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INFLUENCE OF FAMILY SOCIOECONOMIC VARIABLES AND GENDER ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' SELF-ESTEEM IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of family socioeconomic variables and gender on secondary school students' self-esteem in Anambra State. Four research questions and four null hypotheses tested at .05 level of significance guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population study includes 3,890 SSSII students in Awka Education Zone of Anambra State. Population of male SSSII students is 1,692 while the population of SSSII female students is 2,198. The sample of the study consisted of 300 senior secondary school students (SSII) drawn from the population of the study. Stratified sampling technique was used to select subjects for this study. Simple random sampling technique was also used in selecting Awka Education zone from the six education zones in Anambra State. The instruments for data collection were two questionnaires. The first instrument is titled: Family Socioeconomic Variables Identification Questionnaire (FSVIQ) which is developed by the researcher and consists of personal data of students, parental level of education, parental occupation and parental level of income. The second instrument was the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by giving copies of it to two experts in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. For the Roseberg scale, it is already a widely-known and most utilized instrument for measuring self-esteem because it is standardized. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation for research questions and paired sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. T-test is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups. The SPSS version 23 was used to analyze the data. The study revealed that students whose parents have a high level of education have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have a low level of education; students whose parents have a professional occupation have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have a non-professional occupation; and students whose parents have a high level of income have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have a low level of income. The study concluded that family socioeconomic variables influence self-esteem of the students irrespective of gender. The study recommended among others that parents should be more supportive and create conducive environment for their children as this will create help to develop a higher self-esteem of the students especially from the low socioeconomic variable parents.

Keywords: self-esteem, family socioeconomic variables and gender

Introduction

The major role of parents and the school is to understand the learners' needs, share their visions, their hopes and aspirations, their fears in order to assist them in building a successful and enduring life (Aduba, 2019). In Nigeria the family consist of a man, his wife, children and other immediate relations (the extended as different from the nuclear family). The family has among other roles, the responsibilities of socializing and providing the basic needs of the child (Akpobia, & Nidah, 2019). Implicitly, a child's family socio-economic background may impact the child's access to resources and prestige within a community. Socio-economic background implies the social and economic standing of any given family. According to Nwafor (2015), socio-economic background is the relative standing of a family in a society based on its income, power, background and prestige. It can also be the relative position of a family or individual on hierarchical social structure based on access to or control over wealth, prestige and power. Machebe, et al. (2017) explained that family socio-economic background includes family income, standard of house occupied or rented, family size, parental education and level of family stability among other factors.

The secondary school students' background factors are important in the students' life and may determine the academic outcomes and the levels of self esteem. Among the factors that may determine the academic outcomes are the family's socio-economic status, family type and the home location. The family socio economic status is commonly determined by the parental level of education, occupation and income levels. Families with high socio-economic status provide their children with more opportunities at home to build academic skills (Jerald, et al. 2019). Those of low socio-economic status are more concerned with providing basic needs and do not put much emphasis on their children's self-esteem. The economic hardships of parents may interfere with the students' ability to concentrate in their school work and can lead to poor self-esteem (Barry, 2015). Parents are the first teachers of their children. In the light of this, parental education does not only influence students' academic performance but also their self-esteem. To Odoh, et al. (2017), educated parents provide intellectual, economical, psychological and emotional support to their children who in turn make them to be more comfortable and adjusted to their learning development, and this result in high self-esteem. When students have parents who are poorly educated, they might not have adequate academic, emotional and social support from their parents as well as they will lack parental guidance at home, which could influence their self-esteem.

Parental occupation as socioeconomic variable affects the students' self-esteem. Thus, parents' occupation could be a source of academic motivation that help to build and develop the students' self-esteem. Students from parents with high occupation level performed poorly compared to those students from parents low and middle occupation level of parents (Walter, 2018). Parents have informal jobs who are mainly self-employed with job without a guarantee to turnover cannot afford to spend a great deal of time on their children. Highly educated parents with high or low occupation

level had better outcomes compared to their peers whose parents had low educational and occupation level (Walter, 2018). Furthermore, according to Mayer (2015) parents whose financial income level is high can meet their children's needs, whereas parents whose financial income level is low cannot meet their children's educational needs, thereby de-motivating the students' learning. These can create either a high esteem or low esteem in students. Parents' income is also a good parameter for determining the self-esteem of students as parents with high income level can provide all the basic and luxury needs of the students which boost their self-esteem while the parents with low-income level hardly provide the basic needs of the students resulting to students' frustration and low self-esteem. Graetz, (2019) reported that unemployed or low-income parents tend to see themselves as incapable because they cannot meet the needs of their children and families, therefore, leading to low students' self esteem. Usaini and Abubukar, (2015) pointed out that socio-economic background is a most critical variable in the determination of self-esteem, stressing that the opportunity to achieve success is influenced by learning, availability of special help at home, reference materials and tutors.

