INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL OCCUPATION AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of parental occupation and educational level on the academic achievement of Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students in English language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones of Anambra State, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of 16,886 students in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Ten (10) out of 51 senior secondary schools in the two Zones were randomly selected. Eight hundred SS2 students of senior secondary schools were selected by multistage sampling technique from the ten (10) public senior secondary schools in the two Education Zones in the State. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. Ex Post facto design was adopted for the study. Data were collected using document analysis (school records) for SS2 third term results in English language and Mathematics. Parental occupation and educational level were collected from students' records. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and t-test was used for hypotheses 1 and 2 while Two-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyse hypothesis three. The result revealed that parental occupation and education influenced academic achievement of SS2 students in English language and mathematics. Some recommendations were made thus: Governments and private companies should provide employment opportunities to give the parents betterpaid jobs. Governments and non-government organisations should improve on giving people loan with little or no interest to help them become self-employed.

Keywords: Occupation, Educational Level and Academic Achievement.

Introduction

In this period of high level of scientific and technological development, education plays a very vital role in a child's growth and development. Education is defined as all the activities involved in acquisition and transferring of knowledge, skills and other abilities that can contribute to human and societal growth and existence. Fafunwa, (2004) defined education as aggregate of all the processes which helps a child or young adult to develop the abilities, attributes and other forms of behaviour which are of positive value to the society in which he or she lives. Education can be formal and informal, but only formal education measures academic achievement of students after an academic task or work.

Anaedu and Okonkwo, (2016) stated that technological advancement of any society depends on educational attainment of people in that society. Education develops a child's cognitive, affective and psychomotor potentials which help the individual to function maximally in the society. The education of children by parents and significant others at home are likely to determine academic success or failure of the children. The National Policy on Education was provided by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in 2007 in order

to achieve the national objectives of secondary school education as they are in the policy. The objectives are:

- -Provide all primary school graduates with the opportunity to further their education at a higher level irrespective of sex, religion or ethnic background.
- -Cater for differences in interests, talents for opportunity and future roles.
- -Foster national unity of all Nigerians.
- -Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the feelings of others, respects the dignity of labour, be patriotic and good citizens.

The family as the primary agent of socialization remains the bedrock of any child's educational growth and development. Therefore, the occupation and educational level of parents have a lot to contribute to the academic growth and development of every child. Parental occupation and educational level determine income of parents, which enable them to cater for their children's upbringing. High parental occupation and educational level provide high income which helps parents to provide for their children's learning needs. When children are provided enough learning materials and conducive atmosphere to learn, they are likely to get good academic achievement in their academic task.

Akujieze (2003) stated that parental occupation measures social position by describing job characteristics, decision-making abilities and control, psychological demand on the job. Parental education is the level of academic qualification that parents obtained. Academic achievement simply means the score assigned to academic task or work performed by a student. The basic academic requirement in Nigeria is credit pass in five subjects including English language and Mathematics, in Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE), National Education Council (NECO) and General Certificate of Education (GCE). This is the Benchmark given by the Governing Board of West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO). Academic achievement of students was graded as follows by the Councils.

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0 - 39% = Fail (F)
40 -49% = Pass (P)
50 - 59% = Credit (C)
60 - 69% = Very Good (B)
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70% and above = Excellent (A) (source: www.scholar.com grading system Nigeria, 1981)

English Language and Mathematics are the compulsory subjects, plus any other three subjects which every student must pass at credit level to acquire good academic achievement. Any academic achievement below this is considered as poor in Nigeria, therefore it is very important to determine the academic achievement of senior secondary two students of Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones of Anambra State in English Language and Mathematics.

Many students find it difficult to get credit pass on these two compulsory subjects, especially in mathematics. Poor academic achievement impedes the future opportunities of these students to attend tertiary institution. Therefore, students, parents, educators, researchers, governments and non-governmental organisations would have to increase their efforts on how to improve the academic achievement of students. It is pertinent to identify the factors or variables responsible for the academic achievement of students. Crosnoe, Johson and Elder (2004) divided the factors into outside and inside school and termed them as students' factors, family factors, school factors and peer factors. Students' factors are intelligence quotient of students, reading habit, age, health status and others. Family factors are home environment, parental occupation and educational level, socio economic status of parents, family size, parental involvement and so on. School factors are school environments, school equipment, library, teachers, school administrators, infrastructures. Peer factors are drug abuse, cultism, examination malpractices to mention but a few.

