



EXTENT PARENTAL AND STUDENT-RELATED FACTORS AFFECT STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN BUSINESS SUBJECTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AWKA EDUCATION ZONE

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Abstract:

Poor students' results in business subjects in Awka Education Zone in internal and external examinations informed the need for this on parental and student-related factors that affect students' academic performance in secondary schools in the area. Two research questions guided the study with two hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. Survey research design was adopted. The population was 316 principals and business teachers from the 61 secondary schools in the zone. A structured questionnaire comprising 18 items with 5-response options which was face-validated by experts in the field was used to collect data. The reliability coefficient of 0.81 and 0.77 were obtained for the 2 clusters of the instrument after it was administered to 10 principals and teachers from Otoucha Education zone and analyzing the data collected with Cronbach Alpha. The application of Cronbach Alpha on the obtained data yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.92. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data in respect of the research questions while ANOVA and z-test were used in testing the null hypotheses. Findings revealed among others that parental factors affect secondary school students' academic performance in business subjects at a moderate extent while student-related factors affect their performance to a high extent. Based on these findings, it was concluded that parental and student-related factors all contribute to determine students' academic performance in business subjects. It was recommended among others, that school authorities should encourage parents to be involved in their children's academic activities by supporting them financially and morally to enhance their academic performance and that business students should be encouraged to adopt effective study habits to improve their academic performance.

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Introduction

Education is the foundation for growth in any country. It is believed that education is the key to national development of any nation. It is in light of the above that Battle and Lewis (2002) asserted that education plays a vital role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual's well-being and opportunities for better living. Education ensures the acquisition of knowledge and skills that enable individuals to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life. Similarly, Saxton (2002) noted that increase in productivity also leads towards new sources of earning which enhances the economic growth of a country. Nigeria, just like any country in the world is dependent on her graduates from the tertiary institutions to form the core part of the human capital that will help develop its economy. These beliefs are echoed by the FRN (2004) goals of the national policy on education for secondary education which stipulated that secondary education is an instrument for national development that fosters the worth and development of the individual, for further education and development. The role of secondary education is to lay the foundation for further education and if a good foundation is laid at this level, there is likely to be no problem at subsequent levels. Business subjects are subjects offered by students in secondary schools at the junior and senior secondary level of education. Omosewe and Akanmu (2013) opined that under the new basic education curriculum, business and pre-vocational subjects offered at the junior secondary school level include entrepreneurship, business studies, agricultural science and home economics. Omosewe and Akanmu listed business subjects at the senior secondary school level to include accounting, insurance, office practice and commerce.

Quality of students' performance in business subjects remains a top priority for business educators and it appears that in most secondary schools in Nigeria and Anambra State in particular the quality is on the low. In support, Nwogu (2011) noted that business students continue to perform poorly both in internal and external examinations in Nigeria. This view is accentuated by Aremu (2000), Aremu and Oluwole (2001) and Aremu and Sokan (2003) who at different times have passed the blame for poor performance in secondary school to students' low retention, association with wrong peers, low motivation and parental factors, among others.

According to Crosnoe, Monica and Glen (2004), the socio economic status of the parents affect their children's academic performance. In consonance, Morakinyo (2003) indicated the existence of a relationship between socio-economic status and academic

achievement. In another argument, Aremu (2000) observed that the nature of parental discipline affects academic output of children. Parents, in their bid to discipline their children, have been found to be authoritative and democratic or permissive. Children whose parents are authoritative more than not live in constant fear of such parents and may most likely transfer such fear to significant others in the school environment. Such children have low self-worth, insecurity and may find it difficult to consult with teachers. Aremu and Oluwole (2001) reported that the degree of self-efficacy and anxiety manifest in learners determine their academic performance.

However, these factors are either theoretical assumptions and have not been empirically proven to affect academic performance of business subject students in secondary schools in Awka education zone. It is against this background that the researchers empirically assessed parental and student-related factors that affect students' academic performance in business subjects in secondary schools in Awka Education Zone.

Statement of the Problem

Academic performance, which is measured by the examination results, is one of the major goals of a school. Schools are established with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills to those who go through them and behind all this is the idea of enhancing good academic performance. Secondary schools in Awka Education Zone are expected to be a cradle for state and national development with high standards for quality assurance. Regrettably, Sam (2011) observed that academic excellence has since departed the land while failure has taken over unleashing itself on students year after year.