Self-esteem is simply how a person feels about him/herself and how he/she judge him/her worth. Self esteem is a very important aspect of self development because it is the evaluation of one's competencies as it affects one emotional experience, future behaviour and long-term psychological adjustment. Self-esteem means how people think about themselves, how much they like themselves and if they are satisfied with their achievement, especially how they feel about society, education and family and to what extent their ideal self and actual self are close to each other (Uloko, 2019). Self-esteem is defined by Akpobia and Nidah, (2019) as the extension of values which the information within self-imagination has for a person and it comes from persons belief about all the attributes and features presented in him. Self-imagination has a particular importance for mental health experts because the persons imagination about his personality to high degree determines his image about environment, and these two elements determines his behavioural forms (Lalifaz & Abbas, 2018). Self- esteem is the rate of validity, approval, acceptance and worthiness that a person feels about himself (Vanderzenden, 2018). A sense of self – valuation and self –esteem is a basic need to mental relief and is a need on which our life satisfaction is depended extremely.

In the context of this study, self-esteem is defined as the belief, perception and opinion individuals have about themselves which influences their behaviours and consequently affect their achievements in life. Self- esteem could be high or low. When individuals have high self-esteem, they tend to feel positive about themselves and about life in general. This in turn makes them become able to handle life's challenges better. However, when individuals' self-esteem is low, they tend to perceive themselves and issues of life in a more negative and critical light. A person with high self-esteem perceives himself as better, more capable and of greater worth than someone with low self-esteem. Generally, high self-esteem helps students to view themselves as active and capable persons to bring about changes

through effort and set higher goals which enable them to learn new things. Zoller, and Gerard (2011), emphasized that the best way to improve students' academic achievement is to increase their self- esteem. In the same vein, Uloko, (2019), noted that, high self-esteem plays an important role in academic achievement, social and personal responsibility.

Self-esteem is simply how a person feels about him/herself and how he/she judge him/her worth. Self esteem is a very important aspect of self development because it is the evaluation of one's competencies as it affects one emotional experience, future behaviour and long-term psychological adjustment. It has been observed that children with favourable self-esteem profiles tend to be well adjusted, sociable and conscientious (Sang, 2015). Self esteem fluctuates as the child develops an overall view of themselves within the environment where they are growing up. A student with high self esteem is more emotionally stable, mature and can handle lives' challenges than the adolescent with low self esteem who tends to be more unstable and dependent.

Gender differences have been noted with boys' self esteem being affected by the parental support more than the self esteem of girls (Osokoya, 2012: Okeke, 2018). Gender refers to effects or influences that relate to one being a male or female. The term gender is often used to indicate the distinction between human beings on the basis of masculinity and feminity in relation to their expected roles. Okeke (2018), refers to gender as the social or cultural construct, characteristics, behaviors and roles which society ascribes to females and males. Previous studies reported that there are no distinguishing differences in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills achievement of students in respect of gender in the area of chemistry, mathematics and science (Graetz, 2019). Other studies have revealed that adults whose lives are characterised by poor mental and physical health, poor economic prospects and higher levels of criminal behaviour were more likely to have had low self-esteem in adolescence than their better adjusted and more competent adult counterparts (Akpobia & Nidah, 2019).

It has been observed that students are facing many challenges which include societal disintegration of values and rules. The socio-economic disparities that exist between family backgrounds in the state could have far reaching influence on students' self esteem. People with high self-esteem have a clear sense of what their personal qualities are. They think well of themselves, set appropriate goals and use feedback in a self enhancing manner. People with low self esteem on the other hand have less clear self conception and have a poor self esteem. It is against this backdrop that the study deemed it necessary to investigate the influence of family socioeconomic variables on students' self-esteem in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Self-esteem and socioeconomic status are two of the most frequently examined psychological and sociological variables. At their intersection one finds the relationship between the individual's view of self (self-esteem) and society's primary view of the individual socioeconomic status. Yet the empirical relationship between these two

variables is very unclear, with some studies finding a positive relationship, some negative, and some no relationship at all. The inconsistent findings suggest the existence of powerful moderators such as gender, which may be examined using a descriptive survey design. For example, is socioeconomic status more important to self-esteem with parental level of education, occupation and income? Have there been changes in the importance of socioeconomic status to the self-esteem according to the parental level of education, occupation and income? Therefore, there is need to ascertain through a clear understanding, the influence of family socioeconomic variables and gender on public secondary school students' self-esteem in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State whose parents are of various levels of education?
2. What are the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State whose parents are of various occupations?
3. What are the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State whose parents are of various income levels?
4. What are the mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State whose parents are of various family socio-economic variables?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested and at 0.05 alpha level.

