

Effect of Family Environment on Student Academic Performance and Adjustment Problems In School.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates the effect of family environment on student's academic performance and adjustment problems among year one students of school of health Technology Keffi, Nasarawa State. The study included 168 students made up of 77 males and 91 females from four Departments in the School, ranging between the age of 16 – 20 years. The results revealed that family environment has no effect on Academic performance of the student; also there is no gender difference in school adjustment and academic performance of the participants. However, in cons tract, family environment has effect on school adjustment. This finding suggests the need for parents to pay attention on their relationship with children while in school as it may has effect on them negatively.

INTRODUCTION

Much concern has been drawn on the extent to which adjustment problem and poor academic performance among a significant numbers of health technology students become pressing issue facing health education. The concerns need to be studied in detail and solutions need to be built into the curriculum in order to help students with such difficulties.

In the attend, different form of researches have been carried on the difficulty in learning in school but little done in the area of comparing family environment, school adjustment problems and academic achievement among students in tertiary institutions. And it is an area that requires serious attention. This is because people have different family orientations, which has to do with their behaviors either to be good or bad. This includes how to cope with situations they come across in their daily lives and adjust to the expected behavior or task required of them.

Family environment appears to influence school adjustment as well as academic performance. Families in general and parents in particular, have often been deemed to be the most important support system available to the child. The strongest factor in molding a child's personality or behavior is his relationship with his parents. Students who have struggled academically in most cases are at higher risk of school avoidance, and ultimately dropping out, than those who are successful. Ideally school is a place that makes students feel competent and successful, which breeds motivation and self-confidence. For the struggling students, however, school is often a place that only serves to reinforce his already low self-esteem. He does not see himself as a "good student" nor does he believe it is possible for him to ever become a good student, especially if he has participated in past interventions that have only proven to be frustrating and unsuccessful. The student attempts to avoid these feelings of failure by staying home (Lytton and Romney, 1992).

This study has investigated the perception of family environment and its influence on school adjustment. It has also investigated the effect of parent – student's relationship on academic performance in School. And it has estimated the rate of poor adjustment among students in health institutions. Lastly it has investigated the effect of gender on the adjustment in school environment.

The findings of this study are additional information to the existing relationship between students, lecturers, parents of the students and student behavioral problems in Nigerian schools. It has also identified critical areas for the improvement of academic performance and coping strategies among students in Nigeria institutions. And also the study can be consider as an important material for further studies.

In order to ensure focus on this study the following hypotheses were formulated.

1. Family environment will likely significantly impact on academic performance.
2. There will be a likely significant effect of family environment on school adjustment.

METHOD

Participants

The subjects for this study were drawn from four departments in School of Health Technology Keffi, Nasarawa State, particularly year one students of the departments in their second semester. The departments include; Medical laboratory, Health information management, Community health and Environmental health department.

These are the only four departments in the school and because of that; they were automatically selected for this study. The study was based on year one students because majority of them represent the category of student required for this study.

The participants consisted of 168; made up of 77 males and 91 females. 42 from each department selected for this study. The age range is 16 – 20 years. They were also purposefully sampled based on their last semester examination results and report about them from their Departmental course supervisor. Those that qualified as participants with poor academic performance and adjustment problems were identified by their Departmental supervisors as having exhibited some behavioral problems such as absenteeism, cheating in examination, truancy, loneliness and poor academic performance etc, consistently over a period of time since their admission into the Department.

Design

The study employed a survey design in which two standardized questionnaires were administered concurrently to all the participants. The study has only one factor with three levels (well-adjusted, fairly adjusted and maladjusted), One-way Anova (Analysis of Variance) statistics is used to compute and analyze the variables. The design is 3 x 3 factorial designs:

The independent variables included the six subscales of family environment scale, i.e. family democracy, family cohesion, openness, supportive family, parental acceptance and family discipline.

Instruments

The two instruments administered include Family Environment Scale (FES) and School Adjustment Scale (SAS), developed by Ojiji and Tafida(2010). The **FES** – is a twenty-nine (29) items questionnaire to be completed by the respondents, answers are scored on (1) to (5) point. The questionnaires cover such areas as family democracy, family cohesion, openness, supportive family, parental acceptance and family discipline. Higher scores indicate the presence of effect or the nature of closeness between the participant and their parents.

SAS – Is a 45 item questionnaire designed to assess the views of student about their school environment. The scale has five components which include security, social interaction, esteem, anxiety, and competence. Responses to the items include True (T) and False (F). 1 point for each marked TRUE in the item and 1 for each marked FALSE item.

For the academic achievement, there is no any scale developed to measure the variable. The researcher used the student's last semester examination result in their classes to determine their academic achievement.

RESULTS

Results of the data collected was analyzed and presented below. The level of significance (alpha level) of 5% ($p \leq 0.05$) was used in the study. Stated hypotheses were tested using the One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and the Independent t-test. Below is the presentation of the findings.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 1: Frequency, and percentage on the three variables

		N	Percentage %
Gender	Male	77	45.8
	Female	91	54.2
School Adjustment	Well adjusted	26	15.5
	Fairly adjusted	137	81.5
	Mal-adjusted	5	3.0
Family environment	Weak	5	3.0
	Moderate	143	85.1
	Strong	23	11.9
Academic performance	Low	60	35.7
	High	108	64.3

A descriptive presentation of the data is summarized according to the frequency count and percentage of the categorical data in table above. It indicated that there were 45.8% of males as compared with 54.2% of females, 81.5% of the participants were fairly adjusted, also, 85.1% of the participants had a moderate family

environment, and 11.9% had strong family environment. Sixty-four point three percent of participants had high academic performance compared to 35.7% that had low academic performance.

