HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CHILDREN RAISED BY GRANDPARENTS AND SINGLE PARENTAGE

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Abstract

The dissertation examined house hold structure and students academic performance with a major focus on the comparative analysis of children raised by grandparents and single parentage in Lagos State senior Secondary schools. The general awareness of the importance of the home environment on student's academic performance necessitate an investigation into the family structure as it affects the students' academic outcome.

The research design was a fusion of questionnaire technique with field observation and oral interview. The population for this study consisted of all the students, and teachers in the senior secondary schools in addition to market women in selected markets in Ojo local Government area of Lagos State. Based on this, ten (10) senior secondary schools were purposefully sampled comprising of ten 10 students from separate single parents home and ten (10) students raised by their grandparents, a total of two hundred students. Also, fifty (50) teachers and ten 10 market women were sampled. Three research questions and three hypotheses were advanced and tested in the study. Three types of questionnaires were used, titled questionnaire on parenthood for students (QPS), questionnaire on parenthood for teachers (QPT), and questionnaire for market women (QPMW). These instruments were validated and found reliable at r=0.88. The study revealed that no significant difference existed between the academic performance of students from single parents and those from two parent families (t cal.276<t tab 1.96 at p>0.05). However, significant difference existed in the means of the academic performance of male students from single parent and male students from two parent family (df=(3,28), 83.74, p<0.05) and female students from single parent and female students from two parent families. Also, there is difference between the academic performance students raised by grandparents and students from single parent families (df=(3,28), 31.54, p<.05).

From the findings and conclusion of this study, sufficient evidence were provided such as government initiating educative and enlightenment programme on how to improve and sustain intact parenthood through the mass media and that fund to the assistance of victims of single parenthood.

Introduction

Over the years, investigations of the factors that influence academic performance of students have attracted the interest and concern of many teachers, counselors, researchers and also many school administrators in Nigeria. This is simply because of the complain of members of the public concerning the low standard of education in the country. The declining

quality of education in the country and the breeding of graduates with little or no experiences, and little technical knowhow has resulted in serious setbacks to the industrial development of the nation Nigeria. (Uwaifo, 2008). Previous studies have been concentrated on the area of socio-economic status of parents. Other aspects of parental environment such as the structure of the family have been grossly neglected. Also parents' constant disagreement affects children emotionally and this could lead to poor academic performance in school.

Aside from the constant disagreement between parents, some other factors contribute to low academic performance of students in schools. These factors include – A broken family which could be caused by death of a parent or both parents, divorce, separation, dissertation and illegitimacy, single parent families and sibling structure. Recent evidence from researches suggests that family social status or cultural background does not need to be used to determine a child's academic achievement or performance at school. Also, researches have shown that for academic success to be determined, it is what parents do in the home, and not children's family background that is significant.

Similarly, Agunlana (1991) indicated that in relation to academic outcomes, the potential limitations associated with poor economic circumstances can be over-come by parents who provide stimulating supportive and language-rich experiences for their children. Children who are raised through single parentage have low academic performance and they are more prone to peer pressures by engaging in some deviant behaviors. They have higher dropout rates from primary or secondary school levels and also have greater social and psychological problems. Economic hardship in single-parent families is most likely to require the adolescents to work long hours and to take greater responsibility for younger brothers and or sisters. As a result of this, the time-consuming activities are likely to be related to low academic performance.

It is gathered that the absence of a parent is probably associated with a decrease in total parental involvement, which in turn is related to poor school or academic performance. In African setting, it is believed and clearly seen that the absence of fathers has a particular negative socialization influences which may be detrimental or dangerous especially for male children. A daily sketch publication "Causes and Cures of Poor Performance at West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE)" in 2006 identified and categorized problems responsible for students' poor performance to problems of teachers, problems of inadequate facilities in the schools, problem traceable to students, problems caused by parents and society at large and problems of government policies and low funding of the education sectors. (Ajila & Olutola, 2007).

Concept of Family Structure and Learning

The home has a great influence on the students' psychological, emotional, social and economic state. In the view of Ajila and Olutola (2007), the state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life. This is because the household background and context of a child affect his reaction to life situation and his level of performance. Although, the school is responsible for the experiences that make up the individual's life during school periods, yet parents and the individuals experience at home play tremendous roles in building the personality of the child and making the child what he is.

