

# Effect of Parental Involvement on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Nnewi Education Zone, Anambra State

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**ABSTRACT:** Many factors such as poor parental supervision and involvement have continued to affect students' academic performance with detrimental consequences for all stakeholders. Given this concern, this study explored the effects of parental involvement on secondary school students' academic performance in Anambra State using Nnewi Education Zone. The study adopted a quantitative research design. The sample size of the study was 289 senior secondary class two (SS 2) students who were selected through a Multi-stage sampling procedure. Purposive sampling was used to select the education Zone while systematic sampling was used to select 2 schools from each of the 4 local Government Councils that make up the Nnewi Education Zone. The actual participants were selected using intact classes which were selected through simple random sampling technique. The final sample was 289 senior secondary class two (SS 2) students. In the data collection, 13-item Parental Involvement Questionnaire (PIQ) was adapted from the 40-item Family Involvement Questionnaire High School (FIQ-HS) version by Grover (2015) while the annual average academic performance records of the students were used to measure students' academic performance. Both measures were validated by experts from Measurement and Evaluation units of the Institution while Cronbach's reliability analysis was used in the pilot study to establish reliability measures of the instruments. Data was analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA). Findings reveal that students whose parents were involved in their academic activities performed better than those whose parents were not involved. Males performed better than females when their parents were involved in their academic activities whereas there is interaction effect between parental involvement and gender on students' academic performance. Findings imply that it is parental obligation to supervise and get involved in their children's academic activities as it helps to improve students' performance. It is therefore recommended that the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders find effective means to deepen parental education and sensitization on the benefits of being involved in their children's academic activities and supervision.

**Keywords:** Academic performance, academic activities, parental involvement, parental supervision, secondary school education

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## 1. Introduction

Stakeholders in education and children development have prioritized and emphasized parental involvement in their children's academic life as it may influence academic performance especially among secondary school students who mainly adolescents with role confusion and distraction. Academic performance refers to students' scores in an achievement test as used in this study; it is the record of students' academic knowledge acquired by the student after teaching or learning outcome (Owan, Nwannunu & Chijioke, 2018). Students perform differently at any given examination. The outcome of their performance during school examination

and tests is what is regarded as academic achievement or academic performance. The term achievement and performance largely mean the same time in evaluation of student ability and competence after learning has taken place. Many scholars have advanced several conceptions of academic achievement. For instance, Mohammed, Edu and Etoh (2020) described academic achievement as gain in knowledge of students as a result of taking part in a learning programme.

In Nigeria, tests and examinations basically serve the purposes of evaluating and predicting the standard of students' academic achievement in the subjects they have learnt in schools. As such, tests and examinations are used to assess the worth of students' learning experience as well as to predict how well the students would do in future academic endeavours. According to Nja et al (2020) there are many reason for insisting on students' good academic performance. Good performance at this level means that students are well prepare to face life either as an undergraduate studying in the tertiary institution or as worker or entrepreneur. Secondary education, therefore, is not only a bridge between the basic and the tertiary level of education; it is also a means of equipping one with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to fit in and contribute meaningfully to society. This is in line with National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013) which aims to prepare students for useful living within the society; and to prepare the students for higher education.

Despite the importance of good performance in secondary education, the performance of students may not be said to be satisfactory (Omeje, Anyanwu, Mba, & Ugwu, 2021). There are many factors which affect the performance of secondary school students in Nigeria ranging from method of delivery, curriculum implementation, teacher quality, environmental factors, students factors, availability of instructional materials, nonstop technological advancements, changes in family, schools, the media, parental factors etc. For this study, the researcher is focused on the influence of parental involvement on academic performance of secondary school students in Nnewi Education Zone.

