

Family Conflict, Interpersonal Relationship and Senior Secondary Schools Students' Academic Performance: The Counselling Implication

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Abstract. Good education does not happen by chance. It is a product of effective teaching and learning coupled with the effort of the teacher, the school, the students, parents and their various home environments. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship senior secondary schools students' academic performance and the counselling implications.

A survey research design of the ex-post-facto type was employed in the study. Two thousand four hundred (2400) Senior Secondary School Two (SSS2) students comprising 1200 male and 1200 female were sampled for this study. Data were collected using questionnaire. Four research hypotheses were raised to guide this study, while data were analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation significant at 0.05 alpha level.

Results indicated that family conflict and interpersonal relationship accounted for 24.3% of the variance in the senior secondary schools students' academic performance ($R = .505$; $R^2 = .255$; Adj. $R^2 = .243$; $F_{(1,2398)} = 5.113$; $p = .000$). The most potent predictor of senior secondary schools students' academic performance among the predictor variables of the study is family conflict ($\beta = .284$; $t = 9.249$; $p = .000$) followed by interpersonal relationship ($\beta = .185$; $t = 5.856$; $p = .000$). Student gender (Female = $R = .371$; $R^2 = .137$; Adj. $R^2 = .136$; $F_{(1,68)} = 9.041$; $p = .011$; Male = $R = .332$; $R^2 = .110$; Adj. $R^2 = .107$; $F_{(1,46)} = 5.893$; $p = .007$) was found to moderate the influence of family conflict and

interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance. Also, a significant high relationship was observed between family conflict and senior secondary schools students' academic performance ($r = .387$) as well as interpersonal relationship and senior secondary schools students' academic performance ($r = .448$). It was further shown from the table that a significant relationship equally exist between family conflict and interpersonal relationship ($r = .401$).

The study concluded that all hands should be on deck in ensuring that appropriate counselling programmes such as group counselling, family counselling, and supportive associations are designed to help children from negative home environment and their parents so as to improve the children academic performance at school. Also, no stone should be left unturned in nipping in the bud the growing monster called negative home environment in our society as it does not lead to the proper and successful educational development of our children.

Keywords: family conflict, interpersonal relationship, academic performance

1. Introduction

Academic performance has been a topic of considerable interest and research for a very long time. One of the most important concerns of education is to ensure that each child is able to make most of his abilities. Academic performance in itself has become more or less

powerful symbol and way of life. However, even if the course of life is not determined by achievement, it is essentially directed by it. Academic performance is the outcome of the training imparted to a student by the teacher in a school system. It is defined as the mean achievement score in the examination of each subject i.e., curriculum of the students taught by the teachers (Naderi, Abdullah, Hamid, Sharif & Kumar, 2009).

Different people at different times have passed the blame of poor student performance to the students because of their low retention, parental factors, association with wrong peers, low performance and the likes (Akinlana, 2014). In her own position, Aladenusi (2017) believed that the falling level of academic performance is attributable to teachers' non-use of verbal reinforcement strategy. Others found out that the attitude of some teachers to their job reflected in their poor attendance to lectures, lateness to classes, unsavory comments about students' performance that could damage their ego, poor method of teaching and the likes affect students' academic performance (Odunuga, Onabanjo, Adekunle & Olugbenro, 2013).

However, the family lays the psychosocial, moral and spiritual foundations in the overall development of the child. While the mother's significant role in this cannot be over-emphasized. Studies on father-child relationship suggest that the presence of a father in the home influences significantly the development of a child (Ayodele & Iro-Idoro, 2012). Thus, parenthood is a responsibility requiring the full cooperation of both parents who must ensure the total development of their offspring(s). Structurally, a family is either broken or intact. A broken family in this context is one that is not structurally intact for various reasons; death of a parent, divorce, separation, desertion and illegitimacy in which case, the family was never completed (Ogunsawo, 2018). This analysis becomes necessary because life in a single parent family can be stressful for both the child and the parent. This is because when the single parent is overburdened by responsibilities and by their own emotional reaction to their situation, they often become irritable, impatient

and insensitive to their children's needs (Ezeokoli, 2017).

