

Impact of Parental Occupation and Educational Background on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Chemistry in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *This research investigated the Impact of Parental Occupation and Educational Background on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Chemistry in Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State, Nigeria. The research design used for this study was survey design of the descriptive type of research. The sample size of two hundred (200) senior secondary Class II (SS II) Chemistry students was used for the study. Eight (8) public secondary schools were selected for the study using simple random sampling technique. Twenty five (25) respondents were selected from each of the schools by using simple random sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection for the study was a self-structured questionnaire. The reliability index obtained was 0.94. The hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of Chi-square (χ^2). The findings of the study indicated that there is significant influence of parental occupation on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry and there is significant influence of parents' educational background on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. Based on the findings, conclusions and appropriate recommendations were made.*

Key Words: *parental occupation, educational background, academic achievement, secondary school.*

Introduction

The role of education as the basic instrument and mechanism for the enhancement of the population quality of a nation cannot be ignored or overemphasized. Education is needed and in fact has proven to be the drive for social, political, human, economic and national development. Olorube & Egbebor (2012) expressed education as the process through which school age children, youths and adult learn and develop abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour which are of positive values to the society in which they live. No doubt, education is a mean of access to better life and the upliftment of the society at large for civilization and overall development. It is an effective instrument of positive change in the society and a fundamental social institution for transmitting basic knowledge including values, norms, skills and culture to the younger ones in the society. In the contemporary world, science and technology as one of the product of education have now become the instrument that enrich education and transform nations (Olorube & Egbebor, 2012).

Science is a body of knowledge that involves observation, synthesizing, formulation of hypotheses, testing of hypotheses, experimenting, analysis and evaluation processes. Mishra & Yadav (2013) defined science as a body of empirical, theoretical and practical knowledge that explains the natural world as an evidence of consistent and cumulative process which emphasizes observation, explanation and prediction of real world phenomena through experiments. Science and technology is the parameter upon which the development of any nation is measured today. One major characteristics of the Nigerian school system is the emphasis placed on science subjects. Science subjects in Nigerian secondary schools are classified mainly into Chemistry, Biology and Physics. All the three subjects have their uniqueness and relevance to man's daily activities. Meanwhile, chemistry is very unique in the sense that it explains chemical process that takes place with living things and non-livings, thereby being useful in biology and useful in the change of chemical and energy process in physics.

Chemistry has been identified as great and indispensable cornerstone of science, technology and industrial development. The role that chemistry plays in the national development is visible as it is the backbone of industrial drive, power behind economic development and enhance resourcefulness of nation potentiality. As such it helps to provide some social amenities and has been the pivot of science and hence the most needed tool, scientifically, for human, capital and national development. The wheel of progress have in no small way slowed down, thereby hindering the overall development of science and chemistry education in the nation. The concept of chemistry as a science is centered on life and this encompasses the

three states of matter-solid, liquid and gas in a give and take processes (Ibrahim, Adamu, Ibrahim, Ismaila & Abubakar, 2017). Chemistry addresses the needs of majority through its relevance and functionality in content, practice and application. What many nations like Nigeria need now is a functional chemistry education that will assist in national development. Chemistry education has been identified to be one of the major bedrock for the transformation of our national economy.

Academic achievement is the outcome of education as it indicates the extent to which the student, teacher, curricular and indeed the educational institution has achieved the predetermined educational goals. Academic achievement can be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as extracurricular activities (Kpolovie, Joe & Okoto, 2014). Narad & Abdullah (2016) identified that academic achievement of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution. Success is measured by academic achievement in most educational institutions. Academic achievement is in the context of learning and being able to express what has been learnt in a written or practical form without examination malpractice of any sort.

Consequently, so much research has been carry out into why students perform poorly in school subject like chemistry, when it is filled with so much benefits for citizens and national development. Factors such as parental academic background, parental occupation/profession, students' factors such as interest, attitude, motivation, study habits among others and also some environmental factors such as instructional materials, methodology, government support, laboratory facilities in terms of availability and utilization and so on. Meanwhile, charity is said to begin at home. The home from which a student emerges from is very crucial and the role of the parents cannot be overlooked. Parents are a great gift in one's life. [Your Dictionary \[YD\] \(2020\) defined](#) parent as one who is to give life or raise children. A *parent* is someone who is responsible for the care, the safety, and the shelter of their child. They provide physical, emotional, and spiritual nourishment. Parent is responsible for providing support and social reinforcement for their children.

