

FAMILY CLIMATE AND SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ENUGU STATE

Nwosu, Nneka Charity (PhD) and Chinweuba, Ngozi H. (PhD)

Department of Educational Foundations
University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State.

Abstract

Family type has impacted on development as well as the adjustment of many students in secondary schools in Nigeria. This study therefore examined whether family types predict school adjustment among secondary school students in Enugu State, South- East Nigeria. Predictive survey research design was adopted for the study. A sample of 1,200 senior secondary school students were randomly selected from six secondary schools from the four educational zones in Enugu State through a multi-stage sampling technique. Using descriptive statistics and regression analysis, the study found that the secondary school students are well adjusted. Similarly, the study revealed that majority (50.1%) of the students were from Laissez faire family type, followed by those that came from Dominant/Autocratic family (40.6%). On the other hand, only 9.3 percent of the students came from democratic family type. The regression results further indicate that laissez-faire and democratic family types had positive and significant relationship with students' school adjustment. On the strength of the findings, the study recommended that policy makers, psychologists and school counsellors should advocate more of democratic and laissez-faire family types.

Keywords: Family Climate, School Adjustment, Regression Analysis

Introduction

Family is the oldest form of human relationship all over the world. The peculiar constitution, being, and activities of each family affect others (particularly the members of each family) directly or indirectly (Umezuluike, 2011). Rehman and Singh (2015) noted that family is the most important primary group in a society and immediate social environment to which a child is developed and exposed. In essence, greater lessons are learned by the child on how to adjust in various fields of life according to the values and virtues provided by the family. Thus, the prevailing family type at home has a great influence on the students' psychological, emotional, social and economic stated. Keisha and Deneia, 2014; Ajila and Olutola (2007) noted that the state of the home affects the individual since the parents and other individuals in the

family are the first socializing agents in an individual's life. This is because the type of relationship existing in the family and the context of a child affect his reaction to life situations as well as his level of academic achievement and adjustment. Although, the school is responsible for the experiences that make up the individual's life during school periods, yet parents and the individual's experiences at home play tremendous roles in building the personality of the child and making the child what the child is. Thus, Ichado (2008) concluded that the family situation or environment in which the student grows may greatly influence the performance at school. So a family type affects a child's adjustment level at a large extent and differently in girls and boys (Rehman and Singh, 2015)

Umezuluike (2011) perceives the family as one of the institutions that exists in a constant state of mutual interaction; the smallest social unit yet the most fundamental institution in any society. It is also the basic social institution from which other institutions have grown. Family, in the context of this study, is defined as a group of persons united by ties of marriage, blood and adoption. The relationships are characterized by common residence, economic co-operation, and most importantly, a share of the same culture.

The home is the primary agent of education of the child. The things surrounding the child in the home and environment affect the academic achievement of such child. The primary environment of students is their homes and each home stands to exert tremendous impact on students' achievement (Redding, 2006; Nyarko, 2010). In this regard, the way a child lives is greatly influenced by the home. Nyarko (2010) affirmed, that academic success of a child depends on what parents do at home. Stephen and Cecil (2001) also observed that parent-child interactions are forces that lead to better academic performance. Raim (2000) indicated that a healthy parent-child relation has a great significance in establishing a healthier teacher-student, and student-student relationship. Also, Aremu (2000) found that undergraduates that received democratic type of parenting performed better than their counterparts from autocratic homes. Essentially, the type of family a child is brought up matters a lot and influences the school and social adjustment of the child.

Family type is seen differently by different authors. For instance, Bhushan (2012) sees family type as the inter-personal relationship between parents and their children. The type of family in which a child is brought up plays a significant role in his life. Various studies conducted in this regard reveal that most of the children who have proved successful, great achievers and well-adjusted in the society come from families where sustaining wholesome relationships exist (Shim et al.,2000; Adenike, 2013). Therefore, it

is the family type which establishes the pattern for a child's attitude towards people and society, aids intellectual growth in the child and supports his aspirations and achievements. It is concluded that the teachers, by involving parents in the school bring about a rise in the level of parental encouragement which ultimately augment the children's performance.

