Family Characteristics as Correlates of Academic Performance among School Children in Fishing Settlements in Nigeria.

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Abstract - *In all societies, the family is the premier institution for the socialization of children, adult intimate relationship, life-long economic support and occupation and continuity of relationship along the life course. Scholars had argued for and against the fact that there is a strong relationship between family characteristics and children educational success or otherwise. This present study investigate family characteristics as correlates of academic performance among school children in fishing settlements of Ogun state, Nigeria. A descriptive research design was adopted. The target population comprisedall JSS2 students in Ogun water side local government area of Ogun state. Three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The samples comprised of 400 respondents and 8 junior secondary schools. Multistage sampling techniques were adopted. A self-designed questionnaire was used to collect relevant data. Data generate were analyzed using frequency count, simple percentage, mean, standard deviation and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Recommendations were made that there should be increase cooperation between the parents/ guardians and the school. Quality assurance unit of policy makers should ensure regular monitoring of school particularly in the area of teaching learning process.*

Keyword : *Family; Academic Performance; Fishing; Fishing Settlement.*

Introduction

Academic attainment is an important parameter used in measuring students' success or failure in a particular subject in schools. The correlation of family indicators and students' academic performance continues to pose concern to sociologists of education because of its implications for educational process and psycho-social developmentof children among others. Family structure has influence on students' academic performance [1]. For the purpose of the present study, the focus was on specific family characteristics such as size, family type and family support and their impact on students' academic performance. Small family sizes are linked to higher educational attainment [1]; [2]. In case of large family whether rich or poor, such large families are difficult to maintain and are characterized by a high number of children, rowdiness and these do not augur well for learning and school achievements. Large family engendered such problems as poor feeding, poor clothing, insufficient funds, lack of proper attention for children. It also leads to disciplinary problems which impact negatively on students' academic performance. The attention of parents is also reported to decline as the number of children increases as latter arrivals perform poorly than their senior siblings [2]. Children's family type is likely to be related to academic performance. Children can either belong to nuclear, polygamous or extended family system. Nuclear family consists of two parents and children. Children in nuclear families receive strength and stability from the two parents and generally have more opportunities due to financial ease of two parents [3].

According to United States of America census data, almost 70% of children live in nuclear families and statistics have also shown that children from such families tend to fare better on cognitive, emotional and behavioral areas [1]. In contrast, polygamous and extended family systems are made up of more than two generations of people. In addition, in the extended family system there is the tendency of parents not was being able to provide basic school needs such as; text books and other learning materials, critical to students' academic performance [4]. Academic performance is generally regarded as the display of knowledge attained or skills developed and acquired in school subjects. Such performance is indicated by test scores or by marks awarded by teachers. It is the school's evaluation of students' classroom work as quantified by marks or grades [5]. To this end, when academic performance is good, it means the student has done well and when it is bad, it means there is academic failure. The implication is such that

the children who failed may be asked to repeat a class, while the one who passed would move to the next higher level especially in secondary school.

Also, greater percentage of respondents (38.3%) earned between 21,000 and 30,000, implying low incomes hence the need for the children to engage in child labour activities as to supplement the house hold income. The findings further revealed that majority (80.8%) of the respondents had household size above eight persons which was largely attributed to the extended family system in the area whereby parents, children and other relations live together as a household. The study concluded that children were found to be involved in agricultural activities for the purpose of earning an income for the purpose of earning an income for the family. The present study examine family characteristics as correlates of academic performance among school children in fishing settlements in Ogun state, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The poor living condition of fishermen in fishing settlements has remained a source of concern. Fishing settlement is a rural environment. Like all such environments in Nigeria, they are characterised by poor or complete absence of infrastructures and social amenities which makes living their life in such area tedious and unattractive. It is clear that there is a relationship between people's environment particularly that of school children and their social, educational, psychological well-being. The nature of fishing settlements is likely to have implications for children's learning. The fishing settlements are often faced with different developmental problems such as lack of electricity supply, library, access road, pipe-borne water, learning materials like textbooks as well as a lack of qualified teachers among others. With non-availability of these human and materials resources, children are handicapped to excel in their studies. Poor quality of life in fishing settlements is likely to affect children's learning.

Family characteristics have been identified as determinant, to a large extent of their academic success or failure. For instance, poverty is disadvantageous to a child's educational success. Where children are undernourished, in poor-health conditions or sometimes with retarded mental development, where children are poorly provided for in school, they are likely to develop inferiority complex which often result in poor academic performance.