Fafunwa (2010) blamed the poor academic achievement of students in Nigeria on poor infrastructures in schools, poor funding of schools by the government, parental occupation and educational level. The schools, families, organisations provide help and support to students in various forms for good academic achievement. Unfortunately, the efforts of these stakeholders are not enough and have not provided enough help to students. The academic achievement of Nigerian students in national examinations like West African Examinations Council (WAEC), NECO, General Certificate of Education (GCE), Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB), have been poor in spite of all the efforts made by parents, government, school administrations, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to enhance students' academic performance.

Voluntary agencies like United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF), Communities, parents and individuals have invested in Nigerian educational sector, yet the academic achievement of students are yet to improve.

The recent result of WAEC, NECO, and JAMB in 2017/2018 revealed that students' performance was poor in Otuocha and Ogidi Education Zone, Anambra State. In Nigeria, students are required to obtain five credits in relevant subjects including English and Mathematic and have a minimum aggregate of JAMB score, before they can be admitted into Nigerian Universities. Any performance below the benchmark is not good academic achievement. Unfortunately, the rate of examination malpractices in the country do not allow for proper assessment of students' academic achievement. The poor performance has affected the growth and development of students, families and society. In general, Anambra State children in the last few years have demonstrated improvement in their performance at WAEC and NECO examinations. However, the improved performance is not uniform across the State. For instance, available school records from senior secondary school in Otuocha and Ogidi Education Zones, showed that less than 50% of students credited English and Mathematics (see Appendix I).

In 2018, the result improved but performance was just fair in 2013-2018. Anambra State has been on the top 10 list of States which performed well in SSCE. However, the performance of senior secondary school students in senior school certificate examination is low in public secondary schools in Otuocha and Ogidi Education Zone of Anambra state, unlike their mates in private secondary schools. It was based on this fact that the researchers decided to find out whether parental occupation and education level influence academic achievement of students in senior secondary school, in Otuocha and Ogidi Education Zones.

Statement of the Problem

The performance of students in the two zones under study in West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) has not been impressive, for instance, from 2010-2018, below 50% of students who sat for WAEC and NECO, (particularly WAEC) credited five subjects including English and Mathematics (See Appendix I). It is worrisome to know that students' academic achievements have been below average in public secondary schools in Otuocha and Ogidi Education Zones. Parents blame school system for the poor academic Achievement of their children, especially at external examination like WAEC and NECO. School management on their part blame parents for their aloofness in the schooling of their children. Some parents simply pay the necessary fees for their children and neglect other essentials such as purchase of text books and other accessories that enhance learning. A farmer who goes to farm with the necessary tools and implements should expect bumper harvest, and the reverse is also true. Similarly, a student with the necessary school materials including text books is expected to perform well academically. School management believes that parents have not provided a conducive home environment that will facilitate their children's learning and good academic achievement. Many researchers discovered that parental occupation and educational level have influence on academic achievement of senior secondary school students. Some of the research works were done in foreign countries like United State of America, India, Pakistan and China. Similar studies have also been conducted in some State in Nigeria.

The study has been carried out in other education zones in Anambra State such as Awka, Nnewi, Aguata and Onitsha Education Zones in Anambra State. The academic achievement of senior secondary two students in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones is still poor.

Purpose of the Study

This study sought to determine the influence of parental occupation and educational level on the academic achievement of students in Otuocha and Ogidi education zones of Anambra State. **Specifically, the study sought to determine the influence of;**

- 1. Parental occupation on academic achievement of senior secondary two students in English Language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones of Anambra State.
- 2. Parental level of education on the academic achievement of senior secondary two students in English language and mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones of Anambra State.
- 3. Both parental occupation and level of education on the academic achievement of senior secondary two students in English language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha Zones of Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this work;

- 1. What influence does parental occupation have on academic achievement of senior secondary two students in English Language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones.
- 2. What influence does parental educational level have on academic achievement of senior secondary two students in English language and mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones.
- 3. To what extent do parental occupation and educational level influence the academic achievement of senior secondary two students in English language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones.

Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following null hypotheses;

- H₀₁: Parental Occupation has no significant influence on the academic achievement of the senior secondary two students in English language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuacha Education Zones of Anambra State.
- H₀₂: Parental educational level has no significant influence on academic achievement of senior secondary two students in English Language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha education zones of Anambra State
- H₀₃: Parental occupation and educational level have no significant influence on academic achievement of senior secondary two students in English language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha education zones of Anambra State.