Trebolo, E. (2012), reports that as early as age three, children's ability to adapt to classroom routine appears to be influenced by their parents' marital status. For instance, three and four year old children growing up with their own married parents are three times less likely than those in any other family structure to experience emotional or behavioural problems such as attention deficit disorder. Baumirind (2005) also stated that children living with their own married parents are more likely to be more involved in literacy activities than

children from single-parent homes. Not growing up with their own married parents appears particularly damaging for young children because the cognitive and social behaviour developed early on present throughout childhood affecting the course of effective learning or good academic performance.

It has been critically observed that the environment in which the child comes from can greatly influence his academic performance at school. Although, the home environment or the family has been recognized as having a lot of influence on the academic performance of students, socio-economic status and educational attainment of parents too needs to be critically looked into.

Effects of Single Parenthood on Students' Academic Performance

Several situations can account for a husband and wife calling a quit to their relationship. In relationship between husband and wife, love for one another is a function of contribution because no one eats love like food, though there is a general knowledge that love satisfies our emotional and psychological needs. In the light of this, the following situations are few examples of what may bring about a breakdown in any relationship.

1. Quarrel about income: spending money issue, poverty or greed.
2. Level of trust and communication issue.
3. Cheating or infidelity.
4. Issue of child care
5. In laws and mismanagement of funds
6. Political issue: opposed social and political interest.
7. Issue of political or extended family
8. The issue of physical attraction, sex and love making.
9. Religious views, inclination and association.
10. Fear of death, intercultural conflicts, and home culture.
11. Life in diaspora (distant relationship).

The values and attitudes, customs and tradition of the society are taught to young children in the family. Also, social behaviour is learnt in the family. Haralambos & Holborn (2008), maintained that Nigerian family like others in the world perform those functions which are immediately and ultimately necessary in ensuring society's preservation, perpetuation and progress. It is in the family that the children first learn his social roles and when single family cannot do all these, the child learns from his social group. Hickman, Bartholme and McKenny (2000) argued that human dignity begins in the home and the family is the breeding ground of all inter personal relationship and also the basic sociological unit where personal character is first moulded and self-identity is first formed.

Conclusively, conflict appears to be an important influence in a number of adverse outcomes including behaviour problems. Reduced parental attention is usually associated with separation. The prevailing anti-social behaviour such as telling lies, cheating during examination, exaggeration of facts, stealing, lack of respect for common property, sexual abuse, drug abuse and truancy which are very rampant among the secondary school students could be traced to parental separation.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this research is to find out how children raised by grandparents and single parentage have affected household structure and students academic performance. According to Programme International Student Assessment (2000:12) it was stressed that "it is evident that the quality of parents and the structure of the home of a child go a long way to predict the quality and regularity of the satisfaction and provision of a child's functional survival and academic needs'' Families could benefit in this research because couples would

be exposed to the need for them to guard their marriage jealously from all forms of separation so that proper values, norms, attitudes, customs and traditions of the society could be imbibed by the adolescents within the family and the society as a whole.

It is observed that there is a link between household structure and students' academic performance. This has brought about a comparison between students raised by grandparents and students raised by single parents and has attracted attention of experts from different fields.

Purpose of the Study

The general background and the purpose of this study is to investigate the possible contributions of household structures to the academic performance of students especially students raised by grandparents and single parentage.

Research Questions

i.   Is there any difference in the academic performance of students from single parent families and those from two parent families?

ii.   Is there any difference in the academic performance of male students from single-parent families and male students from two parent families?

iii.   Does any difference exist in the academic performance of female students from single-parent families and female students from two parent families?

iv.   Is there any difference in the academic performance of students raised by grandparents and students raised by single parent families?

Research Hypotheses

In pursuit of the research problems and to realize the objectives of this research or study the following hypothesis were raised and tested as a guide to the study.

i.   There no significant difference in the academic performance of students from single parent families and those from two parent families.

ii.   There is no significant difference in the academic performance of male students from single-parent families and male students from two parent families.

iii.   There is no significant difference in the academic performance of female students from single-parent families and female students from two parent families.

iv.   There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students raised by grandparents and students from single parent families.

Research Design

As a result of variation in people's notion about household structure, single parentage and grand parenthood, the research design that was adopted for the collection of the needed information for this study was the fusion of questionnaire technique with field observation and oral interview.

