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# A Critical Analysis of Parental Attitude and Academic Achievement of Students in English Language in Public Secondary Schools in Uyo Local Government Area

**Aniekan NYARKS, Ph.D**

English Department  
Akwa Ibom State University  
Nigeria, West Africa

**ABSTRACT**

The study sought to find out how parental attitude of parents relate to academic achievement of the students in English language. Correlational survey design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in selected public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The population of this study comprised senior secondary two students in Uyo Local Government Area. There are 14 public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area and the estimated population of SS2 students was 3162. Simple random sampling technique was used to select eight public secondary schools where 303 SS 2 students were randomly selected for the study. The instrument used in this study for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Students Factors Questionnaire (SFQ)". The instrument was vetted and content validated by the researcher's supervisor and two lecturers who are experts in language education in the University of Uyo to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness for the study under consideration. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.97, and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The data were analyzed using t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics analysis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels. Parents who show deep interest in the education of their children would motivate them to perform better than parents who only boast about education of their children without practical motivation. And parents who desire greater academic aspiration of their children will supply all the school requisitions and supervise at home what they do. Students whose parents place high premium on their academic pursuit perform better than those students whose parents pay lip services to their education. However, parents who are not educated may not consider it worthwhile to find out the progress of work of their children. Finally, it was concluded that parents with lucrative occupations provide sufficiently for their children academic pursuit. One of the recommendations made in the study was that it is very needful for parents to give advises to their children on matters concerning their education at every time and as well check their homework in order to develop a closer relationship that will positively contribute to academic success.

**Keywords:**

Parental attitude, Parents, Students' Academic Achievement, English Language, Public Secondary Schools and Uyo Local Government Area

## Introduction

A learner is like a traveler. He plans for a journey and gets all his belonging ready to take off. His journey might be delayed by unexpected occurrences. He does not know how and when he would get to his destination until he finally arrives. A journey to academic pursuit and success is not different. A student is faced with many factors, which can promote or mar his academic excellence. Such factors, which can inhibit or accelerate academic achievement, include physiological factors, psychological factors and environmental factors.

Home environment influences positively and negatively, the academic performance of a student. Students from poverty-stricken homes find it difficult to get educational materials that can boost their academic achievement. But some homes whose parents are rich would readily provide learning facilities to their children. This would contribute to their academic success. Onwuchekwa (1987) observes that the type of home a child comes from affects highly his mental capacities and emotional behavior. Where a child is poorly provided in terms of school requisitions, he might be emotionally disturbed especially on seeing his mates having enough of what he does not. He might appear inferior in the presence of his mates. This can affect his learning.

Etuk (1993) confirms that students in schools that are properly equipped in terms of classroom, library, laboratory and adequate staffing stand to benefit much more than those in schools that are ill or poorly equipped. Therefore, a child who achieves much in any subject such as English Language requires conducive and stimulating environment to match with his inborn trait to elicit the expected result in academic achievement.

## Statement of Problem

Students' performance in English language in Nigerian secondary schools, and students' interaction in spoken communication seem alarmingly disappointing. There seems to be a national outcry on poor output of students in English language. This dismal performance

affects the social, economic, political and educational factors in Nigeria. The above fact is derived from the report of West African School Certificate English Language Examination Students' performances. Regrettably, the society passes the bug of poor performance by students on teachers. Student-learner himself might be the cause of his dismal performance in English language. Home and school environments are likely the cause of poor performance of senior secondary school students in Akwa Ibom State in particular and Nigeria in general.

## Objective of the Study

The specific objective of the study was to:

1. Examine how parental attitude towards education affects academic achievement of students in English language.

## Research Question

1. What is the relationship between parents' attitude towards education and academic achievement of students in English Language?

## Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between parents' attitude towards education and academic achievement of the students in English Language.

## Conceptual Review

### Parental attitude towards education and academic achievement in English Language

The attitude of parents towards the education and academic achievement of their children is very important. Parents who show deep interest in the education of their children would motivate them to perform better than parents who only boast about education of their children without practical motivation. Parents who desire greater academic aspiration of their children will supply all the school requisitions and supervise at home what they do. Many would hire part-time teachers to handle them at home. This is part of qualitative education planned and executed by parents to their children. Denga (1991) relates qualitative education to parents' positive attitudes to education. The scholar

argues that some parents show sheer lip-service to their children's qualitative education. Therefore, lack of parents' supervision of their children learning activities, provision of necessary learning materials and facilities may hamper their children progress in school.

