



INFLUENCE OF SINGLE PARENTING ON STUDENTS' PUNCTUALITY AND ATTITUDE TO LEARNING IN UPPER BASIC SCHOOLS IN KOGI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of single parenting on students' punctuality and attitude to learning in upper basic schools in Kogi State, Nigeria. The research design adopted for the study is descriptive survey. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study comprised all the students in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State East Senatorial district 2023/2024 session. Their combine total is ten thousand eight hundred and fifty-three (10853) drawn from nine Local Government Areas. proportional and simple random sampling techniques was adopted to sample 370 students from 5 selected local government areas. The instrument of data collection for the study was self-developed questionnaire titled 'Single Parent Questionnaire' (SPQ). SPQ is divided into two sections A and B. Cronbach alpha statistics was used to compute the reliability data. The reliability index of .823 was arrived at, the reliability index is considered adequate for the main study. Mean, and Standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while Chi-square was used to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondent on the extent of the influence of widowed parents on students' punctuality to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria. Table 4.5 shows that χ^2 cal. (3), 494.731 > 7.815. it was recommended among others that education administrators can utilize programmes about regular students' punctuality and attitude to learning by organizing symposia, seminars and workshops for upper basic school students in that they can acquire personal, interpersonal, communication, problem-solving and thought processes skills. This will develop the students' social, mental, psychological and emotional well-being to enable then practice regular school attendance behaviour.

Keywords: Single Parenting, Students' Punctuality, Attitude, Upper Basic

Introduction

The National Policy on Education (2013) is not wrong with its assertion that education is "an instrument par excellence" and the world at large had keyed into this, by recognizing education as the panacea to development and survival of man. It is not surprising therefore that the processes of education are offered by the three levels—primary, secondary and tertiary education. As a result, education is classified on the concurrent list. That is, administration, funding, policy formulation and maintenance of schools or matters relating to education can both be deliberated upon by the Federal and State governments.

Over the years, there had been public outcry concerning the fate of educational



system in Nigeria and the breeding of graduates with little technical know-how which has resulted in serious setbacks to the industrial and economic development of the nation and its place among comity of nations in the 21st century. Investigations into the factor that influence academic performance of students in and out-of-school could be trace to individual family or home. The family or home is an integral part of the society which is a sub-system of the social structure. It is an axiom that good homes breed a productive nation. Family can be seen as a group of people who have biological, emotional or legal ties to each other (McDonald, Campbell & Seaburn, 1990). In different cultures, the term “family” may mean different things and a wide variation in families, usually people of two generations and two genders are involved (Jallinogo, 2010). Family, unlike other systems, is an emotional system characterized by affection, loyalty and durability of memberships that organize itself in ways that may be either stated or unstated and whose meanings and broad effects may not be fully understood by the family members or at least may be difficult for them to isolate and articulate. This is the brain-child of why, every society aspires for development.

The educational pursuit of every child is relatively determined by the pattern of family or home he/she comes from. Be it wealthy or poor, educated or otherwise, traditional belief or aspirations. Parents who failed in their responsibility to assist and guide their wards through every stage of development in life may likely have to contend with poor attitude to learning sooner or later and the development of unwholesome behaviours, as foundation to the success or failures in any child is laid upon the home and at the initial stage in life. Parents therefore have a great role to play in seeing to it that the students acquire the appropriate social, psychological, moral and academic development. Those found in this category are mostly adolescents who needed to be tutored not only by the teachers but with combined efforts of the parents (Yombi, 2017).

Single-parenthood across all regions and tribes which has become a major source of concern to the socio-economic and socio-cultural development. Single parenting is seen as a situation in which one of the two individuals involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for the upbringing of the child (Henshin, 2019). Single-parent family is used when a family is formed of one custodial parent and a number of dependent children (Sauvola, 2017). According to Henshin (2015), single parenting can be defined as a situation in which one of the two individuals, involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for upbringing of the child. Single parenthood may arise when either the male or female decide to produce and rear a child or children outside wedlock. This idea is relatively unknown before now in Nigeria but is fast growing family patterns both inside and outside the shores of the land (Nwachukwu, 2018).

