

PARENTAL ROLE AND ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT OF THE GIRL CHILD IN YALA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined parental role and academic attainments of the girl child in Yala local government area of Cross River State. In executing the purpose of this study, two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Survey research design was employed as the appropriate research design for this study. The study population consist of 10,699 female students in Yala LGA of Cross River State, Nigeria. A Sample of 1,068 female students representing 10 percent from each of the 22 local government areas under study. Stratified and simple random sampling procedure was used for the study. To acquire relevant data for the study, a structured instrument was involved namely: "Parental Role and Academic Attainment of the Girl Child Questionnaire (PRAAGCQ)" was designed and validated. Three experts in research and statistic validated the instrument. Split-half reliability test of internal consistency was obtained step up the coefficient obtained with Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The respondent administered questionnaire and the data was appropriately analyzed using Simple Linear Regression. The stated null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the statistical analysis revealed that there is a significant effect of parental advice on academic attainment of girl child and parental commitment significantly predict academic attainment of girl child. Therefore, recommends among others that educating parents on the long-term benefits of girls' education can foster more supportive home environments. Parents should also model the value of learning, self-discipline and hard-work in children. If this exercise is persistent, it can facilitate positive improvement in their children's academic attainments specifically the girl child.

Keyword: Parental role, Academic attainments, Girl child, Yala, Cross River State

INTRODUCTION

Academic attainment of a girl child at the secondary school level is not only a pointer to the effectiveness or otherwise of schools but a major determinant of the future of youths in particular and the nation in general. Academic attainment of learners has attracted attention of scholars, parents, policy-makers and planners. Adeyemo (2001) opined that the major goal of the school is to work towards attainment of academic excellence by students. According to him, the school may have other peripheral objectives; emphasis is always placed on the achievement of sound scholarship. Besides, virtually everybody concerned with education places premium on academic achievement; excellent academic achievement of children is often the expectation of parents (Osiki, 2001).

Parental role is a critical area of study, particularly in the context of gender equality and educational development. Parental roles encompass various responsibilities, including financial support, emotional encouragement, and active involvement in their children's education. These roles significantly impact the academic performance and overall educational outcomes of the girl child. Parental role in a girl child education can be seen as the act of engaging parents in instructional matters, predominantly in the home and also in the school (Topor, Keane, Shelton & Calkins). Generally, parental role in a girl child education includes several forms of participation in education and with the schools.

Children spend more time at home than they do at school (Olatoye & Ogunkola, 2008); so, parents have the opportunity for a number of interactions with their children in one-on-one situation. When parents teach their own children, they impact new skills in children and build the children's feelings of competence. This in turn motivates the child to perform better, setting a cycle of success reinforcement in motion (Henderson, 2009). When parents are involved in the education of their children, they usually have the opportunity to know their children's

behavioural and intellectual needs better and such children in turn feel free to discuss their challenges with their parents.

Education is the bedrock of every nation. That is why different measures are put in place to enhance the standard of education. Though it appears that education seems to be falling in standard, some educationists seem to put the blame on families. The reason advanced for this is that the family is the first social group the child comes in contact with. The family is a group of people who are related by blood or kinship. In Nigeria, families are finding it difficult to stay connected with their children's education, because of life patterns and nature of social commitments. Parents are becoming isolated from their children and finding it difficult to keep a careful watch on what needs to be done to help them succeed in school, which eventually affects their children's academic attainment in school. Some families are not even managed by a parent, but by grandparent, guardian or some other adult. Parents are not able to monitor their children at home, not to think of the school. Due to these changes in family life, schools are now finding it difficult to keep parents informed of and actively engaged them in the day-to-day progress of their children.

Husain (2006) noted that secondary school students often come from different socio-economic background which also affects their performance in school. Often times, students from poor and average income families have poor academic attainments of the girl child because of the various problems these families face causing emotional disturbance among their children and in turn affect their studies. Parents therefore play a role in the development and academic attainments of their children most especially the girl child. There are various styles which parents adopt in rearing their children which might have positive or negative effect on their children's academics.