Ho1: Parental levels of education have no significant influence on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State

Ho2: Parental occupation have no significant influence on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State

Ho3: Parental income level have no significant influence on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State

Ho 4: Family socio-economic variable have no significant influence on mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State

Methods

The study was carried out using descriptive survey design. The study will be conducted in the six education zones in Anambra state. The six educational zones include; Onitsha, Otuocha, Awka, Ogidi, Aguata and Ihiala educational zones. Awka Education Zone has a total population of 3,890 SSSII students. The population of male SSSII students is 1,692 while the population of SSSII female students is 2,198. (P.P.S.S.C. Headquarters, Awka. 2024). The sample of the study consisted of 300 senior secondary school students (SSII) drawn from the population of the study. Stratified sampling technique was used to select subjects for this study. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting Awka Education zone from the six education zones

in Anambra State and selection of two secondary schools each from each stratum (Local Government Area) where this study was carried out. This brings the total number of schools for the study to six (6) schools. In stage two, simple random was used to obtain 50 students per school. This brought the total target sample size for the study to 300 students. The instruments for data collection were two questionnaires. The first instrument is titled: Family Socioeconomic Variables Identification Questionnaire (FSVIQ) which is developed by the researcher and consists of personal data of students, parental level of education, parental occupation and parental level of income. The second instrument was the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), which contained 10-item statement and was structured with four-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D); and Strongly Disagree (SD). The face and content validity of the instrument was ascertained by giving copies of it to two experts in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. For the Roseberg scale, it is already a widely-known and most utilized instrument for measuring self-esteem because it is standardized. Several Nigerian studies have utilized the instrument and found it consistently valid. The Roseberg Self-esteem Scale was deployed for use with a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.77 as determined by Rosenberg (1965). Other studies have also found it reliable at as high as 0.95. due to the closeness of the coefficient to the whole number 1, the instrument is regarded as reliable. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher with the aid of two research assistants and was through direct contact and completed copies were collected on the spot. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation for research questions and paired sample t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. T-test is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups. The SPSS version 23 was used to analyze the data.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State across parental levels of education?

Table 1: The mean self-esteem scores across parental levels of education

Level of Education	N	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev.
Low level of Education	147	2.77	.65
High level of Education	132	2.84	.58

Analysis in Table 1 indicated the the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State across parental levels of education. The result showed that the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students from parents with high level of education were higher than mean self-esteem scores of students from parents with low level of education. Since the mean self-esteem scores of students with high level of parents' education with the mean score of 2.84 was higher than those with low level of education with the mean score of 2.77, the study therefore concludes that students whose parents have a high level of education have a higher self-esteem than those whose

parents have a low level of education in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State across parental occupation?

Table 2: The mean self-esteem scores across parental occupation

Occupation	N	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev.
Non Professional Occupation	151	2.72	.64
Professional Occupation	128	2.90	.55

Analysis in Table 2 indicated the the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State across parental occupation. The result showed that the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students from parents with professional occupation were higher than mean self-esteem scores of students from parents with non-professional occupation. Since the mean self-esteem scores of students with professional occupation of parents with the mean score of 2.90 was higher than those with non-professional occupation with the mean score of 2.72, the study therefore concludes that students whose parents have a professional occupation have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have a non-professional occupation in Anambra State.

Research Question 3: What are the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State across parental income?

Table 3: The mean self-esteem scores across parental income

Level of Income	N	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev.
Low level of Income	143	2.67	.65
High level of Income	136	2.93	.54

Analysis in Table 3 indicated the the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State across parental income. The result showed that the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students from parents with high income level were higher than mean self-esteem scores of students from parents with low income level. Since the mean self-esteem scores of students with high income level of parents with the mean score of 2.93 was higher than those with low income level with the mean score of 2.67, the study therefore concludes that students whose parents have a high level of income have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have a low level of income in Anambra State.

Research Question 4: What are the mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State whose parents are of various family socio-economic variables?

Table 4: The mean self-esteem scores of male across various family socio-economic variables

Level of Education	Male	Female	Mean ($\bar{X}$)	Std. Dev.

Low level of Education	67	80	2.82	.65
High level of Education	61	71	2.90	.58
Non Professional Occupation	70	81	2.65	.64
Professional Occupation	59	69	2.89	.54
Low level of Income	66	77	2.68	.65
High level of Income	63	73	2.85	.54

Analysis in table 4 indicated the mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State across various family socio-economic variables. The result showed that the mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students from parents with high level of education, professional occupation and high level of income were higher than mean self-esteem scores of students from parents with low level of education, nonprofessional occupation and low level of income. The study therefore concludes that male and female students whose parents have a high level of education, professional occupation and high level of income have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have low level of education, nonprofessional occupation and low level of income in Anambra State irrespective of gender.

