra state. Three research questions guided the study, the population of the study comprised of 2377 primary five pupils from 42 public primary schools in Awka south Local government education authority. Using multi-stage sampling procedure, a sample of 414 primary 5 pupils

was drawn from the population. Data was collected and an adapted and validated parental involvement questionnaire was used as instrument. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability co-efficient of the adapted family involvement questionnaire was 0.83 and this was obtained using cronbach alpha statistics. Frequency simple range of scores, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis were used for data analysis. The analysis was carried out using SPSS version 23.0.

Presentation of Results

Research question 1: What are the primary school pupils' parental involvement scores in Awka South Local Government Education Authority?

Table 1: **Range of scores on pupils' parental involvement in primary school**.

Range of scores	N	%	Decision
0-44	39	9.8	Low parental involvement
45-49	57	14.4	Moderate parental involvement
60-100	301	75.8	high parental involvement

Table 1 indicates that 39(9.8 %) of pupils with scores ranging from 0 to 44 experienced low parental involvement while 57(14.4 %) of them scored between 45-59 experienced moderate parental involvement creativity and 301(75.8%) of the pupil experienced high parental involvement in Awka South Local Government Education Authority. Therefore, the parental involvement of primary five pupils in their academics is high in Awka South Local Government Education Authority.

Research question 2: What are primary school pupils' achievement scores in Mathematics in Awka South Local Government Education Authority?

Table 2: Range of scores on pupils' achievement in Mathematics primary schools

Range of scores	N	%	Decision
0-44	86	21.7	Poor academic achievement
45-59	288	72.5	Average academic achievement
60 -100	23	5.8	High academic achievement

Table 2 revealed that 86 (21.7%) of pupils with scores ranging from 0 to 44 have poor academic achievement in Mathematics, while 288 (5.8%) of the pupils have high academic achievement in Mathematics in Awka South Local Education Authority. Therefore, the academic achievement of primary five pupils in Mathematics is average in Awka South Local Education Authority.

Research question 3: What is the relationship between pupils' parental involvement scores and their academic achievement scores in Mathematics in primary schools in Awka South Local Education Authority?

Table 3: Pearson r on pupils' parental involvement and their achievement scores in Mathematics

Variances	N	Pupils' parental involvement r	Academic achievement	Remark
Pupils' parental involvement	397	1.00	0.89	
				High Positive Relationship
Academic Achievement	397	0.89	1.00	

Table 3 revealed that the relationship between pupils' parental involvement and their academic achievement in Mathematics in Awka South Local Education Authority is high and positive. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of +0.89 means that there is a high and positive correlation between pupils' parental involvement and academic achievement in Mathematics in Awka South Local Education Authority.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that parental involvement of primary five pupils is high in public primary schools in Awka South Local Government Education Authority in Anambra State. This means that parents from urban and rural areas are serious about the academic success of their children in the in area. The finding of this study is in agreement with Azuji, Christiana, Uzoekwe, Valentina and Ejichukwu (2020) which reported that most primary school pupils scored their parental involvement high in their learning. The high parental involvement in the education of primary five pupils in Awka South Local Government Education Authority of Anambra State could be attributed to the fact that Anambra men and women find time to ask their children questions about their school activities, reviewed homework exercises with them at home and communicate the academic needs of their children with their teachers in primary schools.

Again the finding of the study revealed that primary five pupils' academic achievement in Mathematics was average in Awka South Local Government Education Authority in Anambra State. The finding is line with the study of Tahir, Muhammad, Raffiat, Sidra and Areeba (2020) which reported the majority of learners studying Mathematics are average achievers in the subject. This means that the pupil's academic achievement in primary school Mathematics was neither very good nor poor; rather, the academic achievement was average. The findings of this study in agreement with Azuji, Christiana, Uzoekwe, Valentina and Ejichukwu (2020) which discovered that the majority of the primary school pupils have fair and average achievement in Mathematics. The researchers are of the opinion that pupils' inability to cope with the teaching pace of their teachers during mathematics classes could be responsible for their average achievement in the subject in primary schools.

Furthermore, the study showed a high and positive correlation exist between parental involvement and academic achievement of pupils in Mathematics in Awka South

Education Authority in Anambra State. This means that parents' involvement in the education of their children does not only improve their numeracy skills but also build positive interest and attitude among pupils towards studying Mathematics within and outside the school environment. This finding concurs with the studies of Tiwari and Tiwari (2020) which reported a high and positive relationship between pupils' parental involvement and their academic achievement in school subjects. This means that the higher pupils' parental involvement in academics, the higher primary school pupils will attain academic success in Mathematics and other subjects. The high and positive correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement of pupils in Mathematics could be attributed to the fact that parents' concern about the strengths and weakness of pupils in Mathematics can positively affect their achievement in mathematics. The researchers are of the notion that when parents are involved and also gave their commitment to their children study of Mathematics, it gets primary school pupils motivated to achieve academic excellence in the subject. However, the study disagrees with Azuji, Christiana, Uzoekwe, Valentina and Ejichukwu (2020) which reported that there is low positive relationship existing between the primary school pupils' parental participation in learning and their academic achievements in Mathematics.

Conclusion

Mathematics is the most important subject in primary school because the mastery of the subject among primary school pupils would go a long way in improving their numeracy skills to handle complex mathematical concepts and computations in secondary school and tertiary institutions. In recent years, primary pupils' academic achievement in the subject has been under the microscopic of Nigerian researchers due to the poor performance of pupils. Without doubt, the academic achievement of pupils in Mathematics has been strongly connected to various cognitive and non-cognitive factors. Based on the findings, the study concluded that the quality of pupils' parental involvement has powerful influence in their academic achievement in Mathematics in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Education Authority in Anambra State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings.

1. Parents should regularly visit their children in school to observe their children's progress more closely, in order to create a comfortable interaction with teachers and other school staff for a clear understanding of the children's academic needs in Mathematics.
2. Guidance counsellors should work with pupils during counselling sessions to develop positive attitude, self-discipline, study habits towards Mathematics and other subjects in order to achieve better grades in school.
3. Administrators and teachers of primary school should change their approach and attitude in dealing with parents to enable parents feel welcomed and comfortable in parent – teacher meetings. This will help ensure that parents remain involved in the school activities that concerns their children and draw their attention to the weaknesses

and strengths of their children in Mathematics and also other subjects.

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