

Influence of Broken Homes on the Academic Performance of Public Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

¹Olunwa, F. J; ¹Minaye D. C.; ¹DR. Ray-Koko, M.O.

National Teacher Institute (NTI) Kaduna. Port Harcourt Study Centre

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ABSTRACT

The influence of broken homes on academic performance on public secondary schools in Port Harcourt, Nigeria was investigated, to examine the extent to which family status of parents affect the motivation and encouragement of secondary school students. Survey design was used for the study and hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study investigated 10 public schools and results were tested using pearsons correlation. The work showed that there was a significant difference between students from broken homes as compared to those from stable homes. Also there is a significant relationship between broken homes and academic performance. It is recommended that parents should be enlightened on the need for parents to maintain a healthy relationship to build children up with an excellent education.

Key words: influence, broken homes, academics, public schools.

I. INTRODUCTION

The home, according to Abdulganiyu, (1997) is the primary institution for children. It is also defined as a place in which an individual or a family can rest and store personal property (Christe, 2009).

A broken home therefore is one in which the parents are separated or divorced or are no more together as a result of death (Homeby, 2004). Udry (2004) defined broken home to mean; a house in which the parents are no more living together. Home and the child's family provide the best and first education since the parents serve as the first teacher of the child, the parents lay the foundation for the desired social, moral, emotional, spiritual

and intellectual wellbeing of the child. The quality of training a child receives from home is imperative in his /her total personality formation and academic performance as a student in secondary school. It can also be observed that the pattern of life in the home (stable or broken), as well as the economic and social status of the family in the community and many other conditions influence the academic performance of students in secondary schools.

Haven defined the concept of home, it is therefore important to define family. Selimian (2010), defined the family as the first social influence in the life of a child. The family unit is considered one of the most influential components of a child's academic achievement due to the fact that it is the first source of informal education for the child (Sumari, Hussin and Siraj, 2010). AKubue and Okolo (2008), defined family as a small kinship structural group with the key function of natural socialization of the new born.

Family remains the primary environment of every child. The families begin the process of education and provide physiological and psychological needs of the child. Transmission of social values of right and wrong, what is morally and religiously accepted or condemned is by the family. It follows therefore, that by the time a child is of age, he must have learnt what his rights are, his obligations and roles within the society.

However, the home background of a student may go a long way to determine his/her academic performance. A home can either be stable or broken. A stable home is one in which both parents (father and mother) live together with their children, while a broken home is the one in which

one or both parents are not living together with the children.

The level at which the home operates may determine the academic achievement of a student in school. Also, children that have suffered from neglect or lack of love (in broken homes) are known to be psychologically imbalanced to face the realities of life.

Academic performance is the knowledge attained or skills shown in school subjects. To indicate such achievement, test scores or marks are assigned by the teachers. It is the school evaluation of the classroom work based on the grades awarded. Academic performance according to Akinboye, (2004) is of two types, namely; positive (excellent performance) and negative (poor performance). Habits, family background, perseverance, attitudes, interest, etc, all these affects academic achievement in school. The research will try to prove that if these variables are modified and attitude changed positively, then, the level of individual's performance would improve.

Research Questions

1. What is the difference between family status of parents and the effect of encouragement and motivation of secondary school students?
2. Does marital status of parents have an influence on the level of monitoring of secondary school students?
3. How does marital status of parents influence the academic performance of secondary school students?

Hypothesis

H₁: there is a significant relationship between family status of parents and the effect of encouragement and motivation of secondary school students.

Aim and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of broken homes on the academic performance of public secondary school students in parts of Harcourt city local Government Area of Rivers State.

In specific terms, this study has the following objectives;

1. To examine the extent to which family status of parent affect encouragement and motivation of secondary school students.

2. To assess the extent to which marital status of parents influence the level of monitoring of secondary school students academic progress.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design used for this study is the survey design. This type of design is preferred in this study because the study sought to find out influence of the independent variable (broken home) on the dependent variable (academic performance) of public secondary school students.

Sample size and Sampling Technique

The sample size for the study is 200 students randomly selected from ten (10) public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers state.

The respondents for this study were selected at random based on the attendance register provided by the principals of the respective schools. The schools were selected through balloting. Numbers were allocated to each of the public secondary schools according to their location. The numbers containing the name of the schools to be studied in two containers was dropped, then mixed up and each chosen at random.