Family type in the context of the present study has to do with the prevailing relationship existing in the family. In essence, family type in this study has to do with whether there is a democratic, laissez faire or autocratic relationship existing in the family. The authoritative or democratic family type is the most adaptive approach to child rearing. Parents that fall under this category place strong demands on maturity, which is reinforced by setting limits and insisting on obedience. Even though this parenting under this family type is very demanding, authoritative parents are very warm and affectionate. They actively listen to their child's point of view, and value shared decision-making. Authoritative families are rational, democratic approach that recognize and respect the right of parents and children. Laissez-faire is a French term meaning "to let people do as they please." Applied to family type, the term refers to a permissive style in which parents avoid providing guidance and discipline, make no demands for maturity, and impose few controls on their child's behavior. On the other hand, Autocratic family type refers to a rigid parenting also known as the authoritarian style. Autocratic parents want their children to be well-behaved and successful, but their strict manner of parenting doesn't allow for much flexibility. Authoritarian parents expect children to live up to their demands without explanation. This family type does have its benefits, but the child of an autocratic parent may suffer adverse effects such as low self-esteem. Children of autocratic parents are typically obedient because they are so used to being told what to do and think. They may learn to hide their feelings and develop a form of detachment for fear of punishment. Children of autocratic parents often become stressed because they feel like they are walking on eggshells around their parents. The nature of the relationship (family type) existing in a family has been found to impact on the academic achievement, and more importantly, on school and social adjustment of the child (Rahman and Singh, 2015).

School adjustment is the process of adapting to the role of being a student and various aspects of the environment (Lakhman, Jain, and Chandel, 2017). Adjustment, in psychology, refers to the behavioral process by which humans and other animals maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. A sequence of adjustment begins when a need is felt and ends when it is satisfied. Hungry people, for example, are stimulated by their physiological state to seek food.

When they eat, they reduce the stimulating condition that impelled them to activity and they are thereby adjusted to this particular need. Adjustment, according to Steinberg (2001), is seen as a process by which adolescents master and transcend the challenges of life by utilizing a variety of techniques and strategies. In Steinberg (2001)'s opinion, each human beings has amazing abilities to adapt to the demands of life, and have access to capable creatures who generally use their wits to adjust, whatever life dishes out in the way of challenges and pressures. In essence, adjustment is the process of modifying one's behaviour in changed circumstances or altered environment in order to fulfill psychological and social needs of the individual. Omebe (2002) views adjustment as being all about someone changing his ways of thinking, living, working, in areas that best suit him. School adjustment plays important role in a child's life, and act like pillar upon which the child's life revolve or based (Lakhman, Jain, and Chandel, 2017).

Adjustment as conceived in this study is the ability of the individual to blend with the dynamics of his environment. This is because the issue of adjustment has to do with the individual's tendencies to equilibrate with the demands of the environment or changing environmental circumstances. Adjustment plays a pivotal role in the development of every individual. Adjustment is responsible for the organization of behaviour in life situations in every sphere. In other words, a change in one's environment demands for adjustment in order to restore stability in the environment, for example, a school learning environment.

There is increasing concern from researchers and education policy makers about secondary school students' adjustment and what factors contribute to its manifestations. School adjustment is a broad construct which consist of many different aspects such as academic achievement, school satisfaction, school engagement and pro social behaviour. Well adjusted student usually value what they are learning and positively involved in school activities and recieve high grades (Kiuru, Salmera-Aro, and Nurmi, 2009). Poor school adjustment leads to low academic acheivement,behavioural problems, discordant educational aspirations and even school dropout (Raju & Rahamtula, 2007). Indeed students' school adjustment depends on the match between their competences and needs, and the demands of the school environment. Richard in Adeyemo (2005:5) defined students' adjustment as "the ability to cope, to manage their emotions and anatomy to behave in socially appropriate and responsible ways to meet up school challenges and responsibilities". This means that adjustment involves coping ability of physiological and emotional components to meet up the social demands of the environment. Wei and Williams (2004) conceptualized school adjustment as

school attachment, attentive behavior and academic achievement. School adjustment has also been envisaged as social- emotional development touching on attention, activity level, anxiety, conducts and learning (McGhee & Mangrum, 2007). McGhee and Mangrum designed the McGhee and Mangrum inventory of school adjustment which measures attention and academic problems, hyperactivity and impulsivity, anxiety and oppositional behavior. In their views, school adjustment incorporates aspects of well-being as well as academic achievement.