Students attitude to learning has become a critical issue especially from children of single parent. Children from single parent homes are likely to suffer deprivation, and denial of some rights and opportunities. They are more exposed to anti-social behaviours and poor academic records. Divorce and separation of various kinds or death of one spouse may leave a child with no option than to have a single parent. The benefits of a two-parents family far outweigh that of a single parent family, as mothers



play the traditional role of child care and home-making while the father's role is that of economic responsibilities and discipline of children. But in single parent families, double responsibilities are required of time, attention and money of the parent. Hence, less attention is given to the education of the child. (Odebode, 2019)

Invariably the cost of receiving education today is high to be financed only by a single parent who may be financially handicapped. In the case of the few wealthy single parents in the locality of the research study the task is more with the nature of their job which affects adequate supervision of a child's growth and development. Teachers commonly describe children from single parents as more hostile, aggressive, anxious, fearful, hyperactive and distractible than children from intact families. The school curriculum if well-designed as the situation demands will become helpful in addressing students punctuality and attitude to learning on the set-objectives of secondary education as well as analyzing the factors that affect the performance. Although, there are no available statistics of single parent families in Nigeria, practical experience and tabloids report shows that it is increasing on a daily basis. On the contrary, western countries have a geometric progression in the percentage of adults and children living in single parent households (Nwachukwu, 2018).

The decision of couples to become separated may sound healthy but worsen if the challenges of being so are critically looked into as it affect every spheres of human lives. Economically, the burden on the affected parents if not in paid employment could be considered alarming. As the sole parent in charge, she would be confronted with how to improve the standard of living, cost of education, attention or care for the children left in his/her custody (Haddad, 2017). Most disturbed is the situation where the custodian parents are not in strong paid employment. Because the responsibilities may far outweigh the salaries or wages earned. It has also become noticeable that medical needs of the affected children suffer a lot. The children are either underfed or malnourished since the custodian parent may not be able to afford qualitative food for his/her household, thus, necessitated the need for prompt medical attention to further save the situation from worsening. On the societal front, the victims are not accorded any fair hearing on important issues of discussion. They are classified as irresponsible to handle sensitive issues. These are invariably transferred to the children who are more likely to exhibit these characters and attitudes when they grow up. Because of this, the researcher has come to terms that the challenges before the single parenthood if not well managed may set their lives on danger (Michelle, 2010).

In determining punctuality to school by children, household income is found to be an important factor; this is because there are many costs associated with schooling and educational process ranging from school fees, uniform PTA fees and the opportunity costs of sending a female- child to school. Household income is linked to a range of factors: when children start school, how often they attend, whether they have to temporarily withdraw and also when and if they drop out (Yombi, 2011). The link between socio-economic and educational background of the parents and children educational process had been highlighted by number of studies in looking at the interaction between the children in particular and the household income and socio-



economic status. All the studies agreed that children's „enrolment, retention and completion can seriously be affected by the low socio-economic status and low educational level of the parents which resulted to poverty (Yombi, 2011).

Poverty could be regarded as the most common primary and contributory reason for many children to be out of school (Lloyd, & Mench, 2016) call poverty, “a plausible explanation of school disruption”. According to Lloyd, and Mench, (2016) Series of questions were asked to parents and guardians about the financial circumstances surrounding children's school enrolment in Nigeria their answers was no more than financial problem militating against sending their children to school. Wang (2010) also mentioned poverty as a contributing factor of children's dropout in rural areas of China. Children from better off households are more likely to remain in school, whilst those who are poorer are more likely never to have attended, or to drop out once they have enrolled. This has been suggested by both statistical data and empirical research. For example, research conducted in rural China by Glewe & Kreme (2016) saw „poor and credit constrained children” three times more likely than other children to drop out of primary school.

Theoretically, Aron Beck's Cognitive Behaviour Theory (CBT) (1976) is based on the idea that it is inner thoughts that cause feelings and behaviour and not external things like people, situations and events. Emotional and behavioural reactions are learned and the goal of the therapy is to help clients to unlearn their unwanted reaction and replace them with positive action. Empirically, the study of Lahaye, (2019) revealed that significant different exist between single parenting and academic performance, also educational attainment of parent has significant different on academic performance and the result also revealed positive between broken home and academic performance. Similarly, Lauby, (2019) found out that those from intact homes performed better academically than their counterpart from broken homes.

