

Influence of Family Dynamics on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State

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Abstract

The study investigated influence of family dynamics on academic achievement of secondary school students in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. Four research questions and four hypotheses guided this study. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study is all secondary school students in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The sample size for the study was 200 students drawn from the population of the study with simple random sampling technique. The instrument for the study was Family Dynamics Scale (FDS) and English and Mathematics Achievement Test (EMAT). The validity of the instruments was established using experts' judgement. Reliability of the instruments were tested using Cronbach alpha method for internal consistency. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question, t-test was used to test the hypotheses postulation. The findings of the study revealed that family types, socio-economic status, parenting styles and parents' level of education significantly influence academic achievement among secondary school students in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. Finally, it was recommended amongst others, that schools should encourage regular communication between teachers and parents to monitor student progress, offer guidance, and reinforce positive learning environments both at school and home.

Keywords: Family dynamics, Family types, Socioeconomic status, Parenting styles and Parents' level of education and Academic achievement.

Introduction

Many factors account for students' successes and failures. These factors range from students, environmental, teachers, parental, and school factors. Success in an educational setting is often measured by students' academic performance over time. As such, their positive achievement in school has become a major concern for parents, teachers, and all other stakeholders in the educational process. To achieve academic success, parents play a crucial role in supporting their children's educational journey. One of the most significant contributions parents can make is the provision of resources both financial and emotional that directly influence their children's academic performance.

According to Bell in Adeyemi (2018) parents devote a lot of resource, financial and other forms of support to enhance their children's education. They believed that when their children acquire good education, it will guarantee a stable future for them. Besides the economic commitment of parents, there are other aspects of parents support which if well harnessed will contribute positively to their success; such supports include parents' educational qualification, attitude towards learning and other home variables such as parenting style, the socio-economic status of the parents, the religious and cultural beliefs of the parents and so on, which may in one way or another influence the academic pursuit of their children. But what has caused the downward trends in the achievement of these children in the secondary level of education is still not certain. Wilkins in Adeyemi (2018) posits that many educators and researchers have sought to find out the reasons for these downward trends. Consequently, this study aims at investigating the influence of family dynamics on student's academic achievement in secondary schools.

Family dynamics as construed in this study are the likely home factors that may affect the education of the child positively or negatively. Some of the family factors that are considered in this study that may influence the students' academic achievement include family type, parents' socio-economic variables, parenting style and parental educational level (Davis-Kean, 2015).

The first thing that comes to mind over these family dynamics is the parents' perspective, that is, the contributions of parental variables to academic progress of students, particularly, socioeconomic status, educational level and parenting styles of parents and its effect on the academic process of students and the educational level of the parents. Consequently, the academic achievement of the learners may also be influenced by these family factors (Jeynes in Mason, 2017).

According to Bossaert, et al. (2011) academic achievement is knowledge gained in a field of study through the process of teaching and learning. It is an important parameter in evaluating students' progress. Studies have consistently shown that achieving academic success is now more important than ever for students (Amaechi-Udogu, & Iwezor, 2025; Amaechi-Udogu, & Chikwem, 2024; Ojetokun & Omale, 2024). However, poor academic performance remains a persistent issue across all levels of education in Nigeria (Bah, 2022; Ojetokun & Omale, 2024; Amaechi-Udogu & Chikwem, 2024). This growing concern has captured the attention of educationists, parents, the government, religious organizations, and especially guidance counsellors.

Despite numerous efforts by government bodies and educational authorities to address the problem, significant improvement still seems far from reach. Various factors have been identified as contributing to this trend. On the part of students, issues such as a nonchalant attitude toward learning and low academic self-concept have been commonly observed.

Beyond student-related factors, school-related elements also play a crucial role; these include the type of school (whether public or private), the general school environment, and the quality and motivation of teachers. Furthermore, parental and family influences significantly affect students' academic outcomes. These include parents' level of education, the extent of their involvement in their children's learning, family size and structure, socioeconomic status (SES), and even the family's religious beliefs and practices (Magnuson in Mason, 2017).