Parental involvement refers to the degree to which parents are committed to their roles as parents and to fostering optimal development of their children (Amponsah, Milledz, Ampofo & Gyambah, 2018). It typically concerns the number of efforts and commitments that parents put into their child's educational affairs. Parental involvement in the educational affairs of the child involves such activities as assisting in the child's homework, providing learning materials, participating in school events and communicating with both the child and the school with a focus on how best to help the child actively engaged in their studies.

Apart from parental involvement, there could be other intervening factors which could influence students' academic engagement. One of such factors could be gender. In support of this for instance; Owoso (2013) ascertained that there are gender differences in academic achievement among students and this could equally be extended to academic engagement.

Gender refers to one's identification as a man or woman, male or female. Research has been inconsistent on findings on the moderating role of gender on academic engagement among students. Some authors found that gender is a significant factor in academic engagement (Amir, Saleha, Jelas, Ahmad & Hutkemri, 2014; Ayub, Yunus, Mahmud, Salim and Sulaiman (2017); others found that it is not (Mohammed, Atagana & Edawoke, 2014). Some authors found a significant relationship in favour of the males (Atoum & Shalalfe, 2018), while others found a significant relationship in favour of females (Amir et al., 2014; Ayub et al., 2017).

In consideration of the importance of parental involvement to students' learning outcome, this study is interested in parental involvement and how it could predict students' academic performance guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of parental involvement on academic performance of secondary school students in Nnewi Education Zone in Anambra State?
2. What is the effect of parental involvement and gender on academic performance of secondary school students in Nnewi Education Zone in Anambra State?

## Theoretical Framework

### Ecological systems theory

The ecological systems theory was propounded by Bronfenbrenner (1979). According to this theory, the development of children is affected not only by factors within the child but also by their family and surrounding world. The Bronfenbrenner theory emphasizes the importance of studying children in multiple environments, also known as ecological systems, in the attempt to understand their development. According to Bronfenbrenner, children typically find themselves enmeshed in four levels of nested ecosystems or environmental systems, namely: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem and the macrosystem. In other words, from the most intimate home ecological system; to the larger school system, and then; to the most expansive system comprising of the society and culture. Each of these ecological systems inevitably interacts with and influences each other in all aspects of the children's lives. Bronfenbrenner later added another construct named chronosystem to explain the dimension of time in his theoretical framework.

## 2. Methodology

**Research design** - The study adopted a between subject design. According to Nworgu (2015) between subject design explores the difference between the components of two or more variables. This study adopted this method because it is interested in exploring the difference in academic performance of students with high and low parental involvement among male and female students. Thus, the proposed research design is suitable for this study among the variables of interest.

**Area of the study** - The study was carried out in Anambra State which has six (6) education zones namely: Aguata, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha, and Otuocha with 261 public secondary schools. The study was carried out in Ogidi Education Zone of Anambra state which located in Anambra Central Senatorial District. Nnewi Education Zone comprises of 4 local governments which are Nnewi North, Nnewi South, Ekwusigo and Ihiala government councils.

**Population of the study** - The population of the study comprised 1,137 senior secondary class 2 (SS2) students in 35 public secondary schools in Ogidi Education Zone (Idemili North, Idemili South and Oyi LGAs) of Anambra State (Source: Planning and Research Section, Anambra State Post Primary School Services Commission, 2020).

**Sample and sampling technique** - The sample size of the study was 289 senior secondary class two (SS 2) students. The procedure to be employed in obtaining participants of the study will be Multi-stage sampling procedure.

**Instrument for data collection** - Parental Involvement Questionnaire (PIQ) adapted from the 40-item Family Involvement Questionnaire High School (FIQ-HS) version by Grover (2015) was used to gather information about the nature and level of parents' participation in their teenager's school and academic work. Annual grade point average score of students' academic achievement was also be used as data for academic achievement.

**Method of data analysis** - Research questions were answered using means while the hypotheses will be tested using Two Way analysis of variance (One-way ANOVA) to ascertain difference among groups. This was done using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 20). The decision rule was to accept the null hypothesis is the r value is greater than the table value at 0.05 level of significance ( $p > 0.05$ ). Reject the null hypothesis is the r value is less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance ( $p < 0.05$ ).

