

Psychosocial Variables as Correlates of Language Development among Primary School Pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State

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Abstract

This study investigated the psychosocial variables as correlates of language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study adopted correlational research design, the study was guided by three research questions and corresponding null hypotheses. The population for the study comprised all the primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. A sample of 380 pupils were drawn using purposive sampling technique. Four instruments were designed by the researcher for the study. The instruments are Parenting Style Scale (PSS), Motivation Scale (MS), Media Scale (MS) and Language Development Scale (LDS). Testing the reliability of the instruments, using Cronbach Alpha. Scores were collected and subjected to Cronbach Alpha. The coefficients obtained were 0.76, 0.77, 0.84 and 0.72 for the parenting styles, motivation, media and language development respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Result revealed a significant relationship between motivation, media and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. While parenting styles were not related with language development. It was recommended among others that parents and government should try and provide parenting styles to the primary school pupils, this will help to improve the language development of primary school pupils.

Key Words: Styles, motivation, media and language.

Introduction

At school, we believe that the development of Language and Literacy skills are of the highest priority. All staff, children and parents should realize that language is the main tool for learning and communication. The linguistic and cultural diversity of the school's population is considered to be both a strength and a rich resource in the promotion of language learning among pupils which in turn, fosters community cohesion and the development of social and literary skills. Learning language enables our children to become international citizens who are linguistically equipped and

culturally aware in a rapidly changing world. Language acquisition does not take place in a vacuum. As children acquire language, they acquire a sign system which bears important relationships to both cognitive and social aspects of their life. Psychosocial aspects of language acquisition are mainly concerned about how language, thought and social interaction interrelate in the child's development. The development of language is influenced by two distinct factors: the individual temperament (individual characteristics) and environment (contextual variables).

The temperament is configured by the tendency that the individual has to relate with one another. For example, children born with a predisposition to behave in a more inhibited way tend to engage less in activities that give them the opportunity to develop language, which may result in less reinforcement (praise, smiles, caresses etc.) by the people around them. Conversely, it is likely that children who are more outgoing are involved in social interactions in which they will have the opportunity to develop in language (Caballo, 2013). The influence of the temperament on the development of language can be counterbalanced by the environmental factor. This is because the environment acts to reinforce (or not) language development (Caballo, 2013).

Children in their development will receive a lot of stimulation directly or indirectly during their growth in the age range of 6-12 years (Syaodih, 2015). Some aspects that affect children's development include physical development, psychology and the ability to interact socially in their environment. In the age range of 6-12 years, children feel they need information from other people around who not only have family relationships, but they also want a lot of interaction with other people outside the family environment. For example, in the surrounding community and children's school, they will receive influences from various different aspects and goals, from the influence of attitudes, speech styles, vocabulary additions, and attitudes.

Children's language skills in their development can be seen and assessed directly from the child's speaking ability in various social situations, because it is very possible that there are different ways and styles of speaking for different situations and interlocutors. The speaking skills referred to by the researcher are a language skill that develops in a child's life, which is only preceded by listening skills, and at that time the ability to speak or speak is learned (Tarigan, 2017). Many things are related to language development in children, especially with regard to language development in elementary school-age children which includes (1) the nature of language development; (2) children's language development; (3) development of oral communication; (4) development of written communication; and (5) the development of reading and writing (Slamet, 2018).

According to Frank (2018), language development is the process by which children come to understand and communicate language during early childhood. From birth up to the age of five, children develop language at a very rapid pace. The stages of language development are universal among humans. However, the age and the pace at which a child reaches each milestone of language development vary greatly among children. Thus, language development in an individual child must be compared with norms rather than with other individual children. In general girls develop language at a faster rate than boys. More than any other aspect of development, language development reflects the growth and maturation of the brain. After the age of five it becomes much more difficult for most children to learn language.

The external influence factor is not the only forming ability factor for speaking, there are also internal factors related to the psychological factors of elementary school children. Like the ability of utterances, intuition, and pressure from various external factors. Language development is direct access to communication in the community in a variety of environments that allow the emergence of a complex and sustainable social atmosphere (Susanto, 2016). Indeed, it is undeniable that communication skills are always changing and relatively developing, adjusting the talk page. This is similar to the statement of Slamet (2018), regarding language skills always giving and getting influence from several factors, in this case, external and internal factors in human psychology.

The age of elementary school children is the best time to form language characters in children from the age of middle school children or the age of teenagers. Primary school teachers must have new references that are more accurate in shaping the character of children's language skills by applying diverse and continuously developed learning theories (Susanto, 2016). Teachers must have the ability to understand the development of elementary school-age children with several aspects of the review, which include physical and motoric character of children, development of perceptions, the character of language development, development of independence and career development of elementary school-age children (Budiman, 2016).