This is evident in the below average performance of students in external examinations like the West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB), National Examination Council and the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) where only about 30 per cent of students pass at acceptable levels. Nwogu in Okolocha and Onyeneke (2013) reported that out of 296 students that sat for office practice in selected schools, 14 percent got credit while 86 percent got pass, failed or had their results withheld. In another school, 211 sat for examination in the same office practice out of which 46 percent got credit and distinction while 54% were made up of those who got pass, failed or were absent.

These records are appalling and do not reflect the expectations of government, parents, business educators and other stakeholders in secondary education in Awka Education Zone. The problem of this study, therefore, was that although several factors

are known to affect academic performance of students, those responsible for the poor performance in business subjects in Awka Education Zone are not clearly known. It was against this background that this study was conducted to determine the extent parental and student-related factors affect students' academic performance in business subjects in Awka education zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study. In the opinion of secondary school principals and business teachers:

1. *To what extent do parental factors affect the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Awka Education Zone in business subjects?*
2. *To what extent do student-related factors affect the academic performance of secondary school students in Awka Education Zone in business subjects?*

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the respondents on the extent parental factors affect the academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects in Awka education zone as a result of academic attainment (1st degree, Masters degree, Doctorate degree).
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the respondents on the extent student related factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects in Awka education zone as a result of gender (male/female).

Method

Descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study as recommended by Ezeji (2004) for studies that use questionnaire to collect data from a given population or its representative sample on existing phenomena. The study was carried out in secondary schools in Awka Education Zone of Anambra state. The choice of the area for the study was informed by the fact that the state had been recognized among the educationally advantaged states in Nigeria and the status needs to be maintained at all times.

The population of the study was 316 principals and business subject teachers from the 61 public secondary schools in the zone. Instrument used for data collection was a validated five point rating scale questionnaire with a total of 18 items in two clusters according to the research questions guiding the study.

The data collected were analyzed with Cronbach Alpha and coefficient values of 0.81 and 0.77 were obtained for clusters A and B respectively with an overall reliability co-efficient value of 0.92 which was deemed reliable for the study. Arithmetic mean was used to analyse the research questions while the standard deviation was used to ascertain the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' mean ratings. Any items with mean between 4.50-5.00 affects business students' academic performance to a very high extent, an item with mean ratings of 3.50-4.49 affects the students' academic performance at a high extent and an item with mean ratings of 2.50-3.49 affects students' academic performance at a moderate extent.

Furthermore, items with mean ratings of 1.50-2.49 and 0.50-1.49 affect the students' academic performance to a low and very low extent respectively. ANOVA and z-test were used to test hypothesis one and two respectively. For the hypotheses testing, where the calculated z or F value is less than the critical value of z or F, it means that the variable does not significantly affect respondents' mean ratings and the hypothesis was retained. Conversely, where the calculated z or F value is equal to or greater than the critical z or F value, it means that the variable has a significant effect on the respondents' mean ratings and the hypothesis was retained.

Results

Research Question 1

To what extent do parental factors affect academic performance of senior secondary school students in Awka Education Zone in business subjects?

To answer this research question, data relating to it were analyzed and presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondents' mean ratings on the extent parental factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects

N = 316

S/NO	Parental Factors	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1.	Parent's academic background	2.95	1.48	Moderate Extent
2.	Parent's socio economic status	4.03	2.01	High Extent
3.	Parent's interest in education	3.66	0.81	High Extent
4.	Parent's academic abilities	3.76	0.38	High Extent
5.	Parent's jobs	2.47	1.09	Low Extent
6.	Parent's ability to use technology	2.56	1.32	Moderate Extent
7.	Student's discipline at home	4.01	1.81	High Extent
8.	Home environment	3.59	0.98	High Extent
9.	Family size	3.75	2.53	High Extent
10.	Parental attitude to discipline	4.01	2.27	High Extent
Grand Mean		3.48		Moderate Extent

The data presented in Table 1 reveal that the respondents mean ratings ranged from 2.47 to 4.03 with a grand mean of 3.48. Seven items, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10 had mean ratings of 4.03, 3.66, 3.76, 4.01, 3.59, 3.75 and 4.01 respectively. This means that they affect the students' academic performance in business subjects at a high extent. Two items; 1 and 6 with mean ratings 2.95, and 2.56 affect the students' performance at a moderate extent while item 5 with mean rating of 2.47 affects them at a low extent. The grand mean of 3.48 indicates that the respondents rated parental factors as affecting students' academic performance in business subjects in secondary schools in Awka education zone at a moderate extent.