Whereas, when a child gets proper nutrition, good health, good care and appropriate stimulation during pre–school years and the ability to interact with and take optimal advantage of full complement of resources offered by any environment, effective learning takes place resulting in good academic performance. It is against this backdrop that the present study examined family characteristics as correlates of academic performance among school children in fishing settlements in Ogun State, Nigeria, specifically focusing on family size, types and family support.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to family structure as correlates of academic performance of school children in fishing settlements in Ogun state, Nigeria and to: 1) Determine the influence of family size on academic performance of children. 2) Examine the influence of family type on academic performance of children. 3) Determine the influence of family support on academic performance of children.

Research Questions

This study provided answers to the following research questions: 1) What is the influence of family size on children's academic performance?; 2) What is the influence of family type on children's academic performance?; 3) What is the influence of family support on children's academic performance?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance. 1) There is no significant influence of family size on children's academic performance?; 2) There is no significant influence of family type on children's academic performance?; 3) There is no significant influence of family support on children's academic performance?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would be significant to stakeholders in the education sector most importantly to students, parents, teachers, head of schools, education administrators, community leaders, policy makers as well as the sociologists of education among others. The parents would see the need for them to provide basic school need for their children. They would also guide them through their homework as well as provide adequate food, clothing and shelter. The findings would provide necessary awareness on the diversity in social, economic and home experience of students which serve as hindrances to schooling and encourage low academic performance in school. It is therefore expected that teacher would adopt best professional practice that will translate into good social skills, teaching methods, effective classroom delivery, and strategic motivation and so on all of which translate into quality lesson delivery that will enhance high performance of students towards high academic excellence.

Similarly, the findings of the study would enable the teachers to adopt mutual working strategy that will act as a bridge between the school, the head of school and the parents through feedback mechanism and appropriate record keeping on student progress report in continuous assessment. Furthermore, the finding of the study would assist in bridging the communication gap between the head of schools, the teachers and the students. It is also hoped that school principals will have a broad knowledge of the diversity in the social context of students with the aim of adopting better administrative strategies that would advance the psycho-social development of the students. The findings would make the heads of schools give attention to the educational delivery process and prompt feedback mechanism through regular Parent Teacher Association meetings. The findings of the study would assist the heads of schools provide enabling environment for teachers' motivation, monitoring of classroom teaching and learning process, provision of teaching aids, development of extracurricular activities to encourage and keep students in school as opposed to work because such would translate into reduction in school dropout, increase school attendance, and high academic performance for students. The finding of the study would guide sociologists of education in the review of teacher education program and process, provide necessary support to policy makers on how to bridge the gap between the school and the society.

Methodology

The mixed research method was adopted which include a combination of descriptive research design and interview schedule with the purpose of generating both quantitative and qualitative data respectively for the study. The area of study was Ogun Water Side Local Government area of Ogun state with latitude 60291N, 40241E and 6.4830N4.40E [6]. The target population comprised male and female students in public junior secondary schools in Ogun waterside local government area, Ogun state, Nigeria.Multistage sampling process was used for the study. Eight junior secondary school two (JSS II) were selected through random sampling method. A self-design instrument was used to collect relevant data. Students' Cumulative Average Score, (S-CAS) during the cause of the study in all Examinable Subjects in Junior Secondary School (JSS2) was adopted for academic performance. The content and face validity of the research instruments were ascertained by experts in Measurement and Evaluations. The reliability coefficient of the instruments was 0.76 using the Cronbach Alpha split-half statistical tool.

Data generated for the study were collated and analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The statistical tools used for analysis include: simple percentage, frequency count, the mean score, standard deviation, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent t-test. Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 were tested using ANOVA. All findings were held significant at the 0.05 Alpha levels.

Results

Descriptive Data Analyses of Respondents are presented in table 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Distributions of respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	181	45.25
Female	219	54.75
Total	**400**	**100**

Evidence in table 1 shows that 181 representing 45.25 percent of 400 respondents were male, whereas female 219 representing 54.75 percent were female.

Table 2: Distributions of respondents Exposed to Work by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	151	54.51
Female	126	45.49
Total	**400**	**100**

Evidence in table 2 indicates that 151male respondents representing 54.51 percent of a total sample of 400 were exposed to work, and 126 female respondents representing 45.49 percent were exposed to work.