The present study sees school adjustment as the proper and effective commitment of students in school. Such level of commitment is supposed to manifest in the academic activities and achievements of the students.

Statement of the Problem

In Enugu State, there has been worries over the increased incidences of school maladjustment or non-compliant deviant behavior such as loitering, absenteeism from school, smoking, drinking. While analysts hold different view about the influencing factors, one view that has become increasingly prevalent and that has been understudied in Enugu State is the opinion and assertion that family type which has to do with the dispensation of authority in the family influences the school adjustment of the child. Some insinuations hold that autocratic homes may be more correlated with juvenile delinquency. Others were of the view that laissez-faire parenting enhances maladjustment while another school of thought maintained that democratic family type promotes school maladjustment. Whether or not the family types of students predict their school adjustment is still left to be concluded empirically. Again, the veracity of the assertions and opinions noted above seem to be lacking due to paucity of empirical studies on the issue as it concerns Enugu State. It is against this background that this study investigated the extent to which family type (democratic, laissez-faire, and autocratic family type) predict students' school adjustment in Enugu State, especially in view of the ever increasing maladjustive behaviors of secondary school students in that State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the predictive relationship between family type and school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State. Specifically, the study examined the following:

1. The prevalent family type of secondary school students in Enugu State
2. The level of school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State

3. Whether family type predicts school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State

Research Question

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the prevalent family type of secondary school students in Enugu State?
2. What is the level of school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State?
3. Does family type predict secondary school students' adjustment in Enugu State?

Hypothesis

The key hypothesis formulated to guide this study is:

H0₁: Family type does not significantly predict student's level of adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State

Methodology

Area of study

The study was carried out in Enugu. Enugu State is located between latitudes 5° 56'N and 7° 06'N and longitudes 6° 53'E and 7° 55'E. The State has a total of 17 local government areas: namely, Enugu South, Igbo Eze South, Enugu North, Nkanu, Udi, Agwu, Oji-River, Ezeagu, Igboeze North, Isiuzo, Nsukka, Igbo-Etiti, Uzouwani, Enugu East, Aninri, Nkanu East and Udenu. The design of this study is predictive I survey and the design was used to determine the predictive relationship between family climate and school adjustment of secondary school students.

Sample and sampling technique

The population of the study comprises all the Senior Secondary School Students in Enugu State as at 2013/2014 session under the Post Primary School Management Board in the State. According to the statistics unit of the Board, as at 2013/2014 session, the number of secondary schools in the state was 287 with a total senior secondary school students population of 77,235 students. This population is made up of 26,092 SS1 students, 25, 241 SS2 students, while SS3 has 25,902 (PPSMB Enugu, 2014). To obtain the sample size, the study first applied the Taro Yamani to calculate the sample size. The formula is given as :

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where:

n= sample size

N= Total population of the area of study

l= constant

e= error limit or margin of error. It is usually accepted at 5% or 0.05

Thus, $n = \frac{N}{1 + \frac{e^2 N}{l^2}}$

n = 399.