Social class refers to a group of people within a society who possess the same socioeconomic status. Social class is also described as a group of individuals who occupy a similar position in the economic system of production. The indication of this is that social class of parents is a product of their socioeconomic strength which is being influenced by education, occupation, family background, level of exposure among others. Students from lower social class backgrounds face day-to-day obstacles at schools which could come as a result of worn out uniform, lack of school materials among others which lead to low self-esteem, poor motivation, negative perception of people in the environment and sense of social isolation, unfamiliar cultural norms and concerns about confirming stereotypes of low ability (Rubin, 2012; Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson, & Cova-rrubias, 2012). For students to perform well and have high level of academic achievement, the role of parent socioeconomic status is crucial.

All parents have desired to do something better for their children according to their available resources. The level of support that parents give their children on their educational pursuit most especially in chemistry is very vital for achieving success and credible academic achievement. Meanwhile, the extent and effectiveness of parental support depends on a variety of reasons, such as, ethnicity, family income, and home environment and their awareness about the importance of education. Chohan & Khan (2014) stated that some poor parents make some arrangements for helping their children in studies and to do their home assignments, while others rely on school for the education of their children, as they do not have enough resources to spend extra money on home tuitions etc. This results to poor performance in academic achievement of their children.

Parental support for their chemistry students could be vital and powerful for the enhancement of school effectiveness, readiness, personal adjustment of students, intention to take chemistry oriented course in tertiary institution and other motivational benefits. Parents at home support their children emotionally, instrumentally, information provision and evaluation support which are needed for enhancement of personal school adjustment and motivation for learning chemistry in school. Shukla, Tombari, Toland & Danner (2015) stated that parental support has been found to relate to several beneficial academic and non-academic outcomes for students, such as increased life satisfaction, reduced risk of suicide attempts in the absence of close friendship with peers and academic achievement. Parental social class and support may positively add value to student achievement in chemistry by increasing their motivation, passion, attitude, action and inaction towards academic pursuit.

Meanwhile, there were few studies that was carried out combining the two variables of social class and parental support and their influence on the academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. Thus, this study investigated the Impact of Parental Occupation and Educational Background on

Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Chemistry in Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

These hypotheses were formulated for testing in the study:

HO1. There is no significant influence of parental occupation on the academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry.

HO2. There is no significant influence of parents' educational background on the academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry.

Concept of Parents

A parent is a caregiver of the offspring in their own species. Some parents may be adoptive parents, who nurture and raise an offspring, but are not biologically related to the child. Orphans without adoptive parents can be raised by their grandparents or other family members. Being a parent is a major responsibility. Parent are in charge of raising an individual to the point of adulthood with the goal of turning him or her into a valuable member of the community (*Browne, 2012*).

As a parent, you must discipline your child. Children are new to the world and do not see the boundaries between good and bad, right and wrong, or danger and no danger. Children are constantly looking for the boundaries and how far he can push them. This undertaking requires care, love, understanding and the ability to keep the children on the right path. If done right, it is one of the hardest things parent will do, but it also will be one of the most rewarding (Ministry of Education, Guyana, [MOEG], 2019).

MOEG (2019) stated that parent should care for the child. This means that parent take care of the child by feeding, clothing and teaching him the things he needs to know to function in life. True parents love their children. Love goes beyond taking care of them. It is the concern parent have for their future and their present. Love is parent watchful eye over children who are sick or troubled; the care parent give when their feelings are hurt; the time parent take out of their schedule to spend with them; and it's the protection that surrounds them and keeps them safe. Parents listen and take the time to understand the troubles of their children. Listen to what they have to say and help them work through issues that have developed during their day.