Table 2: Showing the mean and standard deviation on the research variables

	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Age	168	19.31	1.09
School adjustment	168	21.42	5.86
Family environment	168	90.37	13.06
Academic performance	168	2.11	0.11

Furthermore, results for the mean and standard deviation scores indicates that the mean age of participants was 19.3 (SD 1.09), and the mean score on school adjustment by participants was 21.42 (SD 5.86). The mean score for family environment was 90.37 (SD 13.06), and mean score for academic performance was 2.11 (SD 0.11).

Inferential Presentation

Two hypotheses were stated in the present study and tested with the ANOVA and independent t-test statistical tools. The results are presented below:

Hypothesis 1: Family environment will significantly impact on academic performance.

Table 3: Mean table on academic performance

Family Environment	Mean	Standard Deviation
Weak	2.06	.09
Moderate	2.12	.11
Strong	2.13	.10

Table 3 above shows the mean scores on academic performance by participants with the various levels of family environment. Participants from a weak family environment had mean score of 2.06 (SD .09), those from a moderate family environment had a mean score of 2.12 (SD.11) while strong family environment had mean score of 2.13 (SD .10).

Table 4: ANOVA source table of effect on academic performance

Source	Type III sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-ratio	Sig.
Corrected model intercept	.017	2	.009	.675	.511
Family environment	154.459	1	154.459	2161.222	.000
Error	.017	2	.009	.675	.511
Total	2.096	165	.013		
Corrected Total	753.530	168			
	2.113	167			

The result indicates that there was no statistical significant effect of family environment on academic performance, Mean (weak 2.06, moderate 2.11, strong 2.12); $F(2, 165) = 0.675$. $p = 0.511$ Meaning that the family environment of participants did not influence the academic performance of participants.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant effect of family environment on school adjustment.

Table 5: Mean table on school adjustment problems

Family environment	Mean	Standard Deviation
Weak	22.80	4.07
Moderate	20.97	5.89
Strong	24.30	5.86

Table 5 above indicates that the mean score of participants from weak family environment on school adjustment was 22.80 (SD 4.07), with moderate family environment having a mean score of 20.97 (SD 5.89) and strong family environment having a mean score of 24.30 (SD 5.86).

Table 6: ANOVA Source table of the effect on Adjustment

Source	Type III sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-ratio	Sig.
Corrected Model	205.008	2	102.504	3.056	.050
Intercept	18027.140	1	18027.140	537.509	.000
Family environment	205.008	2	102.504	33.056	.050
Error	5533.325	165	33.538		
Total	83796.000	168			
Corrected Total	5738.833	167			

Results from table 6 above indicate that there was a significant effect of family environment on school adjustment of participants, Mean values: weak = 22.80, moderate = 20.97, strong 24.30; $F(2, 165) = 3.056$, $p = 0.050$. This means that the family environment type of participants influenced their level of school adjustment with those from a strong family environment adjusting well more than other family environment type.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research and their implications in human behavior are discussed together with conclusion, and recommendations.

Hypothesis one which proposed that family environment will significantly impact on poor academic performance of a student was not supported. The study revealed that different type of family environment of the participants did not influence their poor academic performance. Specifically, the result has indicates that there was no statistical significant effect of family environment on poor academic performance of the student, meaning the individual academic performance in school has nothing to do with the individual family environment negatively. This has agrees with the study of Christenson, S. L., Rounds, T., & Gorney, D., (1992), that revealed that parent relationship with their children has no any significant effect on the academic achievement of the student in school.

The implication of these findings is that, it is obvious as a result of confirmation that parents relationship with their children in school do not affect them in any way negatively, as it is reason in a common sense that parents relationship with their children affect their concentration in the school environment and as such affect their academic performance.

The second hypothesis which states that there will be a significant effect of family environment on school adjustment of the student was supported. That is, it is confirmed to the result of the analysis. It revealed to us clearly that there is a relationship between family environment of the student and their school environment in terms of their adjustment in school. In support of these findings, Peterson (1991) study assumes that adolescents' perceptions of parenting styles and school adjustment were significantly related. The findings suggest that family factors play an important role in influencing the psychosocial adjustment of the student in their schools. They do not have active roles, so they gradually form their own moral principles as dictated by the prevailing circumstances. To this finding therefore student are seen as a being without the power of realizing their own purpose to achieve ends. Instead they are individuals controlled by their past and the situation in which they find themselves. They develop abnormality by conforming to certain kinds of expectations of reinforcement. This study shows that the family environment of the students contribute to a greater or lesser extend adjustment problem among students in school environment.

Conclusion

The study has provided some clues on the effects of family environment on student academic performance and adjustment problem in school. The result has shown that family environment do not affect student poor academic performance in school. More so, students in respective of their sexes do not differ in term of adjustment problems and academic performance. It also revealed that family environment has effect or influence on student adjustment in school to be good or abnormal. This will assist in a long ways in improving the standard of the relationship that exists between parents and school activities.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- School authorities should develop a proper policy that will address the problem of student adjustment difficulty in schools.
- Special staff and counselors should be trained to handle and counsel students with behavioral problem in school.
- There is also need for government/school authorities to prepare a grand for student newly admitted into school on proper way of adjusting well to the new (school) environment.

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