Parental engagement is a powerful pedal for raising achievement in schools. Where parents and teachers work together to improve learning, the gains in achievement are significant. They develop a two-way relationship with parents based on mutual trust, respect and a commitment to improving learning outcomes. Failure of the parents to meet these specific needs can have wide-ranging and negative long-lasting effect (Christenson, 2009). This is because parents at home are children's first teacher. As a child moves from infant to toddler and then to a preschooler, he/she learns how to speak, listen, write and read which latter develops to achieve success academically. This study seeks to investigate parental roles as it predicts academic attainment of the girl child in Yala LGA, with a focus on identifying the specific challenges faced by girls and the extent to which parental involvement impacts their educational outcomes.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Academic attainment of the girl child remains a significant concern, with many girls facing barriers to accessing and excelling in education. Despite global and national efforts to promote gender equality in education, cultural, economic, and social factors continue to hinder the educational progress of girls in this region. Parental roles, which include financial support, emotional encouragement, and active involvement in education, play a critical role in shaping the educational outcomes of the girl child. However, traditional gender norms, economic constraints, and limited awareness of the importance of girls' education among parents often result in unequal opportunities for girls compared to boys.

The problem is further exacerbated by early marriages, gender biases, and inadequate educational infrastructure, which disproportionately affect the girl child. While some parents actively support their daughters' education, others prioritize boys' education or withdraw girls from school due to financial difficulties or cultural expectations. This disparity in parental roles and support has led to lower enrollment, higher dropout rates, and poorer academic performance among girls in Yala LGA. It is noteworthy that the impact of parental role on academic attainment includes not only direct effects but also indirect effects. Specifically, economic difficulties lead to economic pressure in the family and parental increased risk for emotional distress, and this, in turn, results in poor educational attainment of the girl child.

Despite all these efforts put in place by parents and the government to curb this situation by providing conducive educational equality, this situation still persists. It is in line with filling this information gap that the researcher isolated the variables in this research for close study. This study therefore tends to address the question thus: To what extent does parental role in terms of parental advice and parental commitment predicts academic attainments of the girl child in Yala local government area of Cross River State?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study examined parental role and academic attainment of the girl child in Yala local government area of Cross River State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Find out the extent to which parental advice predicts academic attainments of the girl child;

2. Examine the extent to which parental commitment predicts academic attainments of the girl child.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. To what extent does parental advice predict academic attainments of the girl child?
2. What is the extent to which parental commitment predicts academic attainments of the girl child.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested:

1. There is no significant effect of parental advice on academic attainments of the girl child;
2. Parental commitment does not significantly predict academic attainments of the girl child.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parenting in schools creates a collaborative environment that benefits students academically, socially, and emotionally, while also strengthening the school community and fostering positive relationships between parents and educators. Naheed, Dahar and Lateef (2016) conducted a study on the impact of parental advice and the academic attainment of their children at secondary level in district Rawalpindi. It was revealed that parental involvement has a significant impact on secondary student's achievement level. Hence, it was proved from the results of study that parental role plays a vital role in their children academic attainment.

Ewumi (2021) conducted a study on gender and socio-economic status as correlates of students' academic achievement in senior secondary schools. His findings revealed negative significant relationship between gender and academic achievement and no significant relationship between socioeconomic status and academic achievement.

Obiunu (2018) study investigated the influence of parenting styles on academic performance of students in Ethiopie East local government area of delta state, Nigeria. The findings indicated the following: that there is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic performance of secondary school students. Secondly, that there is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic performance of secondary school students. Finally, that there is a significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic performance of secondary school students. Based on the findings, it was concluded that parenting styles have some measure of influence on the academic performance of secondary school children. This is because parents set goals and dictate the pace at which such children should go in most cases in the sampled population.

Sacker, 2002 observes that children whose parents spend time with them in outings, studying, visits, and picnics and also in talking to their teachers about their school progress excel academically. This kind of involvement positively affects the child since their parents know their areas of difficulty and assist them. Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem and Khan (2013) conducted a study on the effect of parental involvement in the academic achievement of their children in Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore city, Pakistan. The findings revealed that parental involvement has significance effect in better academic performance of their children. The present research has proved that parental involvement enhanced the academic achievements of their children.

Hasan (2017) carried out a study on correlates of parental support and academic achievement of male and female secondary school students. Findings showed the positive significant relationship as well as no significant difference between academic achievements and parental support of secondary school students. Tiwari and Tiwari (2020) found in the study carried out to examine the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement in higher secondary school students that there was significant relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement of students.