Methodology

The Ex-Post Facto research design was used for the study. This design was appropriate for the study because the researchers cannot manipulate the independent variables. Ex-post facto design yields useful preliminary information regarding the possible causes of some events (Nworgu, 1991). The design helped the researcher to find out whether or not parental occupation and parental educational level influence academic achievement of students in senior secondary school.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher collected data with the help of two research assistants for the ten public senior secondary schools in the two education zones. The researcher also briefed the research assistants on the objective of the study and method of data collection. Since the study is ex post facto, all the necessary information were gathered from the school records. The research assistants who are staff of the school helped the researcher to collect information on the occupation and educational level of the parents of each student from the forms students completed during admission. The data were collected from the records of third term results of senior secondary two (SS2) students on the two subjects, English language and Mathematics.

Result

Based on the analysis of this study, the following findings were made:

- 1. Parental occupational level has a high influence on students' academic achievement in mathematics but has a negligible influence in English.
- 2. Parental educational level has a low influence on students' academic achievement in Mathematics and a very low influence on students' academic achievement in English.
- 3. Parental occupational level has higher influence on students' academic achievement than parents' educational level.
- 4. Parental occupational level has no significant influence on students' academic achievement in Mathematics and English.
- 5. Parental educational level has a significant influence on students' academic achievement in Mathematics but have no significant influence on students' academic achievement in English.
- 6. Parental occupation and educational level did not have significant on influence students' academic achievement in Mathematics and English.

Discussion of Findings

This study identified the influence of parental occupation and educational level on academic achievement of SS2 in English Language and Mathematics in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones in Anambra State.

Table 1: Mean Scores on Parental Occupational Level on Students' academic achievement.

	Mather	matics		English		
Occupational Level	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
High level	512	58.12	11.61	56.00	15.40	
Low level	288	48.22	10.08	55.11	14.45	

According to findings in table 1, parental occupation has high influence on SS2 academic achievement in mathematics but low influence in English Language in their third term result, 2019. Students see mathematics as a difficult subject and exhibit phobia whenever they are exposed to be assessed in this subject. This could have attributed to the high influence of parental occupation on student's academic achievement in mathematics and low influence in English language which students consider easier than mathematics.

Although, these two subjects are compulsory in academic requirement in Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations and others, parents should provide learning materials and lesson teachers to help the students in their academic achievement. This is where the occupation of parents are related to their children's academic achievement. The result revealed that students of those parents with high occupation achieved better than their counterparts whose parents have low occupation. This is in line with Odika (2016) which revealed that parental occupation and educational level background influence the academic achievement of the students of public school in Anambra State. Qaiser, Hassan, Muhammad, Farid and Zaibum (2013) revealed that parents with prestigious occupation provide necessary reading facilities for their children than those parents with low occupation. Most often, the meagre salary of parents with low occupation make it difficult for them to provide the basic needs of their children, let alone academic needs leading to poor academic achievement.

However, Osuofor and Okonkwo (2013) revealed that parental occupation as well as their educational level had little influence on academic achievement of students in Biology in public school in Anambra state. They indicated that their result was in contrast to previous studies conducted on the topic.

In Nigeria, high rate of unemployment and economic meltdown had impoverished many parents especially, those in the rural areas of the country. High percentage of parents in these areas are of low occupation. Until the problem of unemployment is addressed, many parents would end up with low or no occupation, a condition that would invariably influence their children's academic achievement. Other factor like family size, students' intelligent quotient, health status and so on could also influence academic achievement of students in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones. This is why the researcher suggested further research on other factors that can influence academic achievement of SS2 students in Anambra State.

Table 2: Mean Scores of Parental educational level on academic achievement.

	Mather	natics	English		
Educational Level	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
High Education	496	54.44	11.57	57.12	15.22
Low Education	304	50.56	10.85	54.51	14.57

Table 2 revealed that parental educational level has low influence on students' academic achievement in Mathematics and a very low influence on students' academic achievement in English language.

This is in tandem with Ogunshola and Adewale (2012) which revealed that educational level of parents and students' health status had significant influence on students' academic achievement. This could be attributed to the fact that even uneducated parents are curious to sponsor and train their children to high schools. The parental educational level has low influence in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zone because many parents believe there that education is very important to their children's progress in life. Again these parents with low or no education engage in some other activities to make additional money that would help in catering for their children's academic needs.