Historically, the family is well acknowledged as the oldest institution. Its primary role is to nurture the children and has been well recognized as the primary agent of socialization. According to Schaefer in Nna (2016) the family is group of people related by blood or adoption, who share the primary responsibility of reproduction and caring for the members in a society. To Boyer and Jeffrey in Anyanwu and Ofodile (2012) the family serves as a society's primary social group, the foundation on which they experience the major development of life. Anyanwu and Ofodile (2012) further explained that, it is a group of people living intimately together as a unit sharing life's anticipation, disappointment, struggles and joy. Thus, the family is central to the educational experience and educational pursuits of the children. Students get their first experience from the family (home) which provides the bedrock for formal education. Okorodudu (2010) revealed that, there is a positive correlation between family psychological disposition and family stability, which impact positively on student's academic achievement. Okeke and Obi (2014) explained the roles of the family with regards to their children's education that the family determines when a child should start school, which school the child should attend, how to keep and sustain the child in the school, get involved in the child school programme, providing an enabling environment for the child all round development, helping them do their homework, buying and keeping educational motivating materials around the home, creating a study area, helping to prevent distractions many more.

Ajila and Olutola (2019) shared the same view when they noted that the home has great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state, which implies that the state of the family of the child affects their academic progress and socialization either positively or negatively. In line with this view, UNICEF (2011) posits that the influence of

family type/structure on students' academic success continue through high school and it significantly influence the academic progress of the child either positively or negatively.

Another family dynamics considered very important and may contribute or influence students' academic achievement is the family type where a child is being raised from. Generally, the family types known and practiced in many parts of the world include two types, the monogamous or polygamous family. However, Okorodudu (2010) and Eze (2019) revealed several other family types and forms which exist and practiced today. The following family types and forms include: monogamous family (this is the family type in which a man marries only one wife) and polygamous family (this form of family constitute a person and more spouse).

The nature, structure and practices of these family types influence the child emotional, education and moral lifestyle and determines to a large extent the child academic progress in one way or the other, thus affect the academic achievement of the child. It is important to note that the family type sometime influence the size of the family and the type of parenting style, the child background and level of socialization which again affects the child upbringing and socialization. The effects manifest in their life endeavour including their academic achievement in schools. Therefore, students coming from any of these families listed above may have the background depicted by the family type and its inherent problem which associates with it and could influence or affect in one way or another the child educational progress (Blackwell, & Bynner in Hanson, 2020).

Yet another essential family dynamics likely to influence students' outcome in schools is the family socio economic status (SES) or level of the family. The SES of the family could be a disadvantage or an advantage to student's academic achievement. Combs, in Nwobodo (2010) pointed out that virtually in all countries, children of parents whose SES is high have far better opportunities of gaining entry into good secondary schools, also, into the best tertiary institutions than equally brilliant children of peasant workers or farmers, additionally, children whose parents are at the bottom of the SES hierarchy are not as inclined to seek or gain access to available educational facilities as the children with families whose SES hierarchy is in the median or top (Dill, 2016). Family income has a remarkable impact on the educational opportunities available to learners or children or the chances of educational success, and that due to residential difference and secretion, low income students usually attends schools with poor funding, have reduced achievement motivation and much higher risk of educational failure when compared with their more affluent counterparts, learners

from low SES homes receives lower grades, earn lower scores on standardized test and are much likely to drop out of school (Combs in Nwobodo, 2010).

On the other hand, students of a high-income family may be tempted to be relaxed with the hope that money answers all things. A student family SES will certainly affect his academic achievement as the student fees needed to be paid, books needed to be bought and other logistic. For a student to study well his basic needs has to be provided or met, if not while in class, they might be affected in many ways such as, absent minded, day dreaming, sleeping and the tendency to be truant and possible dropout (Hetherington, & Bornstein in Udeli, 2018).

Parental SES is the average monthly income of the family. This SES places the family in a social status within a given society. The impact of this social stratification on the education of the children in the family is portrayed in the various choices of the kind of institution the child attends and the academic performances in terms of the results they obtain. To this end one will say that a student family SES is an important factor that needed to be studied as a correlate to student academic achievement

According to Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, & Bornstein in George (2019) parenting influences the holistic development of the child to prepare him or her for a fruitful future. The concept of parenting is both a biological and social process emerging as probably the most fundamental and universal concern of the society (Hoffmann, 2012). Davies (2010) describes parenting as the task of doing all the things important for proper physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth of a child.