Farooq and Asim (2020) study on parental involvement as predictor for self-regulated learning and academic achievement of students at secondary school level in metropolitan city of Pakistan with two research questions raised to guide the study using multistage sampling approach in selecting a sample of 619 students. Causal comparative research design was used for the study with a population of 1232 staff. Structured questionnaire was used for the study using correlation analysis to analyze the data. The results found that parents of private secondary school students are more concerned with their child's learning and those students are found more self-regulated and high in their academic affairs. So, there may be parental involvement programs directed in order to ensure parents' involvement in their child's learning.

RESEARCH METHOD

Survey research design was employed as the appropriate research design for this study. The study population consist of 10,699 female students in Yala LGA of Cross River State, Nigeria. A Sample of 1,068 female students representing 10 percent from each of the 22 local government areas under study. Stratified and simple random sampling procedure was used for the study. A structured instrument was involved namely: "Parental Role and Academic Attainment of the Girl Child Questionnaire (PRAAGCQ)". Two experts in research and statistic validated the instrument. Split-half reliability test of internal consistency was obtained to step up the coefficient obtained with Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The respondent administered questionnaire and the data was appropriately analyzed using Simple Linear Regression.

Table 1: Population and sample of female senior secondary one and two (SS1 and SS2) students in public secondary schools in Yala Local Government Area of Cross River State

S/N	Villages in Yala L.G.A.	No. of public School	Population of Female students		Total students	Sample of female		Total
			SS1	SS2		SS1	SS2	
1	OKUKU	6	280	255	535	28	26	54
2	YAHE	7	302	361	663	30	36	66
3	UGAGA	5	212	282	494	21	28	49
4	IJEGU	5	115	705	820	12	71	83
5	OLOKO	8	352	906	1258	35	91	126
6	IMAJE	9	410	180	590	41	18	59
7	OKE	6	150	165	315	15	17	32
8	ECHUMOGA	6	212	202	414	21	20	41
9	WODA	5	121	111	232	12	11	23
10	EBO	7	321	327	648	32	33	65
11	ITEKPA	5	110	99	209	11	10	21
12	MAA	8	654	643	1297	65	64	129
13	UKELLE	5	119	100	219	11	10	22
14	WONYE	6	215	213	428	22	21	43
15	UCHU	7	232	229	461	23	23	46
16	OSINA	3	62	54	116	6	5	11
17	MBUOR	5	324	215	539	32	22	52
18	ALIFORKPA	4	148	120	268	15	12	27
19	ECHUMOFANA	6	220	119	339	22	12	34
20	WANIHEM	4	14	8	22	1	1	2
21	WANIKADE	6	199	190	389	20	19	39
22	WANIKOM	5	223	220	443	22	22	44
	TOTAL	128	4,995	5,704	10,699	496	572	1,068

SOURCE: State Secondary Education Board, Planning Research and Statistics, Calabar November, 2025.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mean and standard deviation of the major variables of the study are calculated and presented as shown below. A total of one thousand and sixty-eight (1,068) respondents were used for the study. The following null hypothesis were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

HYPOTHESIS ONE:

There is no significant effect of parental advice on the academic attainment of the girl child. To test this hypothesis, simple linear regression was employed and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the effect of parental advice on the academic attainment of the girl child.

Variable		R	R ²	Adj R ²	Std. Error
Parental Advice		.116 ^a	.013	.012	6.10220
Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F. value	Sig.
Regression	539.639	1	539.639	14.492	.000 ^b
Residual	39694.453	1066	37.237		
Total	40234.093	1067			

Table 2 showed that the effect of the variable as .116 which implied that there is a strong positive effect between parental advice on academic attainment of girl child. More so, the result showed that Adj R² = .012 which implied that the variation in the dependent variable (academic attainment of the girl child) can be accounted for by .01% of parental advice in the academic attainment of the girl child. A cursory look at the Table also showed an analysis of variance result of (F= 14.492, p<.000). Since p (.000) is less than the chosen alpha of .05. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected which implies that, parental advice significantly predicts academic attainment of the girl child in Yala local government area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant effect of parental commitment on the academic attainment of the girl child. To test this hypothesis, simple linear regression was employed and the result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the effect of parental commitment on the academic attainment of the girl child

