IMPACT OF HOME ENVIRONMENT ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN OWERRI ZONE, IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: This study explored how the home environment affects the academic performance of secondary school students in the Owerri Zone of Imo State, Nigeria. It focused on the impact of parental occupation, family size, and family structure on students' educational achievements. This study was delimited to government-owned secondary schools in Owerri Municipal of Imo state, Nigeria. The method adopted for the study was survey research design. The study's population comprised 1,030 respondents, including 64 principals and 966 teachers from 32 public secondary schools in the Owerri Zone of Imo State. A random sample of 206 respondents, representing 20% of the total population, included 32 principals and 174 teachers. Data collection was conducted using a researcher-designed questionnaire. The instrument's face and content validity were established through the review of two experts in measurement and evaluation and educational management and policy from the Faculty of Education at Imo State University, Owerri. Revisions were made based on their feedback prior to final approval. The instrument demonstrated a reliability coefficient of 0.89, determined using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Spearman's ρ). Findings revealed that home environment, including parental education, occupation, family size, economic status, and motivation, significantly affects students' academic performance, with supportive and resourceful home settings encouraging better educational outcomes among secondary school students in Owerri Zone. The study recommends that parents should spend time with their children and check their children's academic work, direct them where necessary, and discuss the academic problems of their children with their teachers or school guidance counsellors so as to detect the student's problems early enough and tackle it before it affects the students.

Keywords: Education, Home Environment, Academic Performance, Family Background

INTRODUCTION

Good education does not happen by chance. It is a product of an effective teaching and learning process, coupled with the effort of the teacher, the school, the students, the parents, and their various home environment. It is a known and widely accepted fact that environmental influence has always contributed positively or negatively to the success or failure of students in school. The success or failure in academic achievement does not always depend entirely on the intellectual endowment of the students but also on a number of other variables. Over a period of time, it has been observed that students who are exposed to the same lesson by the same teachers are likely to perform differently when they are evaluated (Fulton, 2017). Within and outside the school environment, students are faced with some factors that influence their academic performance, such as the location of the school, availability of instructional materials, and parental predisposition to education

(Osuafor & Okonkwo, 2014). Environment, according to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2008), is the natural conditions like land, air and water in which people, animals and plants live and interact.

Environment plays a major role in the life of every individual, whether students, teachers, employers, or employees. The environment can be physical or psychological. The physical environment deals with material aspects such as infrastructure and availability of resource facilities. The psychological environment includes the home, school, community, and significant other people in our lives, such as parents, siblings, and peers. Lewin (2018) has used the term 'life space' to explain the psychological environment. The Psychological environment enables us to understand the personality of an individual.

The environment plays a very remarkable role in the life of every individual and the educational aspect it has affected. Environmental influence in the context of this study and, by its definition, includes everything surrounding the learners 'studying ability that is directly or indirectly controlled or determined by the learner. Furthermore, if a close observation is made about how certain influences on our environment affect education, we will not only be forced to believe the negative trend but accept the fact that there is a need to accord a second thought to the interplay between environmental influence and students' academic performance in most of our core subjects including biology.

The school environment refers to both living and non-living factors within the school that influence the teaching and learning process (Falemu & Akinwumi, 2017). The components of the school environment include the classroom, laboratory, library, teacher quality, and mutual relationships between students and teachers. A healthy and attractive school environment makes for conducive learning and promotes students' pride in their school.

Home is described as the primary and most important human institution for the socialization of the child. The child's experience within the family definitely influences his or her behaviours; they have provided the child with the nature that he or she requires for normal physical, cognitive and psycho to social development. Home means an enjoyable, happy place where you can live, laugh, learn, and more so; it's where you are loved, respected, and cared for. The home environment entails emotional warmth displayed by parents while interacting with their children, provision of stimulating and learning experiences in the home, and physical surroundings, such as safety of play areas and cleanliness. A healthy and safe home environment is essential for promoting and protecting health and development during childhood. The environment plays a very important role in one's personal growth. (Rono, 2018) Stated that parents who provide a warm, responsive and supporting healthy environment encourage exploration, and learning materials accelerate their children's intellectual development. Children need stable, supportive social environments and access to resources within the home to enhance cognitive, emotional, and physical development. Alternatively, unstable, noisy, chaotic home environments have negative effects on children's health and development. Children are motivated to work on activities and learn new information and skills when their environments are rich in interesting activities that arouse their curiosity and offer moderate challenges (Chukwudi, 2019).

In this study, location of the school, accessibility, school cleanliness, security and class size are some factors within the school environment that were found to have influence on the process of teaching and learning hence the school location remains an important area

that should be studied and considered in establishing new schools to enhance students' academic performance (Ajila & Olutola, 2017).