Educated parents would be more interested in the academic excellence of their children. They lay a good foundation for them at home by communicating in English with them. Their children would be greatly encouraged by this method. Oladede (1984) stresses that; children from socio-economic viable homes develop language facilities earlier in life than children from poor homes. Lower class children have poorer vocabularies, more difficulty in reading and poor articulation than middle class children. By implication, wealthy parents develop their children early in life. Their children are motivated by provision of language and instructional materials as well as communicating with them in simple English Language. But parents who are illiterate neither provide instructional materials nor communicate freely in English with their children.

Akpan (1993) observes that educated parents of good occupational status find it necessary and rewarding to visit the schools attended by their children to find out the progress of their wards. By doing so, they contribute towards solving some of the problems that the school attended by their children may be facing to promote teaching and learning. However, parents who are not educated may not consider it worthwhile to find out the progress of work of their children. What Akpan observed had already been found out by Taylor (1987), when he states that children of educated elites pattern themselves upon their parents' thought and languages. This facilitates their adjustment strategies at school. He argues that educated parents place relatively high premium on education, regarding it as the surest investment and hence, a potential for personal satisfaction.

The motivation by parents to their children will spur them up for higher academic achievement. This home arousal of motivation

enhances a student performance in school setting. In complements the work of teachers in the school. Obemeata (1985) believes that the poor performance by students in English Language is not only on differential opportunities to learn language behaviour at home but also on differential conditions of motivational arousal and reinforcement which most homes offer our young learners. According to Obemeata, different opportunities given to children in the learning of English Language at home and motivation contribute to the academic achievement of children. Floud (1992) supports the importance of motivation and interest by parents to their wards' academic achievement. He explains that parents function in their role in influencing the child's motivation and interest in school work, in facilitating the child's initiation into the school culture and in general supplementing and giving support to the activity of the teachers.

### **Methodology**

Correlational survey design was adopted for the study. The study was carried out in selected public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The population of this study comprised senior secondary two students in Uyo Local Government Area. There are 14 public secondary schools in Uyo Local Government Area and the estimated population of SS2 students was 3162. Simple random sampling technique was used to select eight public secondary schools where 303 SS 2 students were randomly selected for the study. The instrument used in this study for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Students Factors Questionnaire (SFQ)". The instrument was vetted and content validated by the researcher's supervisor and two lecturers who are experts in language education in the University of Uyo to ensure that the instrument has the accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness for the study under consideration. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.97, and this was high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The data were analyzed using t-test

and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics analysis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

**Results**

**Hypothesis Testing**

**Hypothesis One**

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between parents’ attitude toward education and academic achievement in English Language. Pearson product moment correlation was used in testing the hypothesis and summary data for computing correction coefficient (r) shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between parents’ attitude on performance in English Language.**

Variables	$\Sigma$	$\Sigma^2$	$\Sigma xy$	df	r	Sig of r
Parent Attitudes (x)	58 67	107 643 3				Significant
			212 461	3 0 1	.32 19 *	
Achievement (Y)	10 01 8	317 622 1				

**Significant P < .05**

**Critical r = .088**

**df = 301**

Since the computed r (.3219) was greater than the critical r (.088) at df of 301 and .05 level of significant hence the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus parents’ attitude significantly relates to academic achievement.

**Discussion of Findings**

The null hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between parents’ attitude towards education and academic achievement of a student in English Language. However, the result shows that there is significant relationship between parental attitudes towards the

education of their children and academic achievement.

The findings support Denga (1991) who relates qualitative education and academic performance to parents’ positive attitudes to the education of their children. He argues that some parents show sheer lip service to their children’s qualitative education and reap poor results. Obemeata (1985) believes that the poor performance by students in English Language is not only on differential opportunities to learn language behaviour at home but also on differential conditions of motivational arousal and reinforcement which most homes offer our young learners. He argues that different opportunities and motivation given to children in the learning of English at home, contribute to the academic achievement of children.

It follows from the result that parents who place high premium on the education of their children will do everything possible for the success of their children but parents who put up indifferent attitude to their children’s education will reap poor academic harvest from their children.

**Conclusion**

Parents who show deep interest in the education of their children would motivate them to perform better than parents who only boast about education of their children without practical motivation. And parents who desire greater academic aspiration of their children will supply all the school requisitions and supervise at home what they do. Students whose parents place high premium on their academic pursuit perform better than those students whose parents pay lip services to their education. However, parents who are not educated may not consider it worthwhile to find out the progress of work of their children. Finally, parents with lucrative occupations provide sufficiently for their children academic pursuit

## Recommendations

1. It is very needful for parents to give advises to their children on matters concerning their education at every time and as well check their homework in order to develop a closer relationship that will positively contribute to academic success.
2. Parents should make sure that they attend school academic programs and meetings of their children schools in order to show concern and interest.

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