Concept of Academic Achievement

Academic achievement is in the context of learning and being able to express what has been learnt in a written or practical form without examination malpractice of any sort. Academic achievement is commonly measured by examination or continuous assessment but maintains that there is no general agreement on how academic achievement is best tested (Ward, Stoker and Murray-Ward, 2019). Academic achievement is the outcome of education as it indicates the extent to which the student, teacher, curricular and indeed the educational institution has achieved the predetermined educational goals.

Academic achievement can be described as the overall measure of indices of learning outcomes of a learner. These indices include the knowledge, skills, retention level, and ideas, acquired and gathered in the course of exposure to particular instruction within and outside the classroom environment (Okorie, 2014). Academic performance refers to a person's performance in a given academic area (e.g. reading or language arts, mathematics, science and other areas of human learning. Narad & Abdullah (2016) stated that academic achievement is the knowledge gained which is assessed by marks by a teacher and/or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specific period of time. They added that these goals are measured by using continuous assessment or examinations results.

Academically successful students have higher self esteem, lower level of depression. Individuals who are better organized, better prepared and have a plan or a planner did better in school and will continue to be like that in their career. Academic achievement is important for the successful development of young people in society. Students who do well in school are better able to make the transition into adulthood and to achieve educational, occupational and economic success (McInerney, Cheng, Mok & Lam, 2012). Academic achievement also allows students to enter competitive fields. Those who wish to enter the medical field need a thorough educational background in chemistry, and science related courses requires adequate educational credentials. Those looking to enter academia need strong academic achievements (Daniel, 2019).

Parents Occupation and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Chemistry

The influence of parental occupation on students' academic achievement is an issue that calls for concern among all stakeholders in academics mostly in chemistry largely because, today more than ever before, tremendous pressure is on students to earn good grades because academic achievement is assumed to possess predictive value and used to bar or open the gate between the university and successful careers in life (Rahaman, 2010). Occupation of parents affects students' achievement in their academics (Chemistry inclusive) (Odoh, Ugwuanyi, Odigbo & Chukwuani, 2017). But, parent's occupation has adverse impact on the academic motivation of learner's success. 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 that 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 (Usaini & Abubakar, 2015).

Samuel, Aluede & Augustine (2016) reported that students, including those from low socio-economic status (SES) whose parents were involved in their education do better academically than students whose parents are not involved. Aigha, Majdi, Aljefri, Ali, Alagha, Elhamed & El-denwi (2017) found positive connection between educational and occupational levels of father and mother and that family socio-economic status of parent's that is father's education, occupation and income affects children's achievement (Das & Sinha, 2017). Parents' occupation identify the parent's ability to finance the academic achievement of their children in school (Gabriel, Muli, Muasya, Moanga & Mukhunguku, 2016). Khan, Ayaz & Ghazi (2017) stated that there was a positive impact of the occupation of parents on the financial capacity of the students and their family relationship.

To provide a proof those learners whose parents belong to highest occupation status may have a better degree than their counter parts whose parents belong to the lowest occupation status (Omalde, Kassim & Modupe, 2014). Akbar, Shah & Anwar (2014) stated that occupation of parents and family earnings are the most important variables affecting the growth of kids. Al-matalka (2014) asserted that families with high occupation level are more likely to recognize and support their children with their homework and aspire to a good career. Therefore, Sails & Chamundeswari (2014) expressed that family financial resources, which are mostly associated with parent's occupation and educational attainment, often influence learning opportunities both at home and in school and concluded that there is a positive relationship between parental level of occupation and socio economic background of a student.

According to Ogunshola & Adewale (2012), parents of different occupation classes often have different styles of child rearing, different ways of disciplining their children and different ways of reacting to their children. Parents with better work and higher education tend to have a higher education level and performance for their children that their counterparts with lesser prestigious work (Rabo, 2014). Parents' occupation status and academic performance has a significant relationship, it is proved that higher income of parents can give better performance on students' performance (Memon, Joubish & Khurram, 2010). Students show delinquency when their parents are unable to meet their financial needs, because their parents lack of sufficient income and good jobs to give a high quality of education for their children (Ekpo & Ajake, 2013).