Instrument for Data Collection

A self-designed questionnaire titled Influence of Broken Homes on Academic Performance of Public Secondary School Students Questionnaire (IBHAPSSSQ) was used for this study. The instrument was made up of 2 sections, namely A and B. Section A contains items eliciting bio-data of the respondents, section B contains items requiring the respondents to indicate their level of agreements or disagreement to the items using the Likert type amended scale which measures students' Academic performance (dependent factor) and influence of Broken Homes (Independent factor).

$$\text{The criterion mean (cm)} = \frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.5$$

III. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Research Question 1: What is the difference between family status of parents and the effect of encouragement and motivation of secondary school students?

Table 1: effect of encouragement and motivation of secondary school students? .

S/N	Home Background Variables and students' academic performance of single and dual parents	Students Responses				
		N	X	SD	Criterion mean	Decision
1	A home with both parents intact is characterized by love, care and togetherness compared to a home with a single parent.	200	3.45	1.61	2.5	A
2	Divorce or separation means relief from tension and the beginning of emotional recovery among public secondary school students.	200	3.34	0.768	2.5	D
3	Student from single parents are affected academically, emotionally and socially compared to students from both parents.	200	2.36	1.96	2.5	D
4	Student from single parents are characterized by abnormal personality and mental adjustment compared to students from both parents.	200	2.60	1.04	2.5	A
5	Students from single parents suffer from silence, isolation and grief compared to students from both parents	200	2.32	1.12	2.5	D
6	Students from single parents are more likely to revolt against the school authorities compared to students from both parents.	200	4.00	0.90	2.5	A
7	Broken homes present a real danger to the emotional, personality and mental adjustment of students compared to stable homes.	200	3.70	1.26	2.5	A
8	Peer group pressure is prevalent among students from single parents than students from both parents	200	3.97	1.06	2.5	A

SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree

The results in table 1 above shows that majority of the respondents (students) believe that a home with both parents (father and mother) intact is characterized by love, care and togetherness. Respondents also believed that students from single parents are characterized by some abnormal personalities and that single parenthood presents a real danger to the emotional stability of the student. They also argue that peer pressure is prevalent among students from single parents when compared to those whose parents live together. Finally, respondents strongly agree that students from single parents are more likely to revolt against the school authorities when compared to students whose parents live together.

However, majority of the respondents disagree that divorce means relief from tension and emotional recovery. They also did not agree that students from broken homes are affected academically, emotionally and socially. Some respondents did not also agree that students from broken homes suffer from silence, isolation and grief when compared to students from homes that are intact.

Research Question 2: Does marital status of parents have an influence on the level of monitoring of secondary school students?

Table 2: influence of the level of monitoring of secondary school students

S/N	Relationship Between Broken Home and Academic Performance of Public Secondary School Students	Students Responses				
		N	X	SD	Criterion mean	Decision
9	Students from public secondary schools are usually worried, upset and confused when their homes become instable.	200	3.69	1.41	2.5	A
10	Students from broken homes have biased minds about marriage compared to students whose homes are intact	200	3.80	1.05	2.5	A
11	Home status is very significant to students academic performance	200	3.71	1.28	2.5	A
12	Students' academic progress is influenced by their parents' interest and motivation	200				
13	Education is the responsibility of both couples in the home	200	2.61	1.04	2.5	A
14	Social background of the students affect their academic performance in public secondary schools	200	2.68	1.09	2.5	A

A = Agree

The results in table 2 above shows that majority of the respondents (students) think that students from public secondary schools are usually worried and confused when their homes become unstable and that students from broken homes have biased minds about marriage. Some respondents also believe that home status is very significant in the academic performance of public secondary school students. Finally, respondents argue that

students' academic progress is influenced by their parents' interest and motivation and that social background of the students' parents affect their academic performance.

Test of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: there is a statistically significant relationship between family status of parents and the effect of encouragement and motivation of secondary school students.

Table 4: academic performance of public secondary school students from single and both parents.

Variables	N	X	SD	DF	P	T-cal	T-Crit
Public secondary school students from single parents	100	4.80	5.60	398	0.05	17.91	1.960
Public secondary school students from both parents	100	12.50	2.60				

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained from the data analysis, the following conclusions are made:

That: there is a significant difference between the academic performance of students from broken homes when compared to those whose homes are stable, and there is a significant relationship between broken homes and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in PHALGA.