The primary environment of the students is the home and it stands to exert tremendous impact on students' achievements (Olanrewaju, 2015). Moreover, the home is the primary agent of education in the child. Thus, the way the child lives, the food he/she eats and his/her life style is influenced by the home. The type of family system the child is exposed to could influence his academic achievement in school. Kellaghan (1993) cited in Ezeokoli (2017) affirmed that academic success of a child depends on what parents do at home.

Ogunsawo (2018); Olanrewaju (2015); Stephen and Ceci (2011) observed that parent-child interactions are forces that lead to better academic performance. Conflict in the family is gradually becoming a phenomena. Conflict could result from dissension, disagreement, incongruence, separation, violent, lack of peace. According to Wanjiku (2010) conflict can be defined as the lack of peace in an environment. Conflict in a family therefore refers to a situation whereby the smooth interaction and relation among members of a family is disrupted due to misunderstanding. It can be between the two parents or between parents and their children. Conflict in a family can occur as a result of lack of trust, drunkenness, and effective communication (dialogue), respect, joblessness and idleness. It comes in form of fights, quarrels, spouse battering, child abuses and child molestation, children who experience these conflict may have difficulty in establishing a healthy interpersonal relationship with peers in the school because of the background orientation. Furthermore, conflict it can be due to a bad atmosphere in the home, separation or even divorce.

The journey to communication and interpersonal relationship begins with peoples' intra personal relationship. When they begin to be in contact with their felt feelings, sense them in their bodies, verbalize them in their minds and finally express them outwardly in their behaviour, they also open doors to contacting their needs. Interpersonal relationship are created by people

who are willing to be in full contact with their feelings and needs and equally be interested in others' feelings and needs (Ayodele, 2011). The giving and receiving exchange is the building block to developing close relationship with others (Rosenberg, 2003).

Relationship quality is a key indicator of individual psychosocial adjustment. The nature of intrapersonal and interpersonal relationship among individuals especially in our educational institutions varied as the individual members themselves. Also, numerous other factors such as personality, attitudes and environment factors affect the totality of one's relationship (intra and inter) in many ways. At one extreme, these relationships can be personal and positive. This is the case when individual interact meaningfully, share mutual friendship and be personal and negative. This happens when individual dislike one another, create tension and crisis for one another or try to humiliate the personality of one another (Limber, 2002; Rigby, 2002; Ayodele & Bello, 2008).

Negative relationship qualities encompass rivalry, betrayal, hostility, antagonism and competition. Positive relationship qualities encompass companionship, intimacy, assistance, loyalty, caring, warmth, closeness and trust. From psychological standpoint, effective and collaborate relationship within an environment/organization will bring about a stimulating environment in which love, trust, cooperation and collaboration can be built towards the betterment of every individual therein and the success of the environment. On the other hand, such environment will be characterised with tension, anxiety, frustration and at large an environment where individuals are made to internalize and exhibit violence, in order, to endanger themselves and other people's peace and right (Ayodele, 2011; 2014).

Based on the above increasing evidence that parental involvement are beneficial for children's success in school, this study, therefore, seeks to find out the influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship as they individually and collectively affect the

senior secondary schools students' academic performance in Ogun State, Nigeria, Nigeria..

2. Research Hypotheses

- There is no significant influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance.
- There is no significant relative influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance.
- There is no significant moderating effect of gender on the influence of family conflict interpersonal relationship and senior secondary schools students' academic performance
- There is no significant inter-relationship among the variables of the study.

3. Methodology

Research Design: This study adopted the descriptive research design of the ex-post-facto type to influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance in Ogun State.

Sample and Sampling Technique: Sampling was done through stratified random sampling technique. The State was stratified into four major educational divisions namely: Remo, Ijebu, Yewa and Egba (RIYE). There are twenty Local Government Areas in the four Educational divisions in Ogun State. Simple random sampling was adopted to pick two Local Government Areas from each of the Educational divisions. In total, eight Local Government Areas represented the interest of the four Educational Divisions.