The academic performance of any child cannot be separated from the home environment in which the child lives; a healthy home environment offers emotional security to a child. The academic performance of students is a key feature in education. It is considered to be the centre around which the whole education system revolves. Academic performance refers to the level of achievement or learning outcomes of students. According to (Kang Moore, 2022), academic performance 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 examination results. He opined that the academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution. (Mario, 2022) also argued that the academic performance of students has an influence on the socio-economic development of a country. In the same vein, Young, (2023), asserted that students' academic performance serves as bedrock for knowledge acquisition and the development of skills. Moreso (Dusk, 2020) emphasized that the top most priority of all educators is academic performance of students. (Narad, Bilkees Abdullah, 2019) asserted that performance tests are used to arrive at academic performance. Therefore, performance tests are instruments used to measure learning abilities.

On the home-based factors, literature review indicated that parents who always check student's school work at home, encourage such students to learn at home because they receive guidance in doing their homework. Parents' social and economic status are also part of students' home backgrounds that influence academic performance of students. Onwukwe, Anyanwu and Agommuoh (2017) studied influence of parents' socio-economic status on academic achieves of secondary in Owerri Imo state, Nigeria. In their study, they came to the conclusion that students from different socio-economic backgrounds achieved differently when taught by the same teachers and in the same environment.

In the same vein, Chukwuemeka (2013) carried out research on the influence of environmental factors on the academic performance of students in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study concluded that schools should be cited in areas that are not noisy, school should try to maintain their schools facilities and teachers should relate well to all students no matter their background in other to enhance the academic performance of the students. The study suggests the need for a holistic approach, considering the interplay between the school and home environment and to effectively support the academic performance of secondary school biology students.

Considering the powerful influence that environment has on the student and its importance as a primary influence on the aspiration of the students, it could be argued that the academic performance of the students could be enhanced or hindered depending on the environment the students come from. It appears that many people have not yet recognized that the environment has a great impact on student's academic performance. Based on the information above, this study will critically look at the influence of environment on the academic performance of students in secondary schools. The goal of this study is to critically examine and analyse the impact of environment on the academic performance of biology students of senior secondary schools in Owerri Municipal of Imo State.

Statement of the Problem

Parents nowadays do not give adequate attention to the education of their children. It appears some of the parents have erroneous notions about the performance of their children; they do not know and seem to fulfil their role of guidance and encouragement in the child's performance in school. Some people also believe that mass failure or success in schools can be traced back to the teachers and the school authorities. Most students in Nigerian secondary schools are at greater risk of poor academic performance in both internal and external examinations.

Parents, teachers, students, and government should be held accountable for students' poor performance in schools. Parents blame teachers for lack of dedication to duties. The teachers blame the government for poor salaries; hence, they are poorly motivated; parents also accuse the government of not equipping the schools with learning materials, the government blame parents for not doing good homework, and the students are blamed for lack of discipline and dedication to their studies.

Statics on the academic performance of secondary school students have shown that there has been a persistent poor performance of secondary school students in internal and external exams. Students who are exposed to some teaching and learning experiences perform differently. It has also been proved by psychologists that a difference in intelligence is not the only factor responsible for the difference in the performance of students. Moreover, very scanty attention has been given to most aspects of the home background of students like parental level of education, parental occupation, family size and type of family as it affects their academic performance. The problem of this research work, Therefore, is to find out the impact of the home environment on the academic performance of secondary school students in Owerri Zone, Imo State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the impact of the home environment on academic performance in the Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria. Specifically, the study will:

1. investigate how socioeconomic factors at home influence students' academic performances in the Owerri zone,
2. assess the impact of the home environment on the academic performance of students influences academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The study will provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What are the socio-economic factors that influence the impact of the home environment on academic performance in the Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria?
2. What are the home structure/background that influences the impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis formulated was tested at a 0.05 level of significance to guide the study.

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of socio-economic factors and structural background influence on the impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Home Environment

The home environment is one of the closest environments that young children are exposed to and learn from, and this environment influences and shapes the child's development. Home environment refers to the overall conditions and factors present in a household, including emotional warmth, provision of stimulating and learning experiences, and physical surroundings such as safety and cleanliness. It plays a significant role in shaping child development, with children from less affluent families typically experiencing fewer enriching environments compared to their more affluent counterparts. The quality of the home environment has been found to be a key factor influencing children's academic achievement and behavioural outcomes, particularly for children living in poverty.