Many factors may be responsible for the development of children's language development or the rate at which children acquires literary skills. These factors include 1) environmental risk factors such as living in an unsafe community, birth order, lack of resources available in the community or lack of policies supporting children, home location and families, etc. 2) family risk factors such as depression or mental illness in the family, parental substance abuse, family violence, birth order, maternal care, etc. and 3) within-child risk factors such as a fussy temperament, developmental delay, and serious health issues. All of these factors need to be taken into careful consideration when gathering information to fully understand and support children's language development through a comprehensive, ecological approach. But this research work will focus on parenting styles, motivation, peer group and media.

As infants become children, parenting takes on different approaches, structures and form. It is difficult and almost impossible to find parents, who adopt similar parenting structures, or styles across various ages of their children development (Driscoll, 2013). The concept of parenting style, although used differently in conceptualization and operationalization, is something most individuals are aware of, and therefore there are many opinions on the best or better way of achieving exemplary parenting. Within the psychological perspective, various models and theories of parenting styles have been proposed and considered for scholarly investigations, but the most popular has been that of Diana Baumrind developed in the 1970's. Various definitions of parenting style exist in the literature. According to Eriega (2010), parenting styles describe the constellation of strategies that parents adopt in rearing their children. Akhtar (2012) describes parenting styles as the broad patterns of childrearing practices, values and behaviours that determine the power, relationship and expectations between parents and their children. As would be used in this study, parenting styles refers to the behaviour and strategies used by parents to control and socialize their children.

In developing her model of parenting style, Baumrind (1991) conducted a study consisting of interviews and observations with children and parents and identified four parenting styles based on levels of demand and responsiveness. These parenting styles as adopted in this study are authoritarian, authoritative, uninvolved and permissive. *Authoritarian* parenting style is a rigid and strict pattern of rearing children. Parents who adopts this parenting style have strict set of rules and regulations and required obedience. Whenever directives are flouted by the children, immediate and harsh punishment is given to enforce compliance. *Permissive* parenting style refers to the parenting style where little demands are made of children. Little attempts is made to control children's behaviour and less guidelines on what behaviour is considered appropriate are given. *Uninvolved parents* are not warm and do not place any demands on children. They minimize their interaction time, and, in some cases, are uninvolved to the point of being neglectful. Uninvolved parents are indifferent to their children needs, whereabouts, or experiences at school or with peers. Uninvolved parents invoke such phrases as, "I don't care where you go," or "why should I care what you do?" Uninvolved parents rarely consider their children's input in decisions and they generally do not want to be bothered by their need (Kopko, 2012).

While the link between parenting styles and children outcomes appears to be firmly established in the literature, they appear to be a dearth of literature regarding the relationship between parenting styles and child's language development. This has been exacerbated by the excessive emphasis on negative problems faced by children such as lack of literary skills, poor literary ability etc. This has not only influenced the way children develop language, but have also shaped a large chunk of scholarly research in that direction. The present study is a diversion from that direction.

Motivation is derived from the word *motive*, or a need that requires satisfaction. These needs, wants or desires may be acquired through influence of culture, society, lifestyle, or may be generally innate. An individual's motivation may be inspired by outside forces (extrinsic motivation) or by themselves (intrinsic motivation). Motivation has been considered one of the most important reasons to improve language development this is because when a child is well motivated it will help to improve his literary skills.

Media are the communication outlets or tools used to store and deliver information or data. The term refers to components of the mass media communications industry, such as print media, publishing, the news media, photography, cinema, broadcasting (radio and television), digital media, and advertising. The Influence of Media on a Child Language Development in the process of first language acquisition, the child spontaneously and gradually develops an ability to use language through interactive situations in his/her natural environment. In addition to the immediate members of the child's family, the child is exposed to language by means of screen media (Christakis, 2009).

Children's TV viewing started in the late 1990s to be strongly believed in as means of education. Nowadays, more than 90% of children view TV programs routinely (Christakis, 2009). Survey by Kaiser Family Foundation (2010) stated that children and young adults ranging from 8 to 18 years old spend about 7:38 hours a day using entertainment media (Rideout, Roberts, & Foehr, 2010). Accordingly, media have become an integral part of children and young adults' daily routine. A study done by Vittrup (2009) found that children spend up to 3.5 hours a day watching TV. According to Zimmerman, Christakis, and Meltzoff (2007b), 40% of 3-month-old infants and 90%

of 24-month-old toddlers watch TV regularly. These children are described as displaying dazed behaviour, sometimes seeming either confused or apprehensive in the presence of a caregiver. Based on the above assertion the researcher is motivated to investigate psychosocial variables as correlates of language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Language development is an important ingredient of modern civilisation, and it's the essential quality of the members of progressive society. It is the process of learning to conform to group standards, mores and traditions and becoming imbued with a sense of oneness, intercommunication and cooperation. As family has a special role in a child's life, it acts as a socializing agent to develop social sensitivity among children. Through his interactions with his/her parents and other family members, the child becomes able to identify himself and the position that he occupies with reference to others. Many research studies indicated negative psychological changes in the childhood period as an outcome of the maladjustment in the social surroundings. Parents and peer group are an essential part of children's social surroundings. Parental attitude, relationship behaviour and expectations towards their offspring, mark a deep impact on the growth pattern of the child and finally on their character. It is not enough, even, to be emotionally intelligent. The rules of the game have changed: we also have to be socially competent."