The selection of the schools were done through balloting method in which all the names of all the secondary schools in the selected divisions were written based on the strata (local governments) on separate sheet of paper of equal size. These sheets were folded and put into 16 plastic bowls (8 public and 8 private). After thorough reshuffling, and without looking into

the plastic bowls, the researcher picked up three (3) slips each from each of the 16 bowls to get out the forty-eight (48) participating schools for the study.

In each of the participating schools, 50 students were randomly selected from SSII classes (Science, Art, and/or Commercial). From these classes, 50 students (comprising 25 male and 25 female) were purposively selected to participate in the study. In all, 2400 SSII students comprising 1200 male and 1200 female within the age range 13 – 17 years were sampled for this study.

Research Instruments: Two self-developed instruments were used for data collection. They are:

Family Conflict Scale: Family conflict scale was a self-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire contained twenty items that is of 4 likert type which ranges from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD).

Interpersonal Relationship: Interpersonal relationship scale was a self-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire contained fifteen items that is of 4 likert type which ranges from strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (SD).

Academic Performance: Students' academic performance was measured by collecting the Students' CGPA.

Method of Data Analysis: The data collected in the study were analysed descriptively and inferentially. The characteristics of the respondents were described using frequency counts, simple percentages, mean and standard deviation scores. Inferentially, the logistic regression analysis set at the .05 significant level was used to analyze the hypotheses generated for the study. All these were done using the SPSS computer analysis.

4. Results

Table 1: Model Summary of the Regression Analysis for the composite contribution of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students academic performance

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-Ratio	P
Regression	164.193	1	164.193	5.113	.000 ^b
Residual	77034.289	2399	32.111		
Total	77198.482	2400			
R = .505; Multiple R = .255; Multiple R ² (Adjusted) = .243; Stand error estimate = 9.321					
a. Dependent Variable: academic performance					
b. Predictors: (Constant), family conflict and interpersonal relationship					

The results indicated that with all the predictor variables (family conflict and interpersonal relationship) in the regression model jointly predicted senior secondary schools students' academic performance ($R = .505$; $R^2 = .255$; Adj. $R^2 = .243$; $F_{(1,2398)} = 5.113$; $p = 0.000$). This showed that all the predictor variables accounted for 24.3% of the variance in the senior secondary schools students' academic performance. The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant combined influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance was rejected by this finding. This implies that there is a significant combined influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance.

This finding corroborates the findings of other researchers such as Akinlana (2014), Clark and Shields (2014), Darling (2010) who find that children from homes that are not well intact exhibit lower self-esteem, lower achievement motivation, lower tolerance for delay of gratification and lower academic achievement than those from intact homes where both parents are present. The explanation for the poor academic achievement of students from homes characterized with family conflict and poor interpersonal relationship that such home is short of positive relationship qualities that encompass companionship,

intimacy, assistance, loyalty, caring, warmth, closeness and trust among family members (Ogunsanwo, 2018).

Table 2: Beta coefficients and t ratio for relative influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	21.059	2.479		7.363	.000
Family conflict	.169	.018	.284	9.249	.000
Interpersonal relationship	.180	.031	.185	5.856	.000

a. Dependent Variable: academic performance

The strength of causation of the predictor variable on the criterion variable was analysed as shown in Table 2. The most potent predictor of senior secondary schools students' academic performance among the predictor variables of the study is family conflict ($\beta = .284$; $t = 9.249$; $p = .000$). Interpersonal relationship is the next potent factor ($\beta = .185$; $t = 5.856$; $p = .000$) in the prediction of senior secondary schools students' academic performance. The hypothesis of no significant relative contribution of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance was rejected by this finding. This implies that there is a significant relative influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance, while family conflict was observed as the most potent predictor among the two.

This result is in line with the findings of Heard (2017) that conflicting homes increased the risk of school disciplinary problems and reduced college expectations of the children. Heard also found that, for each year a child lived in turbulent home, there was a substantial reduction in the grade point average of the child. Also, Ogunsanwo (2018) reported that poor interpersonal relations inhibit effective and good academic performance among students no matter their level of education. On the same vein Ayodele (2003) confirmed that children from broken homes experience more behavioural problems and their ability to cope with these problems differs and is accountable for the differences in their academic achievements.