Population Covered

The population that was used for this study consisted of the students and teachers in the senior secondary schools, market women in selected markets in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. Because of age brackets of students which falls between the children and adolescent age, Boys and Girls in senior secondary schools in Ojo Local Government were used.

Teachers were included in the population because they are also parents and are involved in the day to day upbringing of children while market women were also involved in

order to give public opinion on the various influences and effects of grandparents on the students academic performance.

Sampling and Sampling Techniques

The sampling technique adopted for this study is the list of Senior Secondary Schools in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State. The first stage of the research involved the arrangement of all the names of senior secondary schools in the local government area in Ojo Local Government in Lagos state. Based on this, the first secondary school which appears on the list was purposely sampled. This sampling method was also used in sampling ten (10) students from separate single parent homes and ten (10) students who were raised by their grandparents, a total of twenty (20) students in each of the sampled senior secondary schools.

Moreover, teachers' attendance register were used based on the list of teachers that were physically present in each of the sampled schools on the day of the administration of the questionnaires which were designed for this study. Five teachers were used in each of the sampled senior secondary schools. In addition accidental method of sampling was used using ten market women in each of the sampled markets.

Instrumentation

The data used in this study were obtained from two main sources and these are primary and secondary data sources. The primary data was sourced from the respondents' responses through the use of questionnaires. The three types of questionnaires were respectively titled. Questionnaire on parenthood for students (QPS) and questionnaire on parenthood for teachers (QPT), also questionnaire on parenthood for market women (QPMW).

Each type of questionnaire comprises of two sections. Section deals with the personal data (Bio data) of the respondents and is made up of 7 questions. Section B are questions centred on how household structure and students academic performance affects children raised by grandparents and single parentage.

In an attempt to ensure that the instruments measure what it is purported to measure, the researcher subjected it to test re-test method on subjects different from the sample. These two responses from the test re-test method on subject different from the sample. These two responses from the test re-test were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient with a result of r=0.88 which revealed that the instrument are adequately sufficient to measure what it was meant to do.

Results

From the analyses of the information gathered an attempt was made to show the characteristics of responses in the instruments. Thus, the differences and varying degrees of responses as well as the results are revealed.

Analysis of Research Questions
Question One

Is there any difference in the academic performance of students from single parent families and those from two parent families in senior secondary schools in Lagos State?
In answering this question, items 1,3,4,5,6,7,9,11,13,and 14 of the teachers instrument were pooled and average is presented in table 1.

Table 1
Frequency of Responses Teachers' on Parenthood and Students' Academics in Secondary Schools

Items	%SA	%A	% U	% D	% SD	% Total
1	13	29	23	15	20	100
3	12	23	33	21	11	100
4	15	20	12	32	21	100
6	2	12	8	31	47	100
7	4	10	5	36	45	100
9	29	35	10	13	13	100
11	10	12	6	34	38	100
13	23	12	5	27	33	100
14	7	11	9	30	43	100
Ave.	**12.8**	**18.2**	**12.3**	**26.6**	**30.1**	**100**

Source: field work, 2013

From table 1, participants' response to the level of students' parenthood and school work in senior secondary schools was scored on average of 12.8% (SA) and 18.2% (A) and 12.3% (U). But 26.6% respondents Disagree and 30.1% Strongly Disagree that single parents are found wanting in their obligations to their children academics in senior secondary schools.

Question Two

Is there any difference in the academic performance of male students from single parent families and male students from two parent families in senior secondary schools in Lagos State?

In responding to this question, the academic records of sampled students of two hundred (200) students in all the ten secondary schools were taken along with their responses to the students' questionnaire to arrive at table 2.

Percentage of Academic Performance of Male students from -Single Parent Families and Male students from -Two Parent Families in Senior Secondary Schools in Lagos State

Table 2

Subject	Male- Single Parent Families				Male- Two Parent Families			
	Distinction	Credit	Pass	Fail	Distinction	Credit	Pass	Fail
Eng.	5.88	40.11	38.10	15.91	4.19	39.06	41.00	15.75
Maths	9.03	37.56	40.17	13.24	9.01	35.11	39.99	15.89
Bio.	15.11	36.13	39.01	9.75	12.11	47.00	31.00	9.89
Econs.	16.23	50.11	30.17	3.49	15.33	46.12	28.55	10.00
Ave.	**11.56**	**40.98**	**36.86**	**10.60**	**10.16**	**41.82**	**35.14**	**12.88**

Source: field work, 2013

From table 2, the disparities in results of both male-single parent families and male-two parent families were minimal. In English an average of 5.88 candidates had distinction in male-single parent families whereas an average of 4.19 candidates made distinctions in male-two parent families. A cumulative average of 40.98 and 36.86 had credits and passes in male-single parent families while in the male-two parent families, a cumulative average of 41.82 and 35.14 had credits and passes.