It is the wishes of every parent ensure punctuality and positive attitude to Learning among their children. A lot of people, educationists and counsellors are complaining about the nonchalant attitude of students to study and their punctuality toward learning. Reports and observations on students from different family composition are indicators to truant behaviour. Parenthood is challenging enough even under the best of conditions. So, being a single parent in our society is tasking to say the least. This is because, with one parent, the challenges are multifaceted. Single parenting in our society has been the focus of much interest and research in recent years. The effect of single parenting are far reaching because it does not only affect the parents, it also affects the children. In fact, the effects are more devastating on the part of the children because single parenthood leaves them with deep scars; Lateness to school remains a major factor in the school setting that affects, students' academic performance and achievement. Against this backdrop, the problem of this study is to assess the influence of single parenting on students' punctuality and attitude to learning in upper basic schools in Kogi State, Nigeria.

The general objective of the study was to assess the influences of single parenting on students' punctuality and attitude to learning in upper basic schools in



Kogi State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. Find the influence of widowed Parents on students' punctuality to Learning in Upper Basic Secondary Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria,
2. Examine the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Secondary Schools in Kogi State,

Research Question

This study sought to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the influence of widowed Parents on students' punctuality to Learning in Upper Basic Secondary Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria?
2. What is the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Secondary Schools in Kogi State?

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study at the 0.05 alpha level of significance.

H₀₁: Divorced parenting has significant influence on the punctuality of students to learning in Upper Basic Secondary Schools in Kogi State

H₀₂: Divorced parenting has no significant influence on the attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Secondary Schools in Kogi State

Methods

The research design adopted for the study is descriptive survey. Two research questions and two hypotheses guide the study. The populations of the study comprised of the total number of students in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State East Senatorial district. Their combine total is ten thousand eight hundred and fifty-three (10853) drawn from nine local government areas. proportional and simple random sampling techniques is used to sample 370 students from 5 selected local government areas. The instrument of data collection for the study was self-develop questionnaire titled 'Single Parent Questionnaire' (SPQ). SPQ is divided into two sections A and B. the A Section contains the bio-data variables of the participants of the study. While the Section B is made up of the main Test Items that comprised of 30 items broken down into three components (10 for each component). The four modified Likert scale will be used to illicit responses from the participants of the study. The responses options are: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). the Cronbach alpha statistics was used to compute the data. The reliability index of .823 was arrived at, the reliability index is considered adequate for the main study. Mean, and Standard deviation will be used to answer the research questions while Chi-square will be used to test the hypothesis.

Result

Research Question One: What is the influence of widowed Parents on Students' punctuality to Learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria?



Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the extent of the influence of widowed parents on Students' punctuality to Learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria

S/No	Item	Sa	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std	Decision
1.	My widowed parent consistently encourages me to be punctual in my learning activities.	260	79	8	3	350	3.70	0.55	Accepted
2.	I feel motivated to arrive on time for school or classes because of the support and guidance from my widowed parent.	232	108	8	2	350	3.63	0.56	Accepted
3.	The absence of my other parent due to widowhood affects my punctuality negatively.	208	137	4	1	350	3.58	0.53	Accepted
4.	My widowed parent sets clear expectations regarding punctuality for my learning activities.	187	148	13	1	350	3.49	0.59	Accepted
5.	I believe that my widowed parent's involvement and support positively influence my punctuality in learning.	194	130	17	9	350	3.45	0.70	Accepted
6.	I find it challenging to maintain punctuality in my learning activities due to the absence of my other parent.	260	79	8	3	350	3.70	0.55	Accepted
7.	My widowed parent actively monitors and reinforces my punctuality in learning.	232	108	8	2	350	3.63	0.56	Accepted
8.	I feel a sense of responsibility to be punctual in my learning activities because of my widowed parent's situation.	208	137	4	1	350	3.58	0.53	Accepted
9.	The loss of my other parent through widowhood has had a significant impact on my punctuality in learning.	187	148	13	1	350	3.49	0.59	Accepted
10.	My widowed parent provides necessary resources and assistance to ensure my punctuality in learning.	194	130	17	9	350	3.45	0.70	Accepted
Cluster Mean and Std							3.57	0.59	