Testing of null hypotheses:

Hypothesis One: There is no significant influence of family size on children's academic performance.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviations of Influence of Family size on Children's Academic Performance

Family Size	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Small Family	78	59.55	5.48
Moderate Family	199	58.28	7.55
Large Family	123	58.11	7.04
Total	400	58.48	7.04

Evidence in table 3 shows that 199 respondents representing the highest, were from moderate family, 78 respondents representing the least were from small family size, 123 respondents belong to large family size. While respondents from small family size had the highest mean score of 59.55, the respondents from large family size has the least mean score with 58.11 whereas those from the moderate family size has mean score 58.28. The table above also shows that respondents with moderate family size recorded the highest mean deviation with a score 7.55, the least mean deviation was from respondents with small family size whereas respondents from large family size has a mean deviation score 7.04.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in Family Size and Children's Academic Performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	114.588	2	57.294	1.158	.315
Within Groups	19647.162	397	49.489		
Total	19761.750	399			

Significant at $p < 0.05$; df= 2, 397

The result in table 4 shows that at 2 degrees of freedom between group, 397 degrees of freedom within group and 0.05 level of significance the F-stat.1.158 > P-Val. 0.315. This means academic performance is not significantly different among family sizes. As a result, the null hypothesis which state that: There is no significant influence of family size on children's academic performance is hereby accepted.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of family type on children's academic performance.

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviations on Influence of Family Type on Children's Academic Performance

Family Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Extended	172	57.78	7.18
Polygamous	78	59.97	6.85
Nuclear	150	58.49	6.89
Total	400	58.48	7.04

The result in table 5 shows that 172 respondents representing the highest are from extended family, the higher comes from nuclear family and 78 respondents which is the list were from polygamous family. It is equally observed that the polygamous family had the highest mean score 59.97; from nuclear family had the higher mean score 58.49 while those from extended family had the least mean score 57.78. It is observed that respondents from extended family had the highest mean deviation score 7.18; the nuclear family is higher with mean deviation score of 6.89 while those from polygamous family had the least with 6.85.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), on Influence of Family Type on Children's Academic Performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	258.703	2	129.352	2.633	.073
Within Groups	19503.047	397	49.126		
Total	19761.750	399			

Significant at p<0.05; df= 2, 397.

The result in table 6 shows that at 2 degrees of freedom between group, 397 degrees of freedom within group, at 0.05 level of significance, the F-statistics 2.633 > P-Val. = 0.073. As a result, academic performance is not significant among the three family types. This means the null hypothesis which states that: There is no significant influence of family type on children's academic performance is hereby accepted.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence of family support on children's academic performance.

Table 7: Mean and Standard Deviation on Influence of Family Support on Students' Academic Performance

Family Support	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Always	179	59.34	5.95
Often	215	57.71	7.85
Not often	6	60.17	.983
Total	400	58.48	7.04

The result in table 7 shows that a total of 215, 179 and 6 respondents responded to "often", "always" and "not often" respectively in family support variable. It is observed that not often has the highest mean score (60.17), always has the nest mean score (59.34) while the often has the least mean score (57.71). It is equally observed that the mean deviation scores in order of 7.85, 5.95 and 0.98 for often, always and not often respectively.

Table 8: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Influence of Family Support on Children's Academic Performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	274.91	2	137.45	2.80	.06
Within Groups	19486.84	397	49.09		
Total	19761.75	399			