However, parents with less prestigious occupation due to instability and financial problems cannot provide adequate modern facilities to enhance their children education. Mother's occupation also influences students' academic performance. It was observed that students with a mother who have better occupation performed well in matriculation examination than their peers from mothers with less prestigious occupation. Saifullahi (2011) pointed out that parents' occupation significantly influences students' achievement. Parents with lower or less prestigious occupation are always battling with how to satisfy their basic needs in the life as such, they pay little attention to their children education. Therefore, the influence of parents' occupation cannot be overemphasized, even though; other socioeconomic status variables such as income, education do affect students' academic performance.

Parents' Educational Background and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Chemistry

Parental qualification has significance effects on students' academic performance. However, the blame of this poor performance is placed only on the school. It is necessary to realize that the school is not the only agency for the education of the child; family of the child equally plays significant role and there is a family-school relationship as stipulated in the family school relationship model. It is within the family that the child acquires and organizes his first experience and then moves to the school for his or her secondary experience. It is also a proven fact in psychology that intelligence and most types of ability are not

necessarily innate, but that they are usually modified by environmental factors such as learning motivation, nutrition and encouragement of parents, schools and the like (Ajedegba, 2017).

Ahmad & Naeema (2013) suggested that children from families where parents have less education tends to perform systematically worse in school than students whose parents have more education. To him, 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 academic performance. The role that parents play in the upbringing of a child is very important. Children look up-to their parents for guidance, protection and motivation to live a great life. One of the best ways to achieve wholesome qualities of education is the partnership of parents and teachers in injecting valuable skills, conduct, and knowledge to the students (John, 2014).

Khan, Iqbal & Tasneem (2015) concluded that high level educated parents to an extent, have more influence on their children to achieve and perform well in their studies at secondary school level. This assertion has been supported that high level educated parents usually show interest and care in their children's academic performance or achievements and their choice of subject and career while in secondary school. This undoubtedly leads to better performance and achievements in studies.

Osorio et al. (2013) analyzed the impact of the social and educational background of Nigerian parents on the education of their children and provided parents with advice on how to overcome personal and financial challenges and how to support their children's education. Variables related to socioeconomic status, education level, and children's education were used in this study. Parental involvement in children's education is a key issue of several pieces of research. Students with high social capital, positive and warmth home environment, and appropriate involvement of parents get more success in their academic career as well as in social life (Jaiswal & Choudhuri, 2017). Educated parents better understand their role and responsibilities in their children education, therefore; they are always active in participating in children's educational activities at home as well as in school. On the other hand, less educated parents feel less efficacious in helping their children and feel uncomfortable in interacting with teachers and participating in school programs and activities (Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010). Educated parents belief that they are capable enough in helping their children's education, and keep high educational expectations concerning their children's success, therefore, in turn, they tend to be more involved in their children's educational attainment (Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010).

According to Mattison (2014) parents with higher education levels have stronger confidence in their child's academic abilities, and they also have higher expectations of their child. They expect that their child will get good grades, behave well in school and attend college. These high expectations motivate their child to do well. The confidence they have in their child enable the child to build his own confidence in his academic abilities hence succeed in life. A research conducted by Larzelere (2013) suggests that parents with higher levels of education are also more likely to believe strongly in their abilities to help their children learn. It further established that a parent's self-efficacy, children's academic abilities, level of parent education and program participation are significantly related to parental self-efficacy. In turn, parental self-efficacy beliefs significantly predict children's academic abilities.

Research Methodology

The descriptive type of survey research type was used for this study. The area of the study was Ikere local government area of Ekiti State, Nigeria.

The population of the study comprised of all secondary school chemistry students in Ikere local government. This population involved only the public secondary schools within the local government.

The sample size of two hundred (200) senior secondary Class II (SS II) Chemistry students was used for the study. Eight (8) public secondary schools were selected for the study using simple random sampling technique. Twenty five (25) respondents were selected from each of the schools by using simple random sampling techniques.

The only instrument used for the study was a self-structured questionnaire by the researchers. The questionnaire was designed in two sections, sections A and B. Section A was designed to gather demographic data of respondents which include: school, gender, parent occupation and academic background. Section B was used to collect information on the research variables with a Likert scale format of strongly Agree, SA, Agree, A, Disagree, D and Strongly Disagree, SD.

