

FAMILY FACTORS AS PREDICTOR OF STUDENTS ENROLMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BENUE STATE

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Abstract

The study sought to investigate on how family structure and socio-economic status of family as predictors of student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue State. The study adopted a correlation research design. The population of the study comprised 91 principals and 1,202 public secondary school teachers in zone B Senatorial District of Benue State. A sample of 27 principals and 297 teachers were selected through stratified random sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was 17 item questionnaires. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson moment correlation coefficient. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using multiple regression statistics. The findings of the study show that family structure predicts students' enrolment in secondary schools in Benue state. The findings of the study also reveal that socio-economic status of parents predicts students' enrolment in secondary schools. It was recommended that government and financial institutions should provide Nigerian families with micro-finance credit opportunities to enable families invest in business irrespective of the family structure. It was also recommended that self-employment opportunity should be created for families for income generation. This can enhance economic status of the family.

Introduction

Education is a tool for advancing the developing nation. Breakthrough in science, technological advancement, cultural transformation, political stability, economic growth and agricultural development came through the process of education. Nigeria seems not to have achieved development because it has not given education the right priority. Under-development of the nation can be linked to poor funding of education in Nigeria. Ugwu in Achimugu (2000) reported that poor funding of education could be traced to 1970 when government spending on education began to wane. Achimugu (2000:13) reported that:

Nigeria is lagging behind some relatively poorer African countries in education. Nigeria commits only 1.4 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to education compared to Ghana's 3.4 percent, Gabon's 7 percent, Cote'd'Ivoire's 6.9%, Kenya's 7%. These investments are reflected on their literacy rate. Nigeria can boast of 51

percent literacy rate. Compare that to Ghana's 61 percent, Kenya 69 percent, Gabon 61 percent and Cote'd Ivore's 54 percent.

Considering the above statistics, it is obvious that the Federal Government of Nigeria has not met UNESCO requirement of 26 percent annual budget allocation of a nation to education. The above scenario calls for family intervention in school enrolment.

Family is a fundamental social institution. It is the child first place of contact with the world. Murdock in Onu (2004) defines family as a social group characterized by common residence, economic-cooperation and reproduction. The author concluded that family is a universal institution. Action Health (2003) defines family as the area in which virtually the entire range of human experience can take place. The family is made up of structures. Nwobi in Adikwu (2015) revealed that in Nigerian context because of the phenomenon of the family size, family is made up of the married couple, offspring, immediate kit and kin, brothers and sisters of the bridegroom, parents, in-laws. In the context of this study family implies a home where children are groomed psychologically, morally, socially and physically in preparation into formal system of secondary education.

Secondary education occupies a strategic position in Nigerian system of education. According to National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) secondary education is a form of education that

- prepare the participant for useful living in society and
- preparation of the individual for higher education.

Secondary education is expected to develop the individual for useful contribution to Nigeria.

The importance of secondary education has led to increase in secondary school enrolment. The social demand for secondary education in Benue State has brought about increase in the enrolment of students in schools. This fact was confirmed by Aghenta (2001) who pointed out that social demand approach considered education as a service that is demanded by people just like any other goods or services. Thus, the free education at the primary and junior secondary school levels in Nigeria was a response to the social demand of education by people in Nigeria. The free education introduced by the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo has led to considerable expansion in student enrolment in the school system and this has created demand the family intervention.

Irrespective of the family size, parents are expected to play a fundamental role in child school enrolment. Shankar-Rao (2012) argued that the family is expected to provide the basis for the child formal learning. Family provides connections to the resources that are needed to be successful students. Ayodele (2006) opined that the family structure where children finds themselves goes a long way to determining the educational foundation of the child. Life in a large family can be stressful for both the child and the parents. Such family is faced with challenges of inadequate financial resources. Schuitze (2006) noted that if adolescent from a large or unstable home are

compared with those from small or stable home, it would be seen that the formal have social, academic and emotional problems. Scale and Roehilde (2000) are of the opinion that family and its size play a great role in children enrolment in school. Family structure in terms of small or large and socio-economic background of parent may or may not affect school enrolment.

