

Full Length Research Paper

Effects of family type (monogamy or polygamy) on students' academic achievement in Nigeria

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The present study was undertaken to assess the effects of inter-relationship between family type and academic achievement of students. A Correlational survey research was adopted for the study with a total of 300 respondents. Analysis of the data indicated that significant relationship exists between academic achievement, family type and students' academic motivation ($r=0.26$; $P<0.005$). Also, a significant relationship existed in the overall academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families ($T\text{-cal}=3.48$; $P<0.005$). However, sex did not significantly affect academic achievement of students from monogamy and polygamy background. Though, the males tend to achieve slightly better than the females with mean of 36.26. Outcome of this finding posited that counselors should provide the necessary assistance and psychological support for students from polygamous family to overcome poor academic achievement.

Key words: Monogamous homes, polygamous homes and students' academic achievement.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of the upsurge of academic failure among the youths is a menace that has stirred both the government and stakeholders in the face. There is a consensus of opinion about the fallen standard of education as a big problem that is hindering the posterity of the nation in terms of man power resources. Most students in secondary school experience academic problem that manifests itself in the form of academic poor performance. Many educational authorities have sought to find out the reasons for the downward trend in the academic achievement of secondary school students. Fasanmi (1986), Akinboye (1980) and Aremu (2000) posited that many factors have been attributed to these poor academic performances. Emeke (1984) stressed that the environmental condition and the nature of social interaction that goes on in the family may have some positive or negative influence on the academic achievement of a child. Adesehinwa and Aremu (2010) (A Personal Communication at The World Conference For Psychology and

Counselling, Antalya, Turkey) posit that factors resident in child, family, society, government and the school may be composite causative effects for these downtrend; they, however concluded that there is a need for each of these variables to be considered extensively, hence the focus of this study is to critically consider family type and effects on academic achievements of secondary school students.

The family, being a powerful influence on the child and its importance as a primary agent of socialization could in no doubt enhance or hinder the academic achievement of the child depending on the social climate in the family. Variance in psycho-social emotional fortification in the monogamy and polygamy family background could be an indicator to high or low academic performance of students. Research on this aspect has not been exhaustively looked into in Nigeria where the two types of family system is actively practiced bearing in mind the intervening effect of high and low socio-economic status

Table 1. Correlation table of analysis on academic achievement of students from monogamous families with those from polygamous families and their motivation to achieve.

Variables	N	X	SD	R	P	Remarks
Academic achievement	400	40.14	7.15			
Home background	300	35.10	5.61	0.14	.000	Significant ($p < 0.005$)
Students' motivation To achieve	300	36.21	6.02	0.26	.002	Significant ($p < 0.005$)

Table 2. T-test summary table on academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families.

Group	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	P	Remarks
students from monogamous	183	32.46	5.62	298	3.48	.000	Significant ($P < 0.005$)
Students from polygamous families	117	35.11	6.31				

and emotional stability of students which is a pre-requisite to academic achievement (Adebule, 2004). Wilkins (1976) emphasized that in the monogamous family, favourable learning environment is created, while Adika (1987) noted that conflicts are relatively easier to solve in the monogamous than in the polygamous families. Moreover, less psychological disturbance is envisaged in the former than in the latter. Students from polygamous families are therefore more likely to experience more problems than students from monogamous families. This will invariably affect their academic achievement. This is because psychological problems are potential sources of trouble with learning. It is therefore against these that the study sought to determine the relationships between the academic achievement of students from monogamous homes and those from polygamous homes.

The objectives of the study are to ascertain if there is any correlation between academic achievement and composite effects of home background and students' motivation to excel. The study will also examine the relationship between students' family type (monogamy and polygamy) and their academic achievement. Lastly the study will determine the gender difference in the pattern of academic achievement of both family types.

The findings of this study will help to guide the future generation on the type of family to rear. It will be of immense advantage to educational planners in designing school programmes that are attentive to the family background of students. Teachers and counselors will be able to use the results to predict the performances of certain students based on the influence on their type of home background; thus it will afford them to help students improve their performances.

The following hypotheses were generated to guide the study.

1. Is there any correlation on the academic achievement

of students from monogamous families with those from polygamous families and their motivation to achieve?

2. There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families.

3. There is no significant gender difference in the academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families.

METHOD

A correlational survey research was adopted for the study with a total of 300 respondents. Stratified and purposeful sampling technique was used for selection. Six schools from the Ibadan north and south local government areas were sampled. They consisted of 150 students from monogamous families and 150 students from polygamous families. A questionnaire was administered while a proforma was used to collect the students' Junior Secondary Certificate Examination results in four core subjects namely, English, Mathematics, Basic Science and Social Studies.

The t-test statistics was employed in testing the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULT

Table 1 revealed that a significant relationship existed between academic achievement and students motivation to achieve ($r=0.26$; $P < 0.005$).