Table 3: Model Summary of the multiple regression analysis of the moderating effect of gender on the influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	SE	Change Statistics				
					R ² Change	F Change	d f 1	d f 2	Sig. F Change
Gender									
Female	.371	.137	.136	5.445	.136	9.041	1	1199	.000
Male	.332	.110	.107	6.836	.107	5.893	1	1199	.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, family conflict, interpersonal relationship

b. Dependent Variable: academic performance

The results indicated that when gender entered into the regression model to family conflict and interpersonal relationship, it predicted senior secondary schools students' academic performance. For female undergraduates ($R = .371$; $R^2 = .137$; $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .136$; $F_{(1,1199)} = 9.041$; $p = .011$), it was observed that family conflict and interpersonal relationship accounted for 13.7% variability of senior secondary schools students' academic performance; while 10.7% was observed for male academic performance ($R = .332$; $R^2 = .110$; $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .107$; $F_{(1,1199)} = 5.893$; $p = .007$). Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that gender will not significantly moderate the influence of family conflict and interpersonal relationship on senior secondary schools students' academic performance was rejected by this finding. This implies that family conflict and interpersonal relationship influenced the female academic performance compared to their male counterparts.

This result is in agreement with Richford (2012) who discovered the male students at high school and college levels tend to be more confident than female students in Mathematics, science and technology. He found out that negative home environment to a great extent influenced the female more compared to the male in performance outcome at college level. Silverwise (2010) findings was also in accordance with this result. He confirmed that healthy male performed better than healthy female. This contradicts the findings of Aremu and Tella (2009) who found out that gender have very low insignificant correlation with mental ability and mathematics achievements.

Table 4: Relationship between family conflict, interpersonal relationship and senior secondary schools students' academic performance

		Family conflict	Interpersonal relationship	Academic Performance
Family conflict	Pearson Correlation	1	.401**	.387**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.013	.007
	N	2400	2400	2400
Interpersonal relationship	Pearson Correlation	.401**	1	.448*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013		.000
	N	2400	2400	2400
Academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.387**	.448*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.000	
	N	2400	2400	2400

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results in Table 4 indicated that there is a significant inter-relationship among the variables (family conflict, interpersonal relationship and senior secondary schools students' academic performance) of the study. A significant high relationship was observed between family conflict and senior secondary schools students' academic performance ($r = .387$) as well as interpersonal relationship and senior secondary schools students' academic performance ($r = .448$). It was further shown from the table that a significant relationship equally exist between family conflict and interpersonal relationship ($r = .401$).

This study lends credence to the previous studies by Ogunsawo (2018); Olanrewaju (2015); Stephen and Ceci (2011) observed that parent-child interactions are forces that lead to better academic performance. So it is with the degree of home conflict experienced by the individual student (Olanrewaju, 2015). The state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life.

5. Counselling Implication and Conclusion

Findings from this study have implications for the counsellors, psychologists, social workers, parents, teachers, students and the society at large. Since negative home environment characterized by poor interpersonal relationship and conflicts have negative effects on the academic achievements of the children. Their talents, abilities and interest may not be fully developed to allow them to achieve self-actualization in life. This has a great implication for counselling and educational advancement of the nation.

The parents should also be counselled on socio-mental needs of their children so that their academic work will not suffer at school. Children and their parents should be counseled along their gender, as it affects their children's academic achievement. In this respect, whatever the parents should put the wellbeing of their children into consideration in whatever things they do by making the home a "HOME" and not "HELL".

In conclusion, all hands should be on deck in ensuring that appropriate counselling programmes such as group counselling, family counselling, and supportive associations are designed to help children from negative home

environment and their parents so as to improve the children academic performance at school. Also, no stone should be left unturned in nipping in the bud the growing monster called negative home environment in our society as it does not lead to the proper and successful educational development of our children.

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