In order to be successful in today's competitive world it is imperative for an individual to not only have high intelligence but also good interactional skills. Family being the powerful agent of social development can play an important role in developing language development and lead the children to get well-adjusted in society as per the changing conditions. Present study aims at observing the psychosocial variables as correlates of language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, in order to reach at the conclusion about the role of various factors that predict language development of primary school children and to suggest measures to improve the family environment to provide supportive system to the primary school children. For some children, language difficulties lead to a sequelae of cascading negative effects such as poor literacy and social participation, increased academic failure, disengagement from school, instances of juvenile incarceration, a variety of mental health difficulties, generally poorer health. Therefore, the problem of this study is to investigate the psychosocial variables as correlates of language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to find out the psychosocial variables as correlates of language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. investigate how parenting styles relates to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.
2. examine how which motivation relates to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

3. find out how media relates to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Research Questions

This study answered the following questions

1. How does parenting styles relate to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State?
2. How does motivation relate to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State?
3. How does media relate to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance have been postulated to guide this study.

1. There is no significant relationship between parenting style and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between Motivation and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.
3. There is no significant relationship between Media and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Methodology

The design for this study was correlational research design. The population for the current study was made up of all the primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. This study adopted purposive sampling technique to select the sample from all the schools in the area. To determine the sample size Taro Yamane's formula was used. The sample size for this study was 400 pupils. Four instruments was designed by the researcher for the study. The instruments are Parenting Style Scale (PSS), Motivation Scale (MS), Media Scale (MS) and Language Development Scale (LDS). To ensure the reliability of the instruments Cronbach alpha (α) technique was used for both the instruments. Copies of the instruments were administered on 20 pupils who were not part of the sample for the study and then after the scores obtained were subjected to Cronbach alpha technique. The coefficients obtained are 0.76, 0.77, 0.84 and 0.72 for both parenting styles, motivation, media and language development respectively. Data was analyzed based on the information obtained from the completed instruments. The analysis will be done by deploying d inferential statistics. Research question 1 were answered with multiple regression while research question 2-3 were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. And hypotheses 1 were tested analysis of variance (ANOVA) related to multiple regression while hypotheses 2-3 were tested with Pearson Product Moment Correlation p-value at 0.05 level of significance.

Result Presentation

Research Question 1: To what extent do parenting styles relates to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between parenting style and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Table: Multiple Linear Regression coefficient of parenting styles relationship with Language development

Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.543 ^a	.295	.279	15.34651	
Sum of						
Model		Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	38762.212	4	4306.912	18.287	.000 ^b
	Residual	92793.016	375	235.515		
	Total	131555.228	379			

The answer to research question seven as shown in Table 1 indicated that a multiple regression coefficient of 0.543 was obtained on parenting styles as they relate with language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State, with the coefficient of determination, R^2 , of 0.295, and an adjusted R^2 of 0.279. From the adjusted R^2 of 0.279, it therefore suggest that 27.9% of the variations in language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State can be attributed parenting styles. Furthermore, in testing the corresponding null hypotheses, the result indicated that an F-value of 18.287 was obtained at 4 and 275 degrees of freedom with an associated p-value of 0.010. Since the obtained p-value was less than 0.05, it therefore indicates that parenting styles relate with language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Research Question Two: To what extent does motivation relates to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State?

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between Motivation and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Table 2: Pearson correlation of motivation and language development of primary school pupils

Variable	Mean	SD	N	R	P	α	Decision
Motivation	13.24	3.04					
Language development	41.67	51	380	0.102	0.041	0.05	Reject H_{02}

Result shown in Table 2 indicated that for motivation a mean value of 13.24 (SD = 3.04) on motivation, while for language development it was 41.67 (SD = 51) which when subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation yielded an r-value of 0.102. This result therefore implies that there is a weak positive relationship between motivation and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. In addition, when this result was subjected to z-test of PPMC, it was shown that a p-value of 0.041 was gotten, a value lesser than 0.05 level of significance guiding the study. This result therefore indicate that there is a weak positive but significant relationship between motivation and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. The null hypotheses were therefore rejected.