However, for a more robust result, the study used a raising factor of 3, given approximately 1200 to ensure that the sample mean moves closer to the population mean. In the final analysis, a sample of 1,200 Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students were used for the study. The sample size was obtained through multi-stage sampling techniques. Firstly, from the list of six educational zones, four zones were randomly selected to cover Awgu, Agbani, Enugu, and Nsukka. Next, six schools namely: Community School, Obukpa; Premier Secondary School, Ukehe; Community Secondary School, Nsude; Urban girls, Awgu; Girls high School, Uwani; College of Immaculate Conception, Enugu were randomly selected from Nsukka, Udi, Awgu, and Enugu educational zones. Thirdly, 1,200 SS2 students were disproportionately selected from the six schools selected from the 4 educational zones. The sample was disproportionate in the form of 2 schools each from Nsukka and Enugu Educational zones while one each was selected from Udi and Awgu zones. The SS2 students were purposively chosen because apart from SS3 students (who were not used because they were in their external examination class) the SS 2 students were the next most informed, and can understand the instrument.

Instrument for Data Collection

The Family Students' School Adjustment Questionnaire (FSSAQ) instrument was used for data collection. The FSSAQ developed in this study contains two sections, A and B. Section A was used to elicit demographic information from the respondents with regard to family structure, gender and family size. Section B contains 35 items put in two clusters. Cluster one was used to elicit information on family type based on the type of parenting styles- autocratic, democratic and laissez faire parenting styles. Cluster two was used to elicit information on school adjustment. The items in the two clusters were placed on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), and weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 accordingly

Reliability and method of data collection

For the reliability test, a trial test was carried out to determine the reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient of above 65% was obtained. The data were collected through questionnaire using on the spot delivery and collection method

Method of Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, Mean and regression analysis and results are as discussed below:

Results

Table 1: Percentage distribution of students by family Type in Enugu State

Family climate	Frequency	Percentage
Laissez faire	587	50.1
Dominant/Autocratic	476	40.6
Freedom/Democratic	108	9.3
Total	1171	100

The results in Table 1 show the percentage distribution of students according to the family climate obtained in their homes. The results show that 50.1 % of the students are from laissez faire families, 40.6% of the students reported that they are from dominant/autocratic families, while only 9.2% of the students come from freedom or democratic families.

Table 2: Mean level of school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu state

Category	Adjustments				
	School	Personal	Academic	Social	Emotional
Students Mean	2.65	2.71	2.52	2.20	1.87
Std.	0.60	0.59	0.54	0.56	0.60

The result in Table 2 shows the extent of adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu state. The results show the mean scores and standard deviations of students. In terms of school adjustment, the result revealed that the students had a mean score of 2.65 with a standard deviation of 0.60. The result therefore shows that the mean scores 2.65 of the secondary students in school adjustment is above the criterion mean 2.50. This shows that the

secondary school students are well adjustment in school. However, the standard deviation measures the dispersion or variability from the mean or the indication of sp homogeneity in agreement among respondents based on issues. The 0.6 value of the standard deviation of students in terms of school adjustment indicates that students are fairly homogenous in agreeing on issues relating to school adjustment.

Table 3: Regression Result of how family Type Predict school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State

Model	coefficient	Std Error	t	Sig
Constant	1.303	0.084	15.50	0.00
Laissez faire	0.286	0.018	15.96	0.00
Democratic/freedom	0.177	0.020	8.697	0.00
Autocratic/dominant	-0.099	0.021	-4.759	0.00

$R^2=0.6132$

The results in table 3 reveal the predictive value of family climate on school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State. The values in column 5 showed the significant level or the probability levels. The values in the column show that all the family types are significant at 0.05 level of significance. In essence, at 0.05 level of significance, laissez-faire and democratic family types positively and significantly predict school adjustment of secondary school students, while dominance /autocratic family type negatively and significantly affect school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State. It can be seen that about 61% of the total variation in the level of school adjustment by secondary school students in Enugu state is accounted for by the different family types.