Adesehinwa (2013) stated that some children with moderate or high intelligence quotient perform well in academic activities irrespective of their parents' educational level. However Farooq (2011) revealed that

parental educational level has high influence on students' academic achievement. The researcher is of the opinion that parents should improve on their educational level to help them secure a better job as well as coaching their children at home in some academic activities.

Table 3: mean score of parental occupational level and educational level on students' academic achievement.

<u>ueme remenu</u>	Mathe	matics		English		
Variation	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Parental Occupation	800	59.47	12.70	55.56	14.73	
Parental Education	800	52.5	15.21	54.89	14.97	

Table 3: Parental Occupational level has higher influence on students' academic achievement than parents' educational level. The parental occupation determines the socio-economic status of the family which also determines how parents provide for their academic activities, though some parents are not well educated but they have enough fund to train their children well in schools. This is because some parents engage themselves in more than one job to make money. For instance, some parents who are civil servants also engage on other business activities to make ends meet, especially, the low or no educated parents. Again, in some cases parents' income does not totally depend on their educational level, for example politicians, business tycoons, pastors and so on.

Table 4: Independent t-test of students' academic achievement based on parental occupational level

High Occupat Level	ional	Low Occupational Level								
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	P-value	Rmk
Mathematics	512	54.12	11.61	288	55.11	14.45	1.056	798	.291	Not sig
English	512	56.00	15.40	288	55.11	14.45	.804	798	.422	Not sig

Table 4 showed that parental occupational level has no significant influence on students' academic achievement in Mathematics and English language in Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones. Therefore the null hypothesis one (1) is accepted.

Table 5: Independent t-test of students' academic achievement based on parental educational level

High Education Level	onal				Educational Level					
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	df	P-value	Rmk
Mathematics	496	54.44	11.57	304	50.54	10.85	4.736	798	.000	Sig
English	496	57.12	15.22	304	54.51	14.57	.637	798	525	Not sig

Table 5 revealed; that parental educational level has a significant influence on students' academic achievement in Mathematics and have no significant influence on students' academic achievement in English language. Therefore, the null hypotheses is rejected in students academic achievement in mathematics where as it is accepted in students academic achievement in English language.

Table 6: Two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of students' academic achievement based on parental occupation and educational level

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Source	Types III Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Corrected Model	53.803 ^a	1	53.803	.279	.598
Intercept	4782656.302	1	4782656.302	24779.400	.000

Education x					
Occupation	53.803	1	53.803	.279	.598
Error	308235.961	1597	193.009		
Total	5090968.000	1599			
Correted Total	308289.7	1598			

a. R Squared = .000(Adjusted R Squared = .000)

The table 6 showed that parental occupation and educational level did not have significant influence on students' academic achievement in Mathematics and English Language. The null hypothesis is accepted. This is in tanden with Osuafor and Okonkwo (2013) who revealed that parental occupation and parental education have no significant influence on SS2 students' academic achievement in biology.

Conclusion

The study sought to determine the influence of parental occupation and educational level on academic achievement of SS 2 students of Ogidi and Otuocha Education Zones in English language and Mathematics. The findings confirmed that parental occupation influenced their academic achievement more than parental educational level. Although it was discovered that the influence was not high, more studies should be conducted on this topic in other education zones to determine whether or not parental occupation and educational level influence academic achievement of secondary two students (SS2). This would help to discover the best ways to improve students' academic achievement in Anambra State. Increasing job opportunity, agricultural activities, promotion of parents in their working areas and creating more business opportunities would help to improve and help them to provide for their children's academic needs. Parents could be encouraged to further their education to help them assess their children's academic achievement and discover their academic problems on time and assist them.

The findings of this study would help students, teachers, parents, school administrators and government to find good solutions that would help to improve the academic achievement of students.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings;

- Government and private companies should provide employment opportunities to give parents betterpaid jobs.
- 2) Government and non-government organisations should improve on giving people loan with little or no interest to help them become self-employed.
- 3) Parents should be encouraged by their employers to attend workshops, seminars and part time courses or in-service training to improve themselves on their occupation and education.
- 4) Employers of labour should pay their workers (parents) on time as well as giving them promotion on and as at when due. This would help parents to cater for their children's academic needs.
- 5) Parents could engage themselves on more than one source of income for example, vocational training or businesses to support their salary.
- 6) Parents Teachers Association (PTA) should create time to discuss and encourage themselves on the need to improve themselves financially and academically in order to help their children.

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