The home or the family is the institution the child enters that is to say that the home is a place where the child's earliest education and socialization begins. According to Nwachukwu and Agulanna (2020), the home is described as the primary and most important human institution fir the socialization of the child. The child's experience within the family definitely influences his behaviours; they have provided the child the nature which he or she requires for normal physical cognitive and psycho to social development. The child usually builds his self-image in the home based on the members of the family status in the society. To a large extent, the home being the child's first part of call in the society constitutes his reference point for evaluating his behaviour expectation and performance against that of children from other families. The foundation that is laid for the child in home equips him for the challenges he will face in the future. What the child learns at home and how his family motivated him towards education contributes to the child success or failure in school.

Ali (2019) in his explanation holds that stimulating home environment may teach generalized skill the help children to profit more from school institution that peer from less stimulating environment furthermore, he asserts that it is possible that some parents teach their children to value the kind of learning activities the school provide and these enhance their motivation to do the work the school set before them. Ogwu (2015) contended that the home provides an important for which the child's learning capacity is enhance. Douglas (2021) asserts that the exact environment has not been determined. It seems to be at least plus or minus 15 point he continued that any person below 90 intelligent that is below average intelligent quotient (IQ) level is classified as dull. But exposure to stimulating environment has the tendency of increasing the person's intelligent quotient level from 90 to about 105. Hence, these will make a person formally below average intelligent to be classified into the upper figure of a person with average. Farooq (2018) opined that minority of children is faced with having to develop functional adaptation to two sets of environment, to the home and neighbourhood on one hard and to the large "main stream" society particularly the school on the other hand.

According to Pedrosa (2017) and Khan (2016) the home and neighbourhood environment and school environment present the child with different sets of demand characteristics. The child's success in school environment depends on the degree of overlap or continuity on the demand characteristics of the home neighbourhood. Asikhia (2018) posited that environmental

conditions that determine how the individual's intelligent quotient will develop include nutrition health, quality of stimulation, emotional climate of the home and the type of feedback elicited by behaviour. in continuation, he said that given children with the same goes, the child with better parental and postnatal nutrition, the more, intellectually stimulating and emotionally secured home and the more appropriate reward for academic accomplishment will attains a high (7Q) score, when tested in grade. He posited that environmental condition accentuate whatever differences intelligence that are present at birth.

Ogwu, (2015) emphasized the intrinsic interconnectedness of the family and the school and the connectedness of the family and the school and the importance of these interconnections to development of children. He further argued that in the last two decades there has been a breakdown of the ties between the home and the school resulting in increased stress on the children and is on evidence of increasingly disturbed psychological functioning. This analysis shows that there is need to examine the relationship between the home and school and the developmental impact on the academic performance of the child. Agulanna and Nwachukwu (2020), in the study, found out that the amount of conversation in the home, particularly that directed towards the child, relates significantly to the child's performance on development tests. Elizabeth Fraster, in her study "Home Environment and the School" (2018), investigated whether there is a relationship between factors in the home environment of the child and his progress in school. She found out that factors in the home environment correlated with school more than they did with intelligence. The environmental factors which she found to have contributed most to the difference were partly socio-economic, motivational and emotional. It follows, therefore, that the socio-economic status of the parent, together with the atmosphere of the home, impact of the child's academic performance. Seeing the emotional state of the child determines how successful he is going to be in his academic pursuit.

Factors which make up "Home Environment"

When we talk of home environment, there are factors that make up this home environment and these factors influence student academic performance which includes:

A. Parental Level of Education

Education has to do with the process of training one through school from one level to another in order to obtain the knowledge and skills which he requires for effective living. Jacques maintained that the word education has a triple jet intermingled connotation and refers to (in its broadest sense) any process by means of which man is shaped and led towards the fulfilment of that task of formation which adults undertake intentionally with regards to youths or in it strictest sense, the special task of schools and universities. According to Chukwudi (2019), education is the process through which the individual is helped to develop his potential and maximum activation when necessary, according to the right reason, and to achieve thereby his perfect self-fulfilment. During the colonial period in Nigeria, formal education was restricted to a handful of men of privileged birth and wealth; thus, very few people had the opportunity to partake in formal education in modern times. Today, however, it is no longer possible to educate only a minority. The level of educational attainment of people determines their exposure and influences their understanding and behaviour towards certain issues in life. For instance, a father with only a first school leaving certificate may not have an understanding of the requirements for training his child in a university education and what it takes to train a child in a higher institution. Parents' level of education is a better predictor of success in student's

academic pursuits. This is because parents' level of education determines their level of occupation, which in turn determines their income level.