Discussion

The focus of study was the relationship between family type (laissez faire, democratic and dominant) and students' school adjustment. The summary of the findings shows that laissez-faire and democratic family types positively and significantly predict school adjustment of secondary school students, while dominance/autocratic family type negatively and significantly predicts school adjustment of secondary school students in Enugu State. This result corroborates the findings of Rahman and Singh (2015) who found that the nature of the relationship (family type) existing in a family impact on the academic achievement, and more importantly, on school and social adjustment

of the child. This implies that family type which has some bearings with family discipline influences students' school adjustment. Dominant/autocratic posture of parents greatly predict children's dispositions. This is because some dominance family use intimidation to suppress the opinions of their children and often make the children to live in fear. This fear carried from home often has lasting effects on the students as they tend to have adjustment problems.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study found that laissez-faire and democratic family types had positive and significant relationship with students' school adjustment. This finding poses a challenge to the effect that families should endeavor to promote democratic environment as this will ensure more emotional involvement and interaction with parents.

On the basis of the findings, education policy makers, Psychologists and school counselors should be sensitive in addressing school adjustment challenges. The democratic and laissez-faire family types should be advocated for families and intending couples. In this regard, intending couples should be properly counselled to ensure that upon marriage, they are able to always thrive to provide conducive family environment for their children to have good disposition and better school adjustment.

References

- Adenike, A.O. (2013). Effects of family structure (monogamy or polygamy) on students' academic achievement in Nigeria. *International Journal of Psychology and Counselling*,5(7)153-156
- Adeyemo, D.A. (2005). The buttering effect of emotional intelligence on the adjustment of secondary school students in transition. *Electronic Journal of research in Education ISSN 1696-205679-90*
- Ajila C, Olutola A (2007). Impact of parents' socio-economic status on university students' Academic performance. *Ij'e Journal of Educational Studies*, 7(1): 31:39.
- Aremu, A. O. (2000). *Academic performance 5 factor inventory*. Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers.
- Bhushan, L. (2012), "A Comparative Study of Family Climate, School Adjustment, Attitude towards Education and Academic Achievement of general, SC and BC Students in Haryana. An unpublished Doctoral Thesis submitted the Mahar Dayanand University.
- Ichado, S.M (2008). Impact of broken home on academic performance of secondary school students in English language. *Journal of Research in Counseling Psychology* 4(1): 84- 87

- Knyazev G. G., Slobodskaya H. R., Safronova M. V., & Kinsht I, A. (2002). School adjustment and health in Russian adolescents. *Psychology, Health and Medicine* 7 2 143 - 155.
- Lakham, P., Jain, K. & Chandel, P.K. (2017). School Adjustment, Motivation and Academic Achievement among Students. *International Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 7(10) 333-348.
- McGhee, R. L. & Mangrum, L. (2007) McGhee -Mangrum Inventory of school adjustment. Examiners manual pro.ed: Texas
- Mizelle N. B. (2009). Helping middle school students make the transition into high school. File //G:\ CEEP Archive of ERIC-EECE Digests
- Nyarko, K. (2010). Parental home involvement: The missing link in adolescents' academic achievement. *Educational Research*, 1(9),340-344.
- Omebe, S.E (2002). Counseling parents for effective provision of learning environment for the Nigerian child. In B. U. N. Okonkwo and R. O.Okoye (eds.). *The Learning Environment of the Nigerian Child*. Awka: Erudition Publishers
- Rahman, R, & Singh, H. (2015). Family Type and Adjustment Level of Adolescents: A study. *Int J Dent Med Res*, 1(6) 22-25.
- Raju, M. V. & Rahamtulla, T. K. (2007). Adjustment Problems among School Students *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*. 33 1 73- 79
- Redding, S. (2006). *The mega system: deciding, learning, and connecting*. Lincoln, 11: Academic Development Institute
- Shim, M., Felner, R.D, & Shim, E. (2000). The Effects of Family Structures on Academic Achievement. A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April)
- Stephen, I. & Ceci (2001). Impact of broken home on academic performance of secondary school students in English Language. *Journal of Research in Counselling Psychology*, 4(1), 84-87
- Steinberg, I. (2001). We know some things: Parent-adolescent relationships in retrospect and prospect. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 11 (1), 1-19
- Umezulike, R.Q.E. (2011). Family configuration and leadership styles of household heads as predictors of family stability in Anambra State, Nigeria. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis submitted to the department of Guidance and Counselling, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.