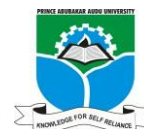


Table 1 reveals that items 1-10 have mean and standard deviation as follows 3.70 (.55), 3.63 (.56), 3.58 (.53), 3.49 (.59), 3.45 (.70), 3.70 (.55), 3.63 (.56), 3.58 (.53), 3.49 (.59), 3.45 (.70) with cluster mean and standard deviation of 3.57 (0.59) all indicating accepted. This clearly shows that all respondents were of the opinion that widowed parent consistently encourages them to be punctual in their learning activities, motivated to arrive on time for school or classes because of the support and guidance from their widowed parent, they feel motivated to arrive on time for school or classes because of the support and guidance from their widowed parent, The absence of their other parent due to widowhood affects their punctuality negatively, their widowed parent sets clear expectations regarding punctuality for their learning activities, they believed that their widowed parent's involvement and support positively influence their punctuality in learning, they also find it challenging to maintain punctuality in their learning activities due to the absence of their other parent. Also, their widowed parent actively monitors and reinforces their punctuality in learning, they feel a sense of responsibility to be punctual in their learning activities because of their widowed parent's situation, The loss of their other parent through widowhood has had a significant impact on their punctuality in learning and their widowed parent provides necessary resources and assistance to ensure their punctuality in learning. The cluster mean with standard deviation of 3.57 (Std. 0.59) is above the cutoff point of 2.50. This implies that widowed parents has influence on students' punctuality to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State

S/No	Item	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean	Std	Decision
1.	My divorced parent consistently encourages me to be punctual in my learning activities.	238	104	6	2	350	3.65	0.55	Accepted
2.	I feel motivated to arrive on time for school or classes because of the support and guidance from my divorced parent.	237	106	6	1	350	3.65	0.53	Accepted
3.	The divorce of my parents affects my punctuality negatively.	231	93	25	1	350	3.58	0.64	Accepted
4.	My divorced parent sets clear expectations regarding punctuality for my learning activities.	185	140	24	1	350	3.45	0.64	Accepted
5.	I believe that my divorced parent's involvement and support positively influence my punctuality in learning.	124	169	47	10	350	3.16	0.76	Accepted
6.	I find it challenging to maintain								



	punctuality in my learning activities due to the divorce of my parents.	238	104	6	2	350	3.65	0.55	Accepted
7.	My divorced parent actively monitors and reinforces my punctuality in learning.	237	106	6	1	350	3.65	0.53	Accepted
8.	I feel a sense of responsibility to be punctual in my learning activities because of my parents' divorce.	231	93	25	1	350	3.58	0.64	Accepted
9.	The divorce of my parents has had a significant impact on my punctuality in learning.	185	140	24	1	350	3.45	0.64	Accepted
10.	My divorced parent provides necessary resources and assistance to ensure my punctuality in learning.	124	169	47	10	350	3.16	0.76	Accepted
Cluster Mean and Std							3.50	0.62	

Table 2 reveals that items 6-10 have mean and standard deviation scores as follows 3.65 (.55), 3.65(.53), 3.58(.64), 3.45 (.64), 3.16 (.76), 3.65 (.55), 3.65(.53), 3.58(.64), 3.45 (.64), and 3.16 (.76) with cluster mean score of 3.50 (0.62) indicating that all items were accepted. This result further explained that all respondents agreed that; their divorced parent consistently encourages them to be punctual in their learning activities, they feel motivated to arrive on time for school or classes because of the support and guidance from their divorced parent, The divorce of their parents affects their punctuality negatively, their divorced parent sets clear expectations regarding punctuality for their learning activities. Also they believe that their divorced parent's involvement and support positively influence their punctuality in learning, they find it challenging to maintain punctuality in their learning activities due to the divorce of their parents, their divorced parent actively monitors and reinforces their punctuality in learning, Finally, they feel sense of responsibility to be punctual in their learning activities because of their parents' divorce, the divorce of their parents has had a significant impact on their punctuality in learning, and their divorced parent provides necessary resources and assistance to ensure their punctuality in learning. The cluster mean with standard deviation of 3.50 (std. 0.62) is above the cutoff point of 2.50. This implies that divorced parents has influence on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondent on the influence of widowed Parents on Students' punctuality to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria.



Table 3: Chi-square analysis on the significant opinions of principals, MOE and teachers on the extent of the influence of widowed Parents on Students' punctuality to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria.