Santrock in Charles (2017) contends that most children learn practices from their own parents while accepting some and discarding others. This implies that parenting methods are passed on from one generation to the next, thus, both desirable and undesirable practices are perpetuated. Parents influence their children's behaviours through established patterns of parental authority called parenting styles. Berk in Daniel (2016) defines parenting styles as a combination of parenting behaviours that occur over a wide range of situations, creating an enduring child-rearing climate. They may also be defined as the emotional climate in which parents raise their children and are characterized by dimensions of parental responsiveness and demandingness. Thus, parenting styles are summarized as psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in child-rearing practices (Santrock in Daniel, 2016).

Based on Baumrind's (2012) classifications, parenting styles adopted by most parents may be identified, as, authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful (Yahaya, & Nordin in

Daniel, 2016). Seid and Milke (2018) distinguished parents based on four parenting styles; firstly, they identify authoritative parents, who are perceived to control the activities of the children in a logical and reasonable way. Such parents are demanding and accepting; they appreciate oral discussions, explain to the children their logic behind their plans and solicit their objections when they disagree. Authoritarian parents maintain the strict control on the behaviour and demand complete obedience from their children. Secondly, Permissive parents are more conforming to the demands and actions of their children. These parents give fewer responsibilities to their children (Grobman in Sandason, 2018). Thirdly, Uninvolved or Neglectful Parents are not responsive and do not place any demands on their children.

Jacob and Harvey in Sandason (2018) identified parenting styles as one of the significant contributors to student's academic performance in school. Extensive studies have been conducted in the many parts of the world to determine the relationship between parenting styles and children's academic performance. These studies report a positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and children's academic performance in school. Conversely, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parenting styles were found to be associated with low academic performance.

Across races or ethnic groups, however, parenting styles have revealed varied influence on performance among students. Whereas authoritative parenting style has been found to be positively associated with academic success for students in Western societies, Blair and Qian (1998) found that parental control, which is a feature of authoritarian parenting style, was positively associated with high performance among adolescents. Similarly, Barnhart (2013) found that while authoritative parenting style facilitated high academic performance among students, Permissive parenting style led to high performance among students in other clines.

Studies on parenting styles and academic performance among students have yielded contradictory results. Studies by Ofofu, (2013) and Tope, (2012), revealed significant differences in academic performances of students as a result of parenting styles and again found authoritative parenting style to be related to high academic performances among students. While Kassahons in Udeli (2018) revealed that parenting styles did not have significant effect on academic achievement. Therefore, a parenting style that a parent exercises has potential to directly or indirectly affect a student's academic performance.

Today the government, school authorities, teachers as well as students are often blamed for low academic performance of the students, without actually looking at other related factors that can contribute to the student's low achievement. As far as academics is concerned these whole blames should not be heaped on these people alone, because the truth is that the

foundation of the child socialization is laid at home, more so children spend most of their time at home and religious places, other than the school. Therefore, many family factors such as family type, family SES and family religious believes could be part of them. It should be noted that a child's psychological disposition goes a long way to impact his performance in school. The family plays a very important role in the education of the children. This study therefore focuses on how student academic achievement is been influenced by their family types, parenting styles and family SES in Bayelsa State especially those in Yenagoa Local Government Area.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of family dynamics on academic achievement secondary school students in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. In specific terms, the study was set out to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the influence of family types (monogamous and polygamous) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.
2. To find out the influence of socio-economic status (high and low) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.
3. Determine the influence of parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful parenting styles) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does family types (monogamous and polygamous) influences students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State?
2. To what extent do socio-economic status (high and low) influences students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.?
3. What is the influence of parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful parenting styles) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses have been formulated for the study, which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference on the influence of family types (monogamous and polygamous) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

2. There is no significant difference on the influence of socio-economic status (high and low) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.
3. There is no significant influence of parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful parenting styles) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Methodology

The design for the study was descriptive survey design. According to Nwankwo (2016), descriptive survey design is that in which the researcher collects data from a large sample drawn from a given population and describes certain features of the sample as they are at the time of the study and which are of interest to the researcher, however without manipulating any independent variables of the study. The population for the study was made up of all the 34 public senior secondary school in Yenagoa Local Government Area. The total number of senior secondary students in the 34 secondary schools in the area during the 2024/2025 academic session is sixteen thousand five hundred and thirty (16,530) (Source: Post Primary Education Board Bayelsa State, 2025). The sample for the study is 200 students. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 200 students as the sample size. The instruments for data collection were Family Dynamics Scale (FDS) and English and Mathematics Achievement Test (EMAT).