But, average failure was higher in male-two parent families (12.88) than in male-single parent families (10.60). See figure 1.
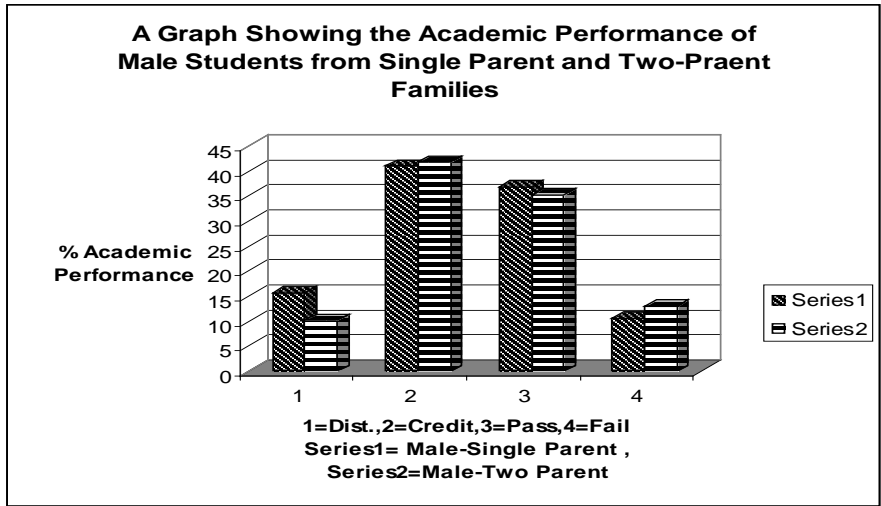
Figure 1: Derived from table 2.

Hypotheses Testing

In testing the hypotheses advanced for this study, the performance of students in English, Mathematics, Biology and Economics in conjunction with responses from the teachers, students and market women questionnaires were used in finding out the significant differences with the variables identified in each hypothesis.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students from single parent families and those from two parent families. In testing this hypothesis t-test analysis was used.

Table 3

Summary of t-test on the Academic Performance of Students from Single Parent Families and those from two Parent Families in Senior Secondary Schools.

Source	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	SEM	df	t-cal	t-tab	Sig.
Single-Parent	100	25.1025	19.07951	4.27	199	.276	1.96	P>.05
Two-Parent	100	23.4635	18.41829	4.12				

NS = Not Significant

The t-test result presented in table 3 was used in establishing whether or not significant difference existed between the means. The data on the table shows that the t- cal. = .276 is less than the t-table value of 1.96 at P>.05 and at df = 199. The implication of this is that the differences observed in the results between the students of single-parent families and two-parent families in senior secondary schools are not significant.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference in the academic performance of male students from single parent families and male students from two parent families. In analyzing this hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA was performed.

Table 4

Summary of One-way ANOVA of the Academic Performance of Students from Singl Families and those from two Parent Families in Senior Secondary Schools.

Source of Variations	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6116.840	3	2038.947	83.742	.000
Within Groups	681.741	28	24.348		
Total	**6798.581**	**31**			

* Significant

The result of the one-way ANOVA performed revealed that significant difference among the mean exists. Df=(3,28), F-cal= 83.742 > F-val = .000, P< .05 . This implies that the hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference in the academic performance of male students from single parent families and male students from two parent families in senior secondary schools.

Hypothesis Three
        There is no significant difference in the academic performance of female students from single parent families and female students from two parent families.

Table 5
Summary of Mean Difference in the Academic Performance of Female Students from Single Parent Families and Female Students from two Parent Families in Senior Secondary Schools.

Source	N	Mean	SD	SEM	df	t-cal	t-val	Sig.
Single- parent	50	24.86	20.10	10.05				
					99	.715	.005	P<.05
Two-parent	50	24.92	16.95	8.48				

* Significant

        Table 5 shows the t-test analysis of academic performance of female students from single parent families and female students from two parent families in secondary schools in Lagos State (t (99) = .715 ; p> .05)
        Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the academic performance of female students from single parent families and female students from two parent families.