Items	<i>F_o</i>	<i>F_e</i>	<i>Residual</i>	<i>x² cal</i>	<i>x² crit</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sign</i>
SA	260	87.5	-85.5				
A	79	87.5	-81.5	494.731	7.815	3	.000
D	8	87.5	16.5				
SD	3	87.5	150.5				
Total	350						

Source: Field Survey Result (2024)

Table 3 shows that x^2 cal. (3), 494.731 > 7.815. Since the calculated *chi-square* is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondent on the extent of the influence of widowed parents on students' punctuality to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria was rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the Opinions of the respondent on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State.

Table 4: Chi-square analysis on the significant opinions of the respondent on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State.

Items	<i>F_o</i>	<i>F_e</i>	<i>Residual</i>	<i>x² cal</i>	<i>x² crit</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sign</i>
SA	238	87.5	-85.5				
A	104	87.5	-81.5	421.429	7.815	3	.000
D	6	87.5	16.5				
SD	2	87.5	150.5				
Total	350						

Source: Field Survey Result (2024)

Table 4 shows that x^2 cal. (3), 421.429 > 7.815. Since the calculated *chi-square* is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondent on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Secondary Schools in Kogi State is rejected. This implies that opinions of students are necessary on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State.



Discussion of Findings

The study revealed there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondent on the extent of the influence of widowed parents on students' punctuality to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria. Table 4.5 shows that x^2 cal. (3), 494.731 > 7.815. Since the calculated *chi-square* is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondent on the extent of the influence of widowed parents on students' punctuality to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, Nigeria was rejected. There is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondent on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State, this implies that pupils from two parents home performed better than pupils from single parent home. This is a clear indication that single parenting had negative influence on pupils' attitude of student to learning, which agree with findings of Lauby, (2019) who examined the influence of single parenting on pupils' academic performance in basic schools in the west municipality, the cross sectional study design was used. A questionnaire aided the collecting of primary data while secondary data on test scores was obtained from pupils' report cards. The sample size was 170. The results show that there is a significant difference between the academic performance of pupils from single parent homes and those from two parent homes, study show that single parenting has negative impact on a child's academic performance.

Finally, the study furthered revealed that there is no significant difference in the Opinions of the respondent on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State. Table 4.6 shows that x^2 cal. (3), 421.429 > 7.815. Since the calculated *chi-square* is greater than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondent on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State is rejected. This implies that opinions of students are necessary on the influence of divorced parents on attitude of student to learning in Upper Basic Schools in Kogi State. This findings agreed with the report of Odebode, (2019) step parenting generally lead to development of low self-esteem and negative spirit of belonging among school children which affect their punctuality in schools, relationship with others and academic performance if compared with their counterparts who live with their both parents. In supporting this finding Lahaye, (2019) asserted that step parenting result from divorce, separation of various kinds, having children out of wedlock or death of one spouse which leaves the roles in the hands of a single parent or none of the parents which consequently affect child's self-esteem, emotional development and academic performance. This finding is in line with the report of Wang, (2010), who observed that, 87 children under step parenting family structure might not receive the necessary attention they require because the step parents might not give adequate attention to the children that are not theirs. This phenomenon creates psychological imbalance among school children.



Conclusion

From the analysis of data collected for this study and the result of the tested hypotheses, the researcher concluded that regular attendance at school by students is needed to facilitate learning. Its consistency is determined by the importance attached to the teaching and learning outcome. Students who take their school activities seriously eventually emerged with good grades in their examinations. In view of the irregular attendance of students and absence from school it became necessary for this study to investigate and moderate single parenting has an influence on students' punctuality and attitude to learning in upper basic schools in Kogi State, Nigeria. It confirmed the researcher's expectation that strategies can be used as vehicles in which truants balance the demands of school activities and at home.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study, the researcher has come up with a number of recommendations as followed.

1. It is therefore recommended that education administrators can utilize programmes about regular students' punctuality and attitude to learning by organizing symposia, seminars and workshops for upper basic school students in that they can acquire personal, interpersonal, communication, problem-solving and thought processes skills. This will develop the students' social, mental, psychological and emotional well-being to enable them practice regular school attendance behaviour.
2. School administrator should include students' punctuality and attitude to learning skills in their scheme of work. Each term should focus on a particular skill while teaching the students punctuality and attitude to learning.

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