To ensure validity of the instrument, the draft of the questionnaire was subjected to reliability and validity mechanism.

The reliability of the instrument was established using split-half method of reliability. The researchers administered the instrument to twenty five (25) respondents from one schools that was not

originally selected for the study. The data collected from these respondents was subjected to inferential statistics of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to determine the value of reliability coefficient (r) at 0.05 level of significance. The reliability index was 0.94.

The researchers personally administered the questionnaire to the selected students with the help of chemistry teachers in each of the selected secondary schools. The questionnaires were retrieved immediately from them as soon as they completed their responses.

In analyzing the data, inferential statistics of Chi-square (χ^2) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant influence of parental occupation on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry.

Table 2: Chi-square test of students' responses

Response	Parental occupation & academic achievement in chemistry	Cal χ^2	Tab χ^2	Remark
Support	169	96.04	3.84	*
Oppose	31			
Total	200			

$P < 0.05$, * = Significant

The result of the analysis in Table 2 above shows the difference in the responses of students on influence of parental occupation on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. The chi-square test revealed that calculated $\chi^2(96.04)$ was greater than the critical χ^2 value (3.84) at the 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is significant influence of parental occupation on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. Hence, the null hypothesis was not upheld.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the influences of parents' educational background on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry.

Table 2: Chi-square test of students' responses

Response	Parents' educational background & students' academic achievement	Cal χ^2	Tab χ^2	Remark
Support	189	160.04	3.84	*
Oppose	11			
Total	200			

$P < 0.05$, * = Significant

The result of the analysis in Table 2 above shows the difference in the responses of students on influence of parents' educational background on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. The chi-square test revealed that calculated $\chi^2(160.04)$ was greater than the critical χ^2 value (3.84) at the 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is significant influence of parents' educational background on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. Hence, the null hypothesis was not upheld.

Discussion of Results

The finding indicated that there is significant influence of parental occupation on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. This is in line with the assertion of Omalde et al. (2014) that children of parents who belong to highest occupation status may have a better performance than their colleagues whose parents belong to the lowest occupation status. Parents with less prestigious occupation due to instability and financial problems cannot provide adequate modern facilities to enhance their children education. Parents with lower or less prestigious occupation are always battling with how to satisfy their basic needs in life as such they pay little attention to their children education. The influence of parental occupation on students' academic achievement is an issue that calls for concern among all stakeholders in academics mostly in chemistry largely because, today more than ever before, tremendous pressure is on students to earn good grades because academic achievement is assumed to possess predictive value and used to bar or open the gate between the university and successful careers in life.

Also, the finding revealed that there is significant influence of parents' educational background on academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. This is consistent with the suggestion of Ahmad & Naeema (2013) that children from families where parents have less education tends to perform

systematically worse in school than students whose parents have more education. Parental qualification has significance effects on students' academic performance. It is necessary to realize that the school is not the only agency for the education of the child; family of the child equally plays significant role and there is a family-school relationship as stipulated in the family school relationship model. Also, this is in line with the findings of Khan et al. (2015) that high level educated parents to an extent, have more influence on their children to achieve and perform well in their studies at secondary school level. Educated parents better understand their role and responsibilities in their children education, therefore; they are always active in participating in children's educational activities at home as well as in school.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were made:

Parental occupation influenced the academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry. Parents' educational background played a significant role on and influenced academic achievement of secondary school students in chemistry.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis of results in this study, it is expected that the researcher make recommendations on the problems conclusions of the study:

1. Parents need to be informed that they can contribute to the education of their children through provision of learning facilities at home, checking school report forms and to appreciate children's ability and active assistance among other strategies.
2. Parents need to know their role in the education of their children so that they do not put the blame entirely on the teachers when their children do not perform well in school.
3. Parents should be actively involved in encouraging students to learn and also in supervising students' academic work at home
4. Students' should give serious attention to studies at home, in addition to other various works done, since the amount of effort they put in their studies influence their academic performance.

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