School enrollment is an important factor that determines growth and development of a nation in the future. Nigeria like any other developing country is composed of a wide gap between the rich and the poor in the society. The gap might serve as an impediment to the pursuit of quality education. According to Ebirim and Ochai (2011), family resources may decline as a result of expenditures resulting in a low standard of living, high level of poverty and inability to meet family financial demand. According to Akinwumi (2008), the causes of decline in family financial resources are attributed to unemployment, corruption in the society and over dependency on government. These may lead to a cut back in the family expenditures on social services sub-sectors like education, health, agriculture, commerce and industry. According to Ogbaji (2015), economic status of parent determines the type of school one goes to and how the individual performs in school. Parents of upper socio-economic class often put their children into good schools and provide them with adequate equipment that facilitates their education.

Family factors have long been studied in the field of education and psychology. It has also become clear that school enrolment is a construct influenced by a number of factors such as family size and economic status. The present study is concerned with family factors as predictors of student enrolment in school in secondary schools in Benue State.

Statement of the Problem

Family is made up of members under one roof having a single household and united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption. Family provides connections to the resources that are needed to be a successful student. This implies that family factors are fundamental in secondary school enrolment. Benue State is known for an extended family system. This is manifested in the structure of the family unit. Most families opt for large families. The rationale for this is to have children that will help out in time of need. In most cases children are deprived of attending schools with the intention to help in to solve family income through income generation. Children mostly are not motivated to value schooling and this reflects in situations where parents fail to provide educational needs of their children. This may affect children enrolment in schools. Whether family structure and socio-economic status can predict student enrolment in secondary school is yet to be empirically established. The problem of this study therefore is to find out how family factors predicate student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue State.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine family factors as predictor of students enrolment in secondary schools in Benue State. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. Determine family structure as predictor of student enrollment in secondary school enrolment in Benue State.
2. Determine socio-economic status of family as predictor of student enrollment in secondary school in Benue State.

Research Question

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the ways family structure predict student enrollment in secondary school in Benue State?
2. What are the ways socio-economic status of the family predict student enrollment in secondary schools in Benue state?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study.

1. There will be no significant relationship between family structure and student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue State.
2. There will be no significant relationship between socio-economic status of family and student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue State.

Methodology

The research is a correlation research design aimed at ascertaining family factors as predictor of student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue State. Benue State has three senatorial District (Zone A, B, and C). The study was carried out in Zone B Senatorial District. Zone B has seven local government areas.

The population of the study comprises 1,293 respondents made up of 91 principals and 1,202 teachers (Teaching Service Board, 2016). The respondents were chosen in order to ensure that those used for the study were sufficiently knowledgeable about the variables under study and could supply useful information on the research instruments.

The sample of the study consist 324 respondents drawn from the total population of the study. Applying proportionate random sampling technique 3 public secondary schools were randomly selected from each local government area in the zone making a total of 27 public secondary schools in Zone B. 11 teachers were randomly selected from the 27 public secondary schools making a total of 297 secondary school teachers. The entire 27 principals were selected for the study making a total of 324 respondents respectively.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher development questionnaire titled: Family Factors for School Enrolment Questionnaire (FFSEQ). A seventeen item survey questionnaire was structured. The items on the questionnaire

were developed based on the two research questions that guided the study. The items on the questionnaire elicit information on family factors as predictors of student enrollment in secondary school in Benue State.

The research instrument was face validated by experts from the University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State. The comments and criticisms made by the experts shaped the focus of the study. The validated instrument was trial tested to ascertain the validity of the instrument. Using Cronbach alpha method the reliability coefficient was 0.65. This indicates that the instrument is reliable. Research assistants were trained and instructed in the distribution of the questionnaire and for the collection of all the data. This was done to ensure that the entire questionnaire were duly completed and returned.

Data collected were analyzed using Pearson moment correlation coefficient for the two research questions. The t-test were tested at 0.05 level of significance using multiple regression statistics.

Results

The results presented in table 1-4 according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

Research Question 1: What are the ways family structure predict student enrolments in secondary school in Benue State?