Variable		R	R ²	Adj R ²	Std. Error
Parental commitment		.089 ^a	0.8	.007	6.12422
Source of variation	SS	df	MS	F.value	p-value
Regression	318.455	1	318.455	8.491	.004 ^b
Residual	39981.443	1066	37.506		
Total	40299.898	1067			

Table 3 showed that the effect of the variable as .089 which implied that there is a strong positive effect between parental commitment and academic attainment of girl child. More so, the result showed that Adj R² = .007 which implied that the variation in the dependent variable (academic attainment of the girl child) can be accounted for by .01% of parental commitment in the academic attainment of the girl child. A cursory look at the Table also showed an analysis of variance result of (F= 8.491, p<.004). Since p (.004) is less than the chosen alpha of .05. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected which implies that, parental commitment significantly predicts academic attainment of the girl child in Yala local government area of Cross River State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

The result of the finding revealed that there is a significant effect of parental advice on academic attainment of girl child. The findings of the study were in line with that of a study by Naheed, Dahar and Lateef (2016) conducted a study on the impact of parental advice and the academic attainment of their children at secondary level in district Rawalpindi. It was revealed that parental involvement has a significant impact on secondary student's achievement level. Hence, it was proved from the result of study that parental role plays a vital role in their children academic attainment. Ewumi (2021) conducted a study on gender and socio-economic status as correlates of students' academic achievement in senior secondary schools. The findings revealed negative significant relationship between gender and academic achievement and no significant relationship between socioeconomic status and academic achievement.

Obiunu (2018) study investigated the influence of parenting styles on academic performance of students in Ethiopia East Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria and found no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic performance of secondary school students. Secondly, that there is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and academic performance of secondary school students. Finally, that there is a significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic performance of secondary school students. Based on the findings, it was concluded that parenting styles have some measure of influence on the academic performance of secondary school children. This is because parents set goals and dictate the pace at which such children should go in most cases in the sampled population.

The result of the second finding showed that parental commitment significantly predicts the academic attainment of girl child. The finding of the study is in line with that by Rafiq, Fatima, Sohail, Saleem and Khan (2013) who's a study on the effect of parental involvement in the academic achievement of their children in Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore city, Pakistan, revealed that parental involvement has significance effect in better academic performance of their children. The present research has proved that parental involvement enhanced the academic achievements of their children.

Hasan (2017) carried out a study on correlates of parental support and academic achievement of male and female secondary school students. Findings showed the positive significant relationship as well as no significant difference between academic achievements and parental support of secondary school students. Tiwari and Tiwari

(2020) carried out a study to examine the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement in higher secondary school students. It was revealed that there was significant relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement of students.

Farooq and Asim (2020) study on parental involvement as predictor for self-regulated learning and academic achievement of students at secondary school level in metropolitan city of Pakistan. The results found that parents of private secondary school students are more concerned with their Childs' learning and those students are found more self-regulated and high in their academic affairs. So, there may be parental involvement programs directed in order to ensure parents' involvement in their child's learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the finding of the study, it was concluded that parental role in the form of advice and commitment significantly predict the academic attainment of the girl child in Yala LGA of Cross River State. The academic attainment of the girl child in Yala LGA is a complex interplay of financial, cultural, and social factors. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach involving parents, communities and government agencies. By fostering a supportive environment and addressing the barriers to girls' education, significant improvements in academic outcomes can be achieved, contributing to the overall development of the region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it was recommended that

1. Parents should actively be organizing and monitoring children's time, helping with homework and discussing school matters regularly with them. Parents should also model the value of learning, self-discipline and hard-work in children. If this exercise is persistent, it can facilitate positive improvement in their children's academic attainments.
2. Strengthening and enforcing policies that promote gender equality in education can provide a more conducive environment for girls' academic attainment.
3. Educating parents on the long-term benefits of girls' education can foster more supportive home environments.

Implication of the study to Educational Stakeholder:

The study has practical implications for students, parents, teachers, administrators and community, as it emphasizes that the active role of parents is indispensable in enhancing the academic attainment of the girl child in Yala LGA of Cross River State, Nigeria.

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