Eshetu (2017) asserts that it is becoming apparent that the well-educated are today able to ensure, by their wealth and their ability to understand and manipulate the school system, that their own children receive good and better education than themselves and that they will constitute the educated elite of the coming generation. Rono (2018) posited that educational status of parents affects the demand they make on their children she added that elite parents understand the role of individual differences among their children and this help them to accommodate and encourage their children. Thus, encouraging children motivates them to improve their effort in their academic pursuit. As a result, children whose parents are educated stand a better chance to be motivated by parents and that aids their academic performance. However parental level of education determines the social class to which the home could be classified. Higher parental level of education brings higher paid occupation that places parent in the upper class thereby affording opportunity to invest more in children education ensure facilitating and conductive that enhance academic performance of the children.

B. Parental Occupation and Academic Performance of Student

The world occupation could be defined as what a person does to earn a living. It can be seen as service rendered in order to receive wage salary at the end of the service. Having seen what occupation means therefore occupational roles and property ownership and control are the criteria by which we define social classes. Occupational differs widely as regards their general desirability. The major determinant of desirability is the wage or salary, which goes with the job. Others include the nature of the work does, this opportunity for promotion working condition.

Concept of Academic Performance

Academic performance is the term that indicates a student's achievement after completing a course or subject from an institution. It measures students' learning across various academic subjects, which is assessed by formative and summative assessments. Academic performance influences the student's concept by telling him how other judges him and how he rates himself in relation to others. They also affect the amount of time and energy he can spend on social activities and this will how sociable he becomes. Academic performance contains cognitive, behavioural, and psychological connotations. Ali (2019) argued that academic achievement can be divided into two aspects: namely, cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes and psychological and behavioural outcomes. Ogwu (2015) and other scholars argued that in addition to cognitive ability, academic achievement also includes psychological factors such as intelligence, psychological change, perseverance. Mario (2022) believes that it can be divided into the following areas: knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, or appropriate behaviour. It contains values, analytical problem solving and social skills, among others, and Pedrosa (2017) believes that academic achievement value added is divided into three dimensions: core competencies, citizenship, and professionalism possessed. The study by Schulz (2016) explored the factors influencing the academic achievement of college students using cross-year data on variables such as academic achievement and social engagement and found that "the higher the level of the student's institution, the more academic achievement is influenced by the student's input (including factors such as academic engagement, social engagement, and learning goals).

METHODS

Research Design

The research design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey. The population for the study comprises 1030 respondents, who are made up of all the 64 principals and 966 teachers in the 32 public secondary schools in Owerri Zone I, Imo state. A sample of 206 respondents was selected randomly, representing 20% of the respondents' population. The sample consists of 32 principals and 174 teachers in the study area. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researchers. It was titled "Impact of Home Environment on the Academic Performance of Students in Owerri Education Zone I Imo State (IHEAPSOIS)". The face and content validity of the instrument was obtained after the appraisal and input made by two experts: One in Measurement and Evaluation and another in Educational Management and Policy. Corrections were made based on their observations before the instrument was approved for use. Thirty copies of the instrument were distributed to thirty respondents who were chosen from secondary schools in other zones that were outside the study area on two occasions within the space of one week for reliability. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.89 using Charles Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (Spearman's ρ). The on-the-spot administrative method was adopted, although those who could not respond immediately were given a day interval. This is to ensure a 100% return on the questionnaire. The method of data analysis adopted was that questionnaire items that have weighted mean scores that are equal to or above 2.50 are considered "agreed". In contrast, those whose weighted mean score was below 2.50 are considered "disagreed". A z-test was used to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Two research questions guided the study;

Research Question 1: What socio-economic factors influence the impact of the home environment on academic performance in the Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria?

Table 1. Mean ratings of the socio-economic factors on the impact of home environment on academic performance that influence students' academic performances in Owerri zone, Imo State, Nigeria?

S/N	The socio-economic factors on impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria	Principals	SD	Teachers	SD	Decision
1	Late admission of the student in a school.	3.2	1.12	3.2	1.06	Agreed
2	Failure of parents to follow up on children's schoolwork.	3.2	1.05	3.2	0.32	Agreed
3	Poor Parents and students enter relationships at home.	3.2	1.05	3.2	1.00	Agreed
4	Lack of stationery, e.g., pens, exercise books, geometrical sets, educational materials, and supervision of the students' academic work at home.	3.1	1.11	3.2	1.2	Agreed
5	Family Socioeconomic status has an influence on the student's academic performance.	3.4	0.88	3.3	1.08	Agreed
6	The family income tells the type of School the child enrols in.	2.8	1.16	2.8	1.64	Agreed
7	The home structure of the student can Influence the academic performance of the student.	3.1	1.23	3.2	1.13	Agreed

Criterion Mean=2.50

Table 1 shows that items 1 to 10 have mean scores greater than 2.50. The respondents agreed that all the home factors itemised can influence the student's academic performance. All the items were rated above the cut-off point value of 2.50 on a four-rating scale.