## 3. Result

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation for effect of Parental Involvement on Academic Performance of secondary school students in Anambra State**

| S/N | Variables                | Mean  | Std    | N   |
|-----|--------------------------|-------|--------|-----|
| 1   | Parental Involvement     | 62.52 | 1.0227 | 133 |
| 2   | Non Parental Involvement | 56.54 | 1.1259 | 156 |

Data in Table 1 reveal that there is a statistical difference on effect of parental involvement on academic performance of secondary school students in Anambra State was ascertained. Whereas students whose parents were involved in their academic activities had academic mean score of 62.52, those whose parents were not involved had 56.54. The finding implies that students with parental involvement statistically performed better than their counterparts whose parents were not involved in their academic activities.

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation for effect of Gender on Academic Performance of secondary school students in Anambra State**

| S/N | Variables | Mean  | Std    | N   |
|-----|-----------|-------|--------|-----|
| 1   | Male      | 60.75 | 1.0227 | 128 |
| 2   | Female    | 57.35 | 1.1259 | 161 |

Data in Table 2 reveal that there is statistical difference on the effect of gender on academic performance of secondary school students in Nnewi, Anambra State. Whereas male students had academic mean score of 60.75, female students had 57.35. The finding implies that male students statistically performed better than their counterpart females

**Table 3: ANOVA on the effect of parental involvement on academic performance scores of secondary school students in Anambra State**

Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

| Source                      | Type II Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F       | Sig   |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------|
| Corrected Model             | 604.430a               | 3   | 259.137     | 9.169   | .000  |
| Intercept                   | 183365.493             | 1   | 192265.834  | 6.287E3 | .000  |
| Parental Involvement        | 59.402                 | 1   | 64.405      | 2.776   | .001* |
| Gender                      | 496.246                | 1   | 503.232     | 14.693  | .012* |
| Parental Involvement*Gender | 41.545                 | 1   | 42.575      | 1.843   | .019* |
| Error                       | 4500.350               | 286 | 23.20       |         |       |
| Total                       | 2053304.044            | 289 |             |         |       |
| Corrected Total             | 5382.347               | 288 |             |         |       |

Data analysis in Table 3 reveal that the parent involvement had a significant effect on secondary school students' academic performance scores in Nnewi, Anambra State was ascertained at  $F = 2.8$ ,  $p < .05$  ( $n = 289$ ). The p-value ( $p \leq .000$ ) is less than 0.05. Since significant difference was found in the group scores between students whose parents are involved in their academic activities and those who don't, the effect is significant and accepted. Thus, hypothesis 1 was confirmed because significant difference was ascertained.

**Table 4: ANOVA on the effect of Gender on academic performance scores of secondary school students in Anambra State**

Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

| Source                      | Type II Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F       | Sig   |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------|
| Corrected Model             | 604.430a               | 3   | 259.137     | 9.169   | .000  |
| Intercept                   | 183365.493             | 1   | 192265.834  | 6.287E3 | .000  |
| Parental Involvement        | 59.402                 | 1   | 64.405      | 2.776   | .001* |
| Gender                      | 496.246                | 1   | 503.232     | 14.693  | .012* |
| Parental Involvement*Gender | 41.545                 | 1   | 42.575      | 1.843   | .019* |
| Error                       | 4500.350               | 286 | 23.20       |         |       |
| Total                       | 2053304.044            | 289 |             |         |       |
| Corrected Total             | 5382.347               | 288 |             |         |       |

Data analysis in Table 4 reveal that the males had significant higher scores on academic performance than females among secondary school students in Nnewi, Anambra State at  $F = 14.7$ ,  $p < .05$  ( $n = 289$ ). The p-value ( $p \leq .000$ ) is less than 0.05. Since significant difference was found in the group scores between males and females on academic performance the effect is significant and accepted. Thus, hypothesis 2 was confirmed because significant difference was ascertained.