Hypothesis Four
        There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students raised by grandparents and students from single- parent families.

Table 6
Summary of One-way ANOVA of the Academic Performance of Students Raised by Grandparents and those from Single- Parent Families.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8332.310	3	2777.437	31.544	.000
Within Groups	2465.410	28	88.050		
Total	**10797.720**	**31**			

* Significant

        From table 6, the one-way ANOVA performed revealed that significant difference among the mean exists. Df=(3,28), F-cal= 31.54 > F-val = .000, P< .05 . This implies that the hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a no significant difference in the academic performance of students raised by grandparents and students from single- parent families.

Discussion of Results
        The percentage of academic performance of male students from single families and male students from two-parent families shows that in English language an average of 5.88 candidates had distinction in male students from single parent families whereas an average of 4.19 candidates made distinctions in male students from two parent families. A cumulative average of 40.98 and 36.86 had credits and passes in male students from single parent families, while a cumulative average of 41.82 and 35.14 had credits and passes in male

students from two-parent families (table 19). Therefore, average failure was higher in male students from two parent families (12.88) than in male students from single parent families (10.60).

In the light of the above findings, it is vivid that the result of the findings did not corroborate the opinion of Haralambos and Holborn (2008), that being a single parent is stressful because the responsibility of the children the home and the bills resting on the shoulders of a single parent can be overwhelming, therefore a single parent may not be able to face the educational challenges of the child.

The above result shows that children from single parent can still be serious and attain a high academic level depending on the capability of such a single parent. The researchers' view is supported by Scepter and Prensky (2009), which said that the extent to which the child's intellectual potentialities for success in educative processes can be realized depend initially on how the parents who transmitted these potentialities can provide and sustain them.

Credence to this result Modo (2001), observed that children from single home tend to perform less well in school and gain fewer educational qualifications. The website adds that children from single parent families are three times likely to drop out of school than children who live with both parents, even when they have the same intelligence levels and academic capabilities. According to Giddens (2009), students who live in homes led by only one of their parents attend school less and drop out more. The adoption com website indicates that children from single-parent households often have more difficulty performing in school and may achieve at lower levels than their counterparts from two parents households.

It has also been observed that the academic performance of children raised by grandparents is nothing to write home about, this could be ascribed to the weakness of the grandparents are found to over pampered and are less disciplined due to the fact that the grandparents have become weak and are no more agile, they are no longer strict and can no longer enforce disciplinary actions because of their ages. Moreso, in most villages, grandchildren are seen leaving with their grandparents as helpers who go about on errands, hawking and doing all other house chores. As a result of this they become over laboured and have little or no time for their academic activities.

Contribution to the Study of Knowledge

The study has contributed significantly to knowledge in several ways:

Firstly, an individual who has not become a victim of single parent would likely guard against becoming one if he/she comes across this work.

Secondly, families could benefit in this research in the sense that couples would be exposed to the need for them to guard their marriage jealously from all forms of separation, so that proper values, norms, attitudes customs and traditions of the society could be imbibed by the adolescents within the family and the society as a whole.

Thirdly, it is also believed that the outcome of this study would help to impart positively on the society by opening the eyes of every member of the Nigerian society especially the lowly placed members like the illiterates e.g. the market women, among whom the incidence or case of child neglect is rampant when it comes to the issue of separation or divorce.

Lastly, the research could reduce divorce rate in the society, and could be of immense benefit to stakeholders in research on children education government establishment on children welfare and also it could be an invariable benefit to marriage counselors.

Conclusion

It has been noted that children are generally well-behaved in the community and school not only bring a good name the family but also a source of joy to the parents.

Therefore, parents should guide against becoming victims of single parenthood so as to improve the children's welfare and academic performance and also lessen the anxiety of teachers, school authorities, counselors, ministry of education, government and the society at large.

Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are hereby suggested to aid and improve the environmental quality in the study area.

1. The government should initiate educative and enlightenment programme on how to improve and sustain intact parenthood through the radio, television and other mass media.
2. Government should commit more funds to take care of victims of single parenthood.
3. Policy makers should always take the subjective views of their wards into consideration in order to avert the problem of single parenthood in the society.

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