Research Question 2

To what extent do student-related factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in Awka Education Zone in business subjects?

To answer this research question, data relating to it were analysed and presented in Table 2

Table 2: Respondents' Mean Ratings on the extent student-related factors affect
 academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects
 N= 316

S/NO	Student Factors	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
11.	Student's learning ability	4.25	2.15	High Extent
12.	Student's self-efficacy	4.15	0.48	High Extent
13.	Student's family background	3.01	1.33	Moderate Extent
14.	Peer group influence	4.02	1.89	High Extent
15.	Student's learning style	4.00	2.75	High Extent
16.	Student's age	2.07	1.18	Low Extent
17.	Student's attitude towards school	4.15	0.48	High Extent
18.	Student's ability to use technology	2.85	1.40	Moderate Extent
Grand Mean		3.56		High Extent

Data presented in Table 2 reveal that five items; 11, 12, 14, 15 and 17 with mean ratings of 4.25, 4.15, 4.02, 4.00 and 4.15 respectively affect students' academic performance in business subjects at a high extent and two items; 13 and 18 with mean ratings 3.01 and 2.85 affect them at a moderate extent while item 16 with mean rating of 2.07 affects them at a low extent. The grand mean of 3.56 indicates that the respondents rated student-related factors as affecting students' academic performance in business subjects in secondary schools in Awka education zone at a high extent.

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the respondents on the extent parental factors affect the academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects in Awka education zone as a result of academic attainment (1st degree, Masters degree, Doctorate degree).

Table 3: ANOVA summary of respondents mean ratings on the effect of parental factors on the
 academic performance of students in business subjects based on qualification

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-cal	Sig.
Between groups	7049.7	2	3524.85		
Within groups	14565.2	12	1213.76	1.94	3.89
Total	21614.9	14	4738.61		

The result in Table 3 indicates that the calculated F-value is 1.94 and the F- critical is 3.89 at 2 and 12 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated F-value is less than the F-critical, the null hypothesis is accepted. On the basis of this analysis, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of principals and business

teachers on the extent parental factors affect the academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects in Awka education zone as a result of their academic attainment.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the respondents on the extent student related factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects in Awka education zone as a result of gender (male/female).

Table 4: z-test analysis of respondents' meaning ratings on the extent student related factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects based on gender

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	α	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Male	176	3.80	1.00					
Female	140	3.69	0.94	314	0.05	9.17	1.960	Significant

Data in Table 4 show that the calculated z-value is 9.17 at 314 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is greater than the critical value of 1.960. This shows that there is significant difference in the respondents' mean ratings based on gender, therefore the hypothesis was not upheld.

Discussion

Findings of the study showed that parental factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects in Awka Education Zone at a moderate extent. This finding agreed with Morakinyo (2003) who indicated the existence of a relationship between parents' socio-economic status and academic achievement of students. Tracy and Walter (1998) corroborated this when they submitted that individuals at the lowest economic level are often the least well-served by the school system. Considine and Zappala (2002) also noted that parental educational attainment, housing type, ethnicity and student age are statistically significant variables and predictors of academic performance. They also found that parents provide higher levels of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school.

Furthermore, findings of the study revealed that student-related factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in Awka Education in business subjects at a high extent. This agreed with Bakare (2011) who discovered that the personality type of the students can affect their academic performance. Adeyemi and

Adeyemi (2014) also noted that peer group has tremendous influence on adolescents' pattern of behaviour especially on their interests, attitudes, value system, emotional expressions and interaction patterns. Aremu and Oluwole (2000) also observed that the degree of self-efficacy and anxiety manifest in learners determine their academic performance. They noted that children from permissive homes are too complacent, unmotivated, and lack personal will to succeed.

Results of the study also showed that the respondents' did not differ significantly in their mean rating on the extent parental factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects in Awka education zone based on academic qualification. However, male and female respondents significantly differed in their mean ratings on the extent student-related factors affect academic performance of secondary school students in business subjects in the area of the study. This is in line with a general belief that the way men look at things is different from how women would look at them.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that secondary school students are the major determinants of how well or poorly they perform in business subjects.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. School authorities should encourage parents to improve their involvement in their children's academic activities by supporting them financially and morally to enhance their academic performance.
2. Teachers of business subjects in secondary schools in Awka Education Zone should guide their students to adopt effective study habits to improve their academic performance.
3. Administrators of secondary schools in Awka education should adopt motivational programmes that will increase students' interest in the study of business subjects.

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