Face and content validity of the instrument for the study were determined using experts' judgement. To ensure the reliability of the instruments Cronbach alpha (α) technique was used. The instruments were administered on 30 students who were not part of the sample for the study and then Cronbach alpha test for internal consistency was used to determine the reliability of the instruments. The coefficient obtained was 0.79 and 0.81. The instruments were administered directly to the student in their respective schools by the researcher and one research assistant, after permission has been sought from the school heads. Mean and standard deviation were used for answering all the research questions and hypotheses were tested using independent sample z-test at 0.05 alpha levels.

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: To what extent does family types (monogamous and polygamous) influences students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the influence of family types (monogamous and polygamous) on the academic achievement

Family type	Mean	SD	N
Monogamous	68.42	2.91	135
Polygamous	63.12	4.56	65

The result of the data analysis as shown in table 1 indicates that the total number of students from monogamous homes are 135 and they had a mean value of 68.42 (SD 2.91), while the total number of students from polygamous home are 65 and they had a mean score of 63.12 (SD = 4.56). This shows that students from monogamous homes had better academic achievement than those students from polygamous homes.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference on the influence of family types (monogamous and polygamous) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Table 2: Independent sample t-test of the influence of family types (monogamous and polygamous) on the academic achievement

Family type	t-test	P-Value	Alpha	Df	Decision
Monogamous					
	2.813	0.000	0.05	198	Reject
Polygamous					Ho1

The result of the data analysis as shown in table 2 indicates that the scores of students from polygamous and monogamous home were tested using independent sample t-test the score obtained was 2.813. Further testing of the associated hypothesis yielded a p-value of 0.000, which was less than the chosen alpha level of 0.05. This result showed that there is a significant difference on the influence of family types (monogamous and polygamous) on the academic achievement among secondary school students in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Research Question Two: To what extent do socio-economic status (high and low) influences students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the influence of socio-economic status on students' academic achievement among secondary school students

SES	N	Mean	SD
High	77	29.64	6.10
Low	123	29.12	6.03

From the result displayed in Table 3, students from homes with high socio-economic status reported a mean value of 29.64 (SD = 6.10), while those from low socio-economic status homes reported a mean value of 29.12 (SD = 6.03) on the section related to students' academic achievement. On the basis of the reported mean values, it can be observed that high socioeconomic status has a slightly better academic achievement than low socio-economic status.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference on the influence of socio-economic status (high and low) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Table 4: Independent sample t-test of the influence of socio-economic status on students' academic achievement among secondary school students

SES	Df	t-test	P	Sig	Decision
High	198	0.610	0.000	0.05	Reject HO ₂ (p>0.05)
Low					

From the result displayed in Table 4, students from homes with high socio-economic status revealed that the t-value obtained, 0.610 was statistically significant at p-value of 0.000. This result therefore suggests that socioeconomic status does significantly influence students' academic achievement among secondary school students in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted.

Research Question Three: What is the influence of parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful parenting styles) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State?

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of the influence of parenting styles on students' academic achievement among secondary school students

Parenting Style	N	Mean	S.D
Authoritative	71	27.69	6.08
Authoritarian	69	28.01	6.05
Permissive	29	32.64	4.96
Neglectful	31	32.42	5.20

From the result displayed in Table 5, it is observed that students who are from authoritative homes ($n = 71$), had a mean value of 27.69 ($SD = 6.08$), those who are from authoritarian parenting styles ($n = 69$) had a mean value of 28.01 ($SD = 6.05$), those from permissive homes had a mean value of 32.64 ($SD = 4.96$), while those from neglectful homes had a mean value of 32.42 ($SD = 5.20$). On the basis of the mean values reported, it can be observed that neglectful parenting homes had the highest influence on academic achievement among secondary school students, followed by permissive, authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence of parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful parenting styles) on students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Table 6: One Way ANOVA on the influence of parenting styles on students' academic achievement