Significant at p<0.05; df = 2, 397

The result in table 8 shows that at 2 degrees of freedom between group, 397 degree of freedom within group and 0.05 level of significance the F-stat. 2.800 > P. Val. = 0.062. As a result the null hypothesis which states that: There is no significant influence of family support on children's academic performance is hereby accepted.
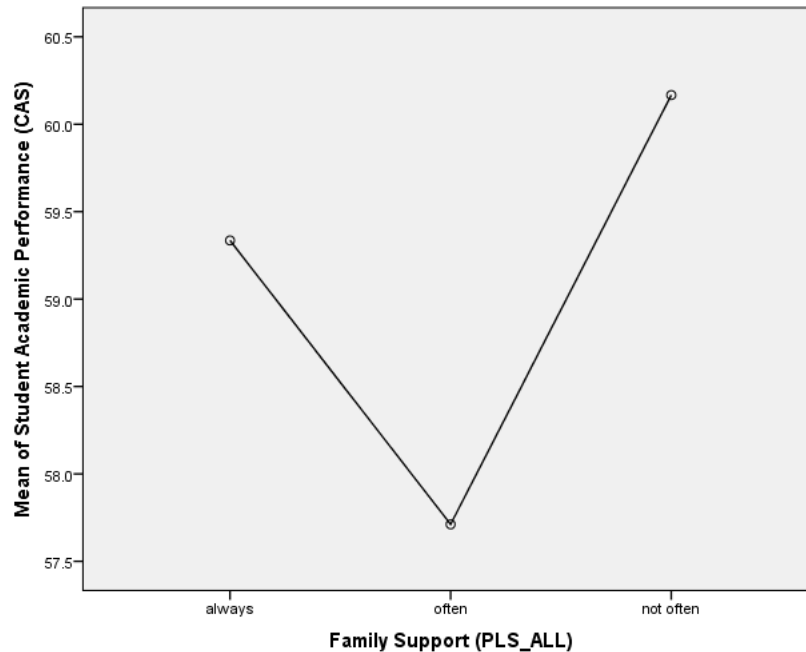
Fig.1. PLS= Parents' level of support

Figure 1 above shows the distribution of respondents' and their mean scores in academic performance according to levels of family support. The graph indicates mean scores 60.17, 59.34 and 57.71 accordingly with indicator, do not often get family support as the highest, followed by always get family support and often get family support as the least.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis One: The findings from hypothesis one indicate that there is no significant difference in academic performance of children and their family size. This implies that the size of the family, be it small, large or moderate family size considering nature of the remote environment where the study was carried out appears not an important factor in students' amenities Also, they create in the upbringing of children some identified problems such as; inappropriate feeding, poor clothing, insufficient funds, and lack of proper attention for children, disciplinary problems and malnutrition which impact negatively on children academic performance. This result is contrary to the finding of [1] and [7] who attested that family sizes are linked to higher educational attainment of students. [1], [7] and [2], explained that large families whether rich or poor are different to maintain. He argued that children with relatively small size families perform better in verbal and non-verbal tests, than children from large family size. [2] stressed that the reason is because children from large families have less frequent interactions with adults. Similarly, Powel and Stellman (2010) and [8] argued that children's academic attainment depends on inputs of time and money from their parents, the more children in a family the less of both inputs to individual children with consequence for academic performance.

Hypothesis Two: The findings from hypothesis two indicate that there is no significant difference in academic performance of children and their family type. This is in contrast to Okon (1994) finding that the nuclear family tends to make for co-operation and democratic type of relationship and those parents in such families pay attention to the education of their children by providing physical materials while at same time preparing the child for subsequent career. Similarly, [4] were of the opinion that polygamous and extended family system is made up of more than one family unit and extends across more than two generations of human beings and that extended family system leads to parents not being able to provide basic school needs such as text books which are necessary for students' academic performance. According to Ella, [3], the family type that a child comes from, nuclear, polygamous or extended, usually has an impact on a child's academic performance.

Hypothesis Three: The findings from hypothesis three indicate that there is no significant difference in academic performance of children and their family support. The study runs contrary to the position of Fan (2001) that parents' educational aspirations for their children prove to be strongly related to students' academic growth. The findings

did not agree with the position of Scgreehneider and Lee (1990) in that they linked academic success of East Asian students to the values and aspirations they shared with their parents, and also to the home learning activities in which their parents were involved with them. In addition, Harderves (1998) in [9] asserted that families whose children are doing well academically exhibit characteristic such as; motivating children's development and progress in school; that is, maintaining a warm and supportive home, showing interest in children's progress at school; helping him or her with homework, discussing the value of a good education and future career with children among others. The finding could be partly due to some factor like intelligence of the students of school, self-support or motivation, effective classroom delivery, positive or healthy competition among students among others.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the result and discursion of the findings of the present study it is evident that that none of the indices or independent variables of family size, types and family support has a significant influence on students' academic performance in this context, the fishing settlements of Ogun waterside local government area of Ogun state, Nigeria. With regards to the findings of the study, the researcher hereby recommend as follows: that there should be increase cooperation between the parents/ guardians and the school. Quality assurance unit of policy makers should ensure regular monitoring of school particularly in the area of teaching learning process.

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