**Table 5: Interaction effect of parental involvement and genders on academic performance among secondary school students in Nnewi Education Zone in Anambra State**

Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

| Source                      | Type II Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F       | Sig   |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------|
| Corrected Model             | 604.430a               | 3   | 259.137     | 9.169   | .000  |
| Intercept                   | 183365.493             | 1   | 192265.834  | 6.287E3 | .000  |
| Parental Involvement        | 59.402                 | 1   | 64.405      | 2.776   | .001* |
| Gender                      | 496.246                | 1   | 503.232     | 14.693  | .012* |
| Parental Involvement*Gender | 41.545                 | 1   | 42.575      | 1.843   | .019* |
| Error                       | 4500.350               | 286 | 23.20       |         |       |
| Total                       | 2053304.044            | 289 |             |         |       |
| Corrected Total             | 5382.347               | 288 |             |         |       |

Data in Table 5 reveal that there is significant interaction effect of parental involvement and gender on academic performance of secondary school students in Nnewi Education Zone in Anambra State at  $F = 1.84$ ,  $p > .05$  ( $n = 289$ ). The p-value ( $p \geq .120$ ) is greater than 0.05. The finding indicates that significant interaction was recorded as both gender and parental involvement discriminated against secondary school students' academic performance in Nnewi Education Zone in Anambra State.

#### 4. Discussion

The findings of the study are discussed in line with the research questions and hypotheses raised in the study. They are also discussed with relevant literature reviewed in the study. The discussions on the findings are presented under the following headings:

##### Effects of Parental Involvement on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students

Statistical findings of research question one and hypothesis one were similar and complimentary as highlighted in Tables 1 and 3. Significant differences were ascertained between academic performance of students whose parents were involved in their academic activities and those whose parent weren't involved in their academic activities. The result was supported by the study carried out by Amponsah's et al. (2018) on the relationship between parental involvement in education and academic performance equally correlated the current findings suggesting that students' academic performance and engagement which are related constructs can influenced by parental involvement both directly and indirectly. Amponsah et al. (2018) study directly supports the current study findings and is thus accepted. Also, Erol and Turhan (2018) found that significant and positive relationship between parental involvement and engagement to school of the students. The finding is related to the current study and provides empirical evidence for accepting the current research findings.

Furthermore, the relationship between parental involvement and student active engagement was also found to be positive and proportional by the findings of Marshall and Jackman (2015) which further confirmed the current statistical finding that parental involvement is a predictor of students' academic engagement. Although the study found that the involvement of parents in their children academic life is waning, the proportional positive relationship is indicative that if parents increase their involvement, students will directly improve on their academic engagement. Thus, high parental involvement improves students' academic engagement as data confirmed that academic engagement scores of secondary school students in Anambra

State increased as parental involvement increased (and vice-versa) such that parental involvement significantly predicted academic engagement scores of secondary school students in Anambra State.

#### **Gender Effect on Academic Engagement of Secondary School Students**

Findings obtained showed that gender influenced the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance of secondary school students in Anambra State.

However, comparing the findings, findings revealed that gender affected the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance of secondary school students in Anambra State. This means that significant gender discrimination was found in the relationship between parental involvement and academic performance implying that gender influenced this relationship, and the influence was strong enough to influence of the relationship. This finding is supported by the findings of Makhija et al. (2018) on the influence of gender, personality, cognitive and affective student engagement on academic engagement in educational virtual worlds. Makhija et al. found that there is gender specific difference observed in cognitive and affective student engagement on academic engagement. Their finding supports the current study which found that the initial gender influence observed in the findings of research question four did not reach significant proportion when tested in hypotheses four.