Variables	Mean square	df	Mean square	Alpha	F	p-value	Result
Between group	872.257	4	290.752	0.05	8.79	0.000	Reject Ho4
Within group	6973.864	195					
Total	7846.121	199	33.051				

From the result displayed in Table 6, it is observed that an F-value of 8.79 was obtained at 4 and 195 degrees of freedom with an associated p-value of 0.000. From the result obtained, it can be seen that the p-value was less than 0.05, which was the chosen alpha guiding the study. This result therefore indicates that parenting styles has a significant influence on students' academic achievement.

Discussion of Findings

The result from the study revealed that there is a significant difference on the influence of family types (monogamous and polygamous) on academic achievement of students in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The meaning of this result is that students who are from monogamous home do excel in their academics more than students who are from polygamous home. On the basis of the instrument administered, students who reported that they are from polygamous homes most likely have low academic achievement. Conversely students from monogamous home are likely to have high academic achievement. This result is not surprising to this research, because student who comes from monogamous homes will feel better and happier, thus the reported significant difference on the influence of family types (monogamous and polygamous) on academic achievement.

The findings of this result are further confirmation of that obtained by Magara (2016) among university students in an institution in Nigeria. In their study they found out those students who from family types (monogamous and polygamous) have no difficulty excelling academically. This study, however, differs in the instrument used as the present study used an adapted instrument, while their study used adopted instrument.

From the analysis of research question two and the corresponding null hypothesis in table 4, it was shown that socio-economic status significantly influences academic achievement. The influence is statistically significant at 0.5 level of significance. This shows that students from low social economic status have better academic achievement than those from high social economic status because the mean score of low social economic status is higher than that of high socioeconomic status. The null hypothesis was also rejected because the calculated-t is greater than the critical-t that means there is significant difference on the influence of high and low social economic status on academic achievement. This is in agreement with the findings of Ojo (2010) which shows that there is significant difference on the influence of high and low socio-economic status on academic achievement. Ojo (2010) also found out that children from low socio-economic status are not strongly motivated to do well in school and are prone to low academic achievement.

From the analysis of research question three and the corresponding null hypothesis in table 6, it was revealed that parenting styles significantly influence academic achievement. The relationship is statistically significant at 0.5 level of significance. This shows that students from Neglect parenting style have less academic achievement than other type of parenting style follow by permissive and authoritarian while students from authoritative parenting style have better academic achievement significantly. This is reached based on the mean score arrived at, which show that neglect parenting style have the less mean score. The null

hypothesis was also rejected because the calculated-t is greater than the critical-t that means there is significant difference on the influences parenting styles on academic achievement. This is in agreement with the findings of Ajulumouo (2007) which says that there is significant difference on the influence of parenting styles on academic achievement students. This finding also supports the position of Baumrind (1991), who asserted that parenting style influences the attitude and behaviour of a child. Furthermore, this finding is expected supposing the researcher knows that students from neglect and permissive home will have poor academic achievement than those from authoritative home.

Conclusion

His study concludes that family type, socio-economic status, and parenting style significantly influence students' academic achievement in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. Students from monogamous families and those raised under authoritative parenting styles performed better academically. Surprisingly, students from low socio-economic backgrounds showed higher academic achievement than those from higher SES backgrounds, suggesting greater motivation to succeed. These findings underscore the importance of stable family structures, supportive parenting, and targeted interventions by educators and counsellors to enhance student performance.

Recommendations

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

1. Parents, especially in polygamous and low-performing households, should be educated on the importance of emotional support, academic involvement, and stable family environments for children's academic success.
2. Counsellors and educators should organize community outreach programs to promote authoritative parenting practices, which have been shown to positively impact students' academic outcomes.
3. Guidance counsellors should be actively involved in identifying and supporting students from polygamous homes, neglectful parenting backgrounds, or low socio-economic settings through academic mentoring and psychosocial support.
4. Government and non-governmental organizations should provide support such as scholarships, mentorship programs, and family counselling to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
5. Schools should encourage regular communication between teachers and parents to monitor student progress, offer guidance, and reinforce positive learning environments both at school and home.

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