H₁: There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families

The finding of this study showed that there was a significant difference in the overall academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families ($T\text{-cal}=3.48$; $P < 0.005$). The null hypothesis postulated earlier was rejected while the alternative one was upheld.

Table 3. T-test table of analysis on gender difference in the academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families.

Group	N	X	SD	Df	t-cal	P	Remark
Male	204	36.26	6.21	298	1.64	.214	Not significant($P>0.05$)
Female	93	35.31	5.14				

H₂: There is no significant gender difference in the academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families

Table 3 revealed that sex did not significantly affect academic achievement of students from monogamy and polygamy background. Though the males tend to achieve slightly better than the females with mean of 36.26, the result was not significant at 0.05 alpha levels. The hypothesis is therefore upheld.

DISCUSSION

A look at the results in Table 1 revealed that a significant relationship exists between academic achievement and students motivation to achieve ($r=0.26$; $P<0.005$). Home background was also found to be significantly related to academic achievement. Students' motivational achievement to excel was found to correlate with academic achievement. The findings imply that both home background and students motivation to excel is a catalyst to academic achievements. This buttresses the findings of Ajiboye and Omolade, (2005) that home is the bedrock of learning. The result of the second hypothesis goes further to reveal that there is a significant difference in the overall academic achievement of students from monogamous families and those from polygamous families. However, the third hypothesis result revealed that sex did not significantly affect academic achievement of students from monogamy and polygamy background, though the males tend to achieve slightly better than the females. The t-value indicated that there is no significant difference between the academic performances of male to their female counterparts. It must be noted that equal educational opportunities is given to both boys and girls. In addition, the learning styles of these students account for their academic performance rather than the types of family they come from. This view is in line with Agulanna (1999) in his theory that the academic performance of a student depends on his learning style. Hassan (1983), attributed problems associated with female that can hinder good academic achievement like fancy making, and societal expectations are not peculiar to one type of family system. It is therefore not surprising that girls from both families do not perform significantly different from each other in academic work. Boys are generally the pillars of each home and are therefore encouraged to attain higher educational achievement. There is no

exemption to this view in both family types and this may not call for significant difference in their academic achievement. Study habits as pointed out by Adesemowo (2005) (Premium on affective education: panacea for scholastical -functioning and aberration, *34th Inaugural Lecture, Olabisi Onabanjo University. Ago-Iwoye: Olabisi Onabanjo University Press*) are the major determinants of academic performance hence sex alone may not allow for any significant difference. It was further suggested by Obasa (2000) that sex of the learner has no significant influence on his or her academic attainment.

This finding of this study could be explained by the fact that life in polygamous family can be traumatic and children brought up in such family structure often suffer some emotional problems such as lack of warmth, love despite availability of money and material resources, and disciplinary problems which may hinder their academic performance. On the other hand, children raised in monogamous families' structure are often stable emotionally and they suffer less emotional problems thereby making them less anxious in the pursuit of their academic work. However, it should be noted that this situation may not be true all the time since there are some children in the polygamous structures who still perform academically better than children from monogamous parent family structure (Isangedigh, 1988). This could be because the various parents are financially buoyant, and that the father takes care of the children and the wives without being partial. The Nigerian culture also expects grown up and able children from such families to take care of their step sisters and brothers. Some students from such polygamous families may be able to outperform their counterparts in monogamous families if they are exposed to a social climate like their counterparts in monogamous families. Moreover through counseling, it is possible for some students from polygamous families to develop positive attitudes to the problems associated with the social climate in their families, to the extent that their academic achievements will not be adversely affected.

Implication of the findings

A consideration of student's family background is very important in teaching and learning. This is because this study has shown that the nature of social interaction within the family can influence the child's personality. A negative influence on a child's emotions and psychology

will consequently affect his or her academic achievement. The school is the second home of the child, therefore the social climate for learning in the school should be made conducive so that the students can do better in their academics. Parental neglects tend to affect younger children more than the adolescents who are the subject of this study. However, early childhood problem may have negative impact on later life development. It should also be mentioned here that the presence of other adults in a polygamous parent household may either bring some positive or negatives influences on the degree of tension that may be suffered by children from such background

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made: Governments, private organisations and individuals concerned with the business of education should endeavour to address the obstacles hindering effective academic performance of students. This can be done by developing achievement motivation in students through achievement motivation training. There is the need for the recognition of individual differences in students and the need to deal with them accordingly. Counsellors should provide the necessary assistance and psychological support for students from polygamous family so as to overcome their emotional problems. There is also the need to keep enlightening the parents of the importance of the home structure on the life of children. This is necessary so that parents can understand the implications and consequences of such family structure and thus mobilize all resources to curtail the problems arising from the situation.

Generally, there is need to combat the continuing declining state of education by providing more funds and materials for boosting our educational system. Finally, school counsellors should be employed in institutions of learning and adequate supervision be put in place to ensure provision of necessary guidance services to students.

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