Research Question Three: To what extent does media relate to language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between Media and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Table 3: Pearson correlation of media and language development of primary school pupils

Variable	Mean	SD	N	R	P	α	Decision
Media	31.71	3.11					
Language development	41.67	51	380	0.773	0.0005	0.05	Reject H_{04}

According to the result obtained and displayed in Table 3, it was revealed that media had a mean value of 31.71 (SD = 3.04), while for language development it was 41.67 (SD = 51) which when subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation yielded an r-value of 0.773. This result therefore implies that there is a strong positive relationship between media and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. Furthermore, when this result was subjected to z-test of PPMC, it was shown that a p-value of 0.0005 was gotten, which was lesser than 0.05, the alpha level guiding the study. This result therefore indicates that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between media and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State, thus the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

Parenting styles and Language development

From the analysis of research question two and the corresponding null hypothesis in table 1, it was shown that there is no significant relationship between parenting styles and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. The influence is statistically significant at 0.5 level of significance. On the basis of the instrument administered, student who reported low values on the section of parenting styles are most likely to score low or high on their language development as tested using the instrument for the study. Conversely those who score high on the section of parenting styles are most likely to score high in their language development.

The result of this finding are a further confirmation of that obtained by Tryon, Soffer & Winograd (2011) who determine the relationship between self-reported language development, anxiety, and depression in adolescents. Participants were 97 primary school pupils from a private high school in New York City. The results indicated that depressive and anxious symptomatology was related to poorer language development in adolescent high school primary school pupils. Language development training in anger management, dating behaviors, and time management were suggested as ways to reduce anxiety symptoms. In the same vein Persefoni, Nick and Dimitris (2010) who found out that motivation positively predicted social physique anxiety and negatively predicted subjective vitality. However, these studies differ in the instrument and variables used as the present study used language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State and the previous used management of primary school pupils.

Motivation and Language Development

From the analysis of research question one and the corresponding null hypothesis in table 1, it was shown that there is a positive and significant relationship between motivation and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. The relationship is statistically significant at 0.5 level of significance. This result implies that primary school pupils who perceive support are prone to adjust to school activities. However, the reported influence indicates that all those who are high in perceive support also scored high in their language development. The result that perceive support is positively related to primary school pupils' language development is not surprising to the researcher. Because when a worker is socially supported through what he has achieved his language development will increase. This could be a probable explanation for the influence of perceive support language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

This result is similar to that obtained by Luis (2021) assessed whether peer expressive language skills predict language ability of preschool-aged children attending Norwegian Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) centers. The path analysis revealed that perceived motivation might indirectly have an effect on language development through mediating role of academic motivation. The perceived motivation explained 13 % of the academic motivation variation, and academic motivation predicted 37 % of variation in language development. Also Davidson (2017) who examined the relationship of perceived motivation and adolescents' adjustment behaviors over time.

Results showed a relationship between motivation and student adjustment behaviors over time. Specifically, support from parents was related to clinical maladjustment and emotional symptoms one year later.

Media and Language development

From the analysis of research question two and the corresponding null hypothesis in table 3, it was shown that there is a positive and significant relationship between media and language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. The relationship is statistically significant at 0.5 level of significance. The meaning of this result is that student who has high media perform better at school. On the basis of the instrument administered, student who reported high values on the section of media are most likely to score low on their language development as tested using the instrument for the study. Conversely those who score high on the section of media are most likely to score low in their language development. This result is not surprising to the researcher, because when a student media is high that student will work well with his or her colleague and will be well satisfied and his language development will increase, thus the reported weak positive relationship between media and language development.

The finding of this study is in line with the finding of Rani (2017), in his study, he found that intrapersonal, interpersonal and adaptability dimensions correlated significantly with language development. No correlations were found between stress management and general mood dimensions with language development. However, this study differs in the instrument and variables used as the present study used multiple variables and the previous used single variable of emotional intelligence.

Conclusion

The study has shown that parenting styles, motivation, peer group and media have different relationship with language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. This study has empirically shown that parenting styles, motivation, peer group and media significantly relates with language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State. Furthermore, this study is the first in the researcher's opinion that has considered the correlates of language development among primary school pupils in Obio/Akpor Local Area of Rivers State.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendation were made

1. Parents and government should try and provide parenting styles to the primary school pupils, this will help to improve the language development of primary school pupils.
2. Parents should as well get attached well with their children as this will help them adjust better in school.
3. School administrators should try and introduce programmes that will help improve the media of this primary school pupils and this will as well help to improve the language development.

4. Teachers should look into the work load of the student and see how they can help the primary school pupils manage it well.
5. Teachers in the rural areas should try and improve in their teaching pattern because this could be one of the reasons while urban primary school pupils adjust better.

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