Table 1: A Correlation coefficient of Family Structure as Predictor of Student Enrollment in Secondary Schools

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of Estimate
I	0.015	-0.000	-0.001	0.49124

In providing answer to research Question 1 which sought to determine what ways family structure predicts student enrollment in secondary schools., Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed. The analysis of data in Table 1 shows that the correlation between the predictors (family structure) and student enrollment is 0.015 with a coefficient of determination of 0.000. This means that the variation in student enrollment in secondary school can be attributed to family structure. A corresponding hypothesis formulated to further address the research question is hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant relationship between family structure and student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue State.

Table 2: A Simple Liner Regression Analysis of Family Structure Predicts Student Enrollment in Secondary Schools.

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	0.052	1	0.052	0.213	0.644
Residual	215.493	893	0.241		
Total	215.544	894			

The analysis of data on the Table 2 above reveals that the probability associated with the calculated value of F (0.213) is 0.644. For the fact that the probability value of 0.644 is more than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence family structure does predict student enrollment in secondary schools.

Research Question 2: What are the ways socio-economic status of the family predicts student enrollment in secondary schools in Benue state?

Table 3: Correlation Coefficient of Socio-economic Status of Family predicts student Enrollment in Secondary Schools.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.224	0.050	0.049	0.47878

In providing answer to research question 2 which sought to determine what ways socio-economic status of family predicts student enrollment in secondary schools Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilized. The analysis of the data in Table 3 shows that the correlation between socio-economic status and status of family and student enrollment is 0.224, with a coefficient of determination of 0.050. Thus student enrollment in secondary schools can be predicted by socio-economic status of the family. A corresponding hypothesis formulated to further address the research questions is hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant relationship between socio-economic status of family and student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue State.

Table 4: A Simple Liner Regression Analysis of What ways socio- economic status of family Predict student enrollment in secondary schools

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	10.85	1	10.845	47.312	0.000
Regression	10.85	1	10.845	47.312	0.000
Residual	204.699	893	0.229		
Total	215.544	894			

The analysis of Table 4 shows that for the relationship between socio-economic status of family and student enrollment in secondary schools, the calculated value of F (47.312) has a probability value of 0.000. Thus, there is a significant relationship between socio-economic status of family and student enrollment in secondary schools. This is for the fact that the probability value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance.

Discussion

There are similarities between the responses of principals and teachers. Research question one indicted ways family structure predicts student enrolment in secondary schools. The finding is in line with Ayodele (2006) who opined that family where children find themselves goes a long way to determine the educational foundation of the child. Life in the large family can be stressful for both the child and the parent. Schuitze (2006) argued that if adolescent from a large family are compared with those from the home, it would be seen that the formal have social, academic and emotional problems. The result of the analytical finding is in support of rejecting the hypothesis as stated that family structure has no significance relationship with student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue state.

The major finding on socio-economic status of the family on student enrolment in secondary schools shows that there is a relationship between family structure and student enrollment in secondary schools. The finding is in agreement with Ogbaji (2015) who argued that socio-economic status of parent determines the type of school one goes and how the individual perform in school. Parents of upper socio-economic class often put their children into good schools and provide them with adequate equipment that facilitates their education. The results from the respondents agree with the second hypothesis made that socio-economic status of family has no significance relationship with student enrollment in secondary schools was rejected hence it was established that socio-economic status of family has significant relationship with student enrollment in secondary schools.

Conclusion

Considering the findings of the study, there is need for student enrolment in secondary schools in Benue state. This is evident in the finding of this study. The findings have led the researchers to conclude that socio-economic status of parent has significant relationship with student enrolment in secondary schools. It was therefore concluded that family financial support, provision of financial needs and availability of school fees are ways family economic-status predicts student enrolment in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made bearing in mind the need for student enrolment in secondary schools.

1. Government and financial institutions should provide Nigerian families with micro-finance. The finance will enable each family structure to invest in business irrespective of the family structure.
2. Self-employment opportunity should be created for families for onward income generation. This will enhance the economic status of the family.

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