Hypothesis 1: Parental levels of education have no significant influence on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State

Table 5: Paired sample t-test of students on the significant influence of parental levels of education on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State.

Variables	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Df**	**p-value**
Parental levels of education - self-esteem	279	8.50	.416	278	.000

Significant at p < .05

Analysis in Table 5 showed the paired sample t-test of students on the significant influence of parental levels of education on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State. The result showed that p-value of .000 < .05 level of significance which resulted in the decision to accept the alternative hypothesis at p(.000) < .05 and reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the study concluded that parental levels of education significantly influence the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 2: Parental occupation have no significant influence on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State

Table 6: Paired sample t-test of students on the significant influence of parental occupation on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	p-value
Parental occupation - self-esteem	279	7.80	.685	278	.000

Significant at p < .05

Analysis in Table 6 showed the paired sample t-test of students on the significant influence of parental occupation on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State**.** The result showed that p-value of .000 < .05 level of significance which resulted in the decision to accept the alternative hypothesis at p (.000) < .05 and reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the study concluded that parental occupation significantly influences the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State**.**

Hypothesis 3: Parental income level have no significant influence on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State

Table 7: Paired sample t-test of students on the significant influence of parental income level on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	p-value
Parental income level - self-esteem	279	6.95	.553	278	.000

Significant at p < .05

Analysis in Table 7 showed the paired sample t-test of students on the significant influence of parental income level on mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State. The result showed that p-value of .000 < .05 level of significance which resulted in the decision to accept the alternative hypothesis at p(.000) < .05 and reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the study concluded that parental income level significantly influences the mean self-esteem scores of secondary school students in Anambra State.

Hypothesis 4: Family socio-economic variable have no significant influence on mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State

Table 8: Paired sample t-test of students on the significant influence of family socio-economic variable on mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State

Variables	Male	Female	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	p-value
Familysocio-economic variable - self-esteem	128	151	6.95	.553	278	.000

Significant at p < .05

Analysis in Table 8 showed the paired sample t-test of students on the significant influence of family socio-economic variable on mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State. The result showed that p-value of .000 < .05 level of significance which resulted in the decision to accept the alternative hypothesis at p (.000) < .05 and reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the study concluded that family socio-economic variable significantly influences the mean self-esteem scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State irrespective of gender.

Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

Findings on the self-esteem of students whose parents are of various levels of education showed that students whose parents have a high level of education have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have a low level of education in Anambra State. This finding could be as a result of educated parents providing intellectual, economical, psychological and emotional support to their children who in turn make them to be more comfortable and adjust to their learning development which result to high self-esteem. The low self-esteem of students could be as a result of students having parents who are poorly educated; they might not have adequate academic, emotional and social support from their parents as well as they will lack parental guidance at home which influence their self-esteem. The findings on the self-esteem of students whose parents are of various occupations revealed that students whose parents have a professional occupation have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have a non-professional occupation in Anambra State. The finding is in agreement with the discovery of Odoh *et al* (2017) who revealed that highly educated parents with high or low occupation level had better outcomes and higher self-esteem compared to their peers whose parents had low educational and occupation level. Findings on the self-esteem of students whose parents are of various income levels indicated that students whose parents have a high level of income have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have a low level of income in Anambra State. The finding is as a result of parents whose financial income level is high can meet their children's needs, whereas parents whose financial income level is low cannot meet their children's educational needs, thereby de-motivating the students. In with this, line Mayer (2015) opined that the children of affluent parents are more likely to succeed in life than the children of poor parents probably because the rich parents spend more than poor parents on their children. While findings on the self-esteem of male and female students from various family socio-economic variables indicated that male and female students whose parents have a high level of education, professional occupation and high level of income have a higher self-esteem than those whose parents have low level of education, non-professional occupation and low level of income in Anambra State. This is in line Bhat, Joshi, and Wani, (2016) who found that the parent's economic status influences students' academic performance irrespective gender and location, Parent/Family Involvement influence students' academic performance in

public secondary schools and the parenting styles affects students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

Recommendations

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

1. The study recommended that parents should be more supportive and create conducive environment for their children as this will create help to develop a higher self-esteem of the students especially from the low socioeconomic variable parents.
2. The study recommends that parents can assist their children on how they can maintain their self-esteem using their abilities in life and their different strengths can help to have a high self-esteem.
3. The study recommended that school counseling services which attempt to identify adolescents with low self-esteem should take into consideration parental education level, occupation and income.
4. The study recommended that parents should always encourage their children and provide moral support as well for the child to be emotionally stable and have confidence in their academic pursuit to achieve excellence and develop higher self-esteem.

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