Equally, the finding of the study was supported by King's (2016) finding on gender differences in motivation, engagement and achievement, students' perceptions of peer, parent or teacher attitudes toward school. King found that although boys showed a more maladaptive profile in terms of academic motivation, engagement, and achievement than girls and also perceived their friends to have more negative attitudes toward school, there were no significant gender differences in terms of perceived parental and teacher support. King's finding thus supports the current research result that the relationship between parental involvement and academic engagement was not moderated by gender.

#### **Interaction Effect of Gender and Parental Involvement on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students**

From findings in hypothesis 3, result indicated that there is a significant interaction between gender and parental involvement among of secondary school students in Anambra State. Comparing the finding of hypothesis 3, statistical data confirmed that initial differences observed in findings of research question were confirmed as the result obtained confirmed that gender interacted with parental involvement to affect academic performance of secondary school students in, Nnewi, Anambra State. The findings imply that the way parents are involved in the children academic activities have uneven impacts across males and females on the students' academic performance. This means that whereas interaction of gender and parental involvement had more male influence on their academic performance, however, it had less on female's academic performance. The finding is supported by both Makhija et al. (2018) and King's (2016) empirical findings on the influence of gender, personality, cognitive and affective student engagement on academic engagement in educational virtual worlds. The authors found that there is gender specific difference observed in cognitive and affective student engagement on academic engagement.

Support for the finding can be found in the study of Wilcox et al (2018) while exploring supporting academic engagement in boys and girls. Their study found that boys and girls differ with respect to academic engagement, perceived social support, and anxiety. According Wilcox' findings, girls tend to be more engaged in school than boys are, and girls tend to perceive more social support than boys. Again, genders differences are most noticeable in adolescents especially in academic anxiety. For instance, girls are also more likely to experience anxiety than boys are, which may affect their school functioning thus, explaining that there is a complex interplay of personal and social factors that influence academic engagement such as gender and parental involvement.

## 5. Conclusion

Academic performance is an important learning component because without it stakeholders will not know or measure the students' ability, competence and learning. Given its importance, stakeholders are interested on factors which could influence or affect students' academic performance and this study evaluated parental involvement and gender. To achieve the objectives of the study, the study utilized between subject design and ANOVA statistics which made use of One-way analysis of variance as statistical tools to test the hypothesis of the study. After statistical analysis, findings revealed that both parental involvement and gender affected students' academic performance in secondary schools in Nnewi, Anambra State. It was also found that males differed from females in academic performance with males outperforming females. Hence interaction effect of gender and parental involvement was found significant. The study concludes that parental involvement in their children's academic life is crucial as it helps to improve students' academic performance and vice versa. Also, the study exposed female students have slightly lowered academic performance than males.

### Implications of the Study

Student with less parental involvement may have poor academic engagement leading students' nonchalant attitude or lack of motivation in academic endeavour. The problem with students' academic performance is that secondary school students who are adolescents need constant repetition and enforcement in order to develop interest and motivation towards academic life hence the importance of parental involvement.

### Recommendations

There is need for more sensitization on parents by school management during parent-teachers meeting to charge them (parents) to be more proactive in their children's academic life. This would in turn enhance their children's academic engagement and consequently influence their academic performance positively. It is recommended that school management look closely into students who are performing poorly in academic activities to ascertain physical, social and psychological factors which may be affecting their academic engagement and with the aim of addressing them to improve on their overall academic performance.

### Limitations of the Study

The limitation of the current study is the size of the population which further study should expand to ascertain effect size. However, efforts were made by the researcher to ensure the survey was carried out in natural setting and all factors were effectively controlled and managed to improve empiricism of the findings.

### Suggestion for Further Studies

Due to the restrictions in this study, the researcher suggests the following for further studies. There is need to replicate the study in other regions of the country to ascertain the national pattern of effects which group instruction technique has on students' interests and academic achievement in civic education. Use of true experimental design is also advised for future studies. There is also the need to ascertain the influence of parental level of education as parents in the area of study are of mixed education background.

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