Research Question 2: What are the home structure/background that influences the impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria?

Table2. Mean response of the home structure/background influence on the impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria

S/N	Home structure/background influence on impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria	Principals	SD	Teachers	SD	Decision
1	Home size and Parents interest towards the student's academic activities helps the student's academic excellence in school.	3.1	1.20	3.2	0.96	Agree
2	On time enrolment of students in school by the Parents encourage students to perform well.	3.0	1.16	3.1	1.20	Agree
3	Family's that are together can also enhance a student's academic performance.	3.2	0.94	3.3	0.97	Agree
4	Provisions of modern mechanical or electronic Devices or tools at home enhance a student's academic performance.	3.1	1.09	3.2	1.03	Agree
5	Sufficient provision of necessary school needs to the students can encourage the student's academic performance.	3.1	1.02	3.1	0.63	Agree
6	Good interaction between Parents and children can enhance children's academic performance.	3.1	1.14	3.0	1.17	Agree

Criterion Mean=250

Data in Table 2 showed that items 11, 12, 13… and 18 have mean scores greater than 2.50. It revealed the Impact of the Home Environment on students' Academic Performance, with all the items rated above the cutoff point value of 2.50.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 3. Z-test on there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the response of the principals and teachers on the socio-economic factors and structural background influence on the impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria

Respondents	N	X	SD	Z-tab	Z-cal	Level of significance	Decision
Principals	32	3.1	1.09	1.96	2.31	0.05	Ho is not rejected
Teachers	174	3.2	1.03				

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the Responses of the principals and teachers on the socio-economic factors and structural background influence on the impact of the home environment on academic performance in the Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria. Data in Table 3 showed Z-cal score (2.31) was greater than the Z-table score (1.96). Sequel to this, it was agreed that the null hypothesis has no significant difference

between the mean ratings of the response of principals and teachers on the socio-economic factors and structural background influence on the impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo state, Nigeria was not accepted.

DISCUSSION

The result of this study indicated that the impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri Zone, Imo state, Nigeria include all that was listed in the table above. This in line with the findings of (Farooq, 2018) observed that Family financial resources, which are associated with parents "occupation and educational attainment, often imply increased opportunities both at home and in school. Indeed, family background is the foundation for children's development, as such family background in terms o family types, size, socio-economic status and educational background play an important role in children's educational attainment and social integration. Parents' Educational Background has an enormous influence on their children's education for several reasons, most importantly because they are their children's first teachers.

Singh et al. (2019) found daily study hours, socioeconomic status of parents/guardians and age as factors that significantly affect academic performance. Similarly, (Asikhia, 2018) and (Douglas, 2021) also found the economic status of parents, their academic background and encouragement as factors that influence academic performance. Proper guidance from parents and teachers, communication skills, and learning facilities have also been found to be significant determinants of academic performance (Khan, 2016). The findings also indicate a combination of home, school, student and teacher factors, as well as environmental, personal, social, psychological and economic factors. Other authors have also found that age, gender and parents' level of education affect academic performance (Agulanna & Nwachukwu, 2020). It should be noted that these findings differ among countries, different academic levels and the subjects involved.

CONCLUSION

Results from the study indicated that parents' educational level, occupation, family size, economic status, and level of motivation are key variables of family background that significantly influence the impact of home environment on academic performance in Owerri zone, Imo State, Nigeria. Also, students from a sound family background naturally tend to perform better than their peers from a paltry family background. Based on this, the study advised that Students should be encouraged, monitored, motivated and supported by their parents and teachers. These results are vital information for all stakeholders in educational administration, practice and evaluation to note, especially parents of students who are at the home front, should support their ward's educational achievement by providing the right and most favourable home environment to enhance better school performance by the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents of students should yearn for higher educational qualification statuses since it will translate into better occupations and higher wages, that is, higher economic statuses; thus, better educational choices and offerings can be provided for their

wards.

2. Parents should endeavour to motivate and give their children adequate time to read and do their homework at home rather than engaging them in domestic and non-educational activities.
3. Parents and all the significant others at homes should make home environments to be learning stimulatory and study friendly for students.
4. Similar study may be replicated at other locations, at any other level of Nigeria's educational system in any part of the country.
5. Parents should provide their wards with essential materials that will enhance educational achievement

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