

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY TYPE AND STUDENTS' WELLBEING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ORLU EDUCATION ZONE I OF IMO STATE

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between family type and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State. The study adopted a correlation design. The population of the study is made up of 5322 respondents which comprised of 3991 girls and 1331 boys in all the senior public secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State. The sample size for this study is 783 respondents which made up of 87 boys and 696 girls and was drawn using stratified proportionate random sampling technique. Two instruments were used for data collection for the study. They are researchers made rating scales titled "Family Type Scale (FTS)" and "Students' Wellbeing Scale (SWS)". The scales were validated by experts in the department of Education Measurement and Evaluation and Educational Psychology. Reliability indexes of 0.88 for FTS and 0.74 for SWS were obtained using Cronbach alpha. These indexes indicated that the instruments were reliable for the study. Pearson "r" statistics was used to answer the research questions while t-test significance of simple linear correlation was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of confidence. The findings revealed that there is high but significant relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State. It was also revealed in the findings of the study that there is low but significant relationship between single-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that parental separation (in the form of divorce or disagreement) should be avoided. This can be done when partners learn to tolerate each other's individual differences.

Introduction

The wellbeing of a Nigerian child is of immense importance to the family. This is so because, every family wants to see their children excel in life. The wellbeing of a Nigerian child is encompassing as it includes the

moral, education, health, mental, and nutritional value of that child. Therefore, to ensure the child's wellbeing, the family plays formidable roles towards its realization. Well being is a state of comfort and happiness that is pleasant to an individual. According to Billings (2012), wellbeing is a situation that makes one to feel safe, happy and secured. Though, there are other factors that contribute or are associated to achieving the wellbeing of a Nigerian child, but the family as one of these factors is of paramount importance to be considered. Family is the bedrock of children's wellbeing in the areas of psychological development, social relations, moral advancement, and socio-economic attainments. This view was shared by Ajila and Olutola (2009) when they noted that the home has a great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state. According to them, the state of the home affects the individual since the family is the first point of contact and socializing agent in an individual's life.

Family type is a great predictor of the Nigerian child's wellbeing. Family type for the purpose of this study suggests intact (two parents) or single parent family. A broken family in the context of this research work is a family that has separated for various reasons such as death of a parent, separation, divorce or abandonment that may lead to children being raised by single parents, stepparents or relatives. Salami and Alawode (2002) note that single parents are fast growing family patterns both inside and outside Nigeria nowadays. According to them, the existence of such parents is formerly unknown in Nigeria and where they existed, they are ignored as exceptional cases. Billings (2012) argues that children from such homes become delinquent because they are most often denied security, protection and love that should come from both parents and these affect their academic activities negatively. In the same vein. Stone (2012) claims that children from single parents are more likely to show, to a large extent, the effect of under-nourishment, illness, insufficient rest as well as negative attitude towards school, which manifest in infancy, and which is a factor that can affect their wellbeing negatively. Single parent families have on the average, lower income than two parent families and are therefore more constrained in ensuring adequate financial resources to meet their children's needs, it is usually more difficult for single parents to provide and maintain a supportive and conducive environment for their children since they must cope with the double responsibility of work and child rearing.

An intact family or two-parent family refers to a family in which both biological parents are present and living together in the home. Michelle (2012) describes it as the traditional type of family, which is held in esteem by society as it is considered the ideal to raise children. Parent; involvement in the

activities, training as well as development of the children is high as both parents are available. In other words, children in two-parent family enjoy more parental support financially, socially and physically from both parents (Pagan and Churchill, 2012) since both parents have more access to employment, income and savings than single parents do (Amato, 2005). Peter (2016) contends that two-parent families are able to give more time, affection, and supervision to their children than single parent families. This is so because the two parents can relieve one another when they find that parenting is becoming difficult, this kind of family is also likely to offer more social and emotional support as the children would be exposed to both father- and mother-figures that are yardstick for achieving positive wellbeing. Ella. Odok and Ella (2015) opine that nuclear family, which consists of two parents and children, is held in esteem by society as being the ideal in which to raise children. In their opinion, such children receive strength and stability from the two parents¹ structure and generally have more opportunities due to financial ease of two parents and they tend to fare better on a number of cognitive, emotional and behavioural needs which are indices that measures the wellbeing of the Nigerian child.

The intactness of a family may not necessarily mean that it functions well or that the children are being well catered for, as all manners of normal conflicts and problems as well as life threatening issues do occur in intact families as well. Intact family is important because it is the most important and informal socializing agent that moulds the child in society and the future of the child depends upon it. It helps children to recognize and achieve important societal goals.

All in all, family type and background play important role in the overall wellbeing of the children. The family type that a child comes from either monogamous (nuclear). polygamous divorced parents, re-married parents single parents, or step-parents usually has an impact on a child's wellbeing. According to US census data, almost 70% of children live in nuclear families and statistics have also shown that children from such families tend to fare better on a number of cognitive, emotional and behavioural needs.

Single parent's family which consists of one parent raising one or more children on his/her own. Most times involves a mother with her children, although, it involves only fathers as well in some cases. Billings (2012) stated that children from single family type become delinquent because they are most often deprived of security, protection and love that should come from both parents and these impacts negatively on the wellbeing of the child or children.

This study examined the relationship between family type and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State.

Statement of the Problem

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 wellbeing of the child depending on the social climate in the family. Variance in psychodynamics emotional fortification in the two and single family background could be an indicator to increase or decrease wellbeing of the students. Adebule (2004) contends that 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 and emotional stability of students which is a prerequisite to the general wellbeing of students. Could it be that students from single families are therefore more likely to experience more problems than students from two-families? This is because psychological problems are potential-sources of trouble with children's wellbeing. The problem of this study, therefore, posed as a question is: what are the relationships between the students' wellbeing and family type? Providing answers to the above question becomes the thrust of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between family type and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone 1 of Imo State. The specific purpose of this study therefore is to:

1. ascertain the relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools and;
2. determine, the relationship between single-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following research questions in line with the specific purpose guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools?
2. What is the relationship between single-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools?

Hypotheses

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State.
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between single-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlation design in order to correlate between family type and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone 1 of Imo State. A correlation design of this study intends to show the relationship existing between the independent and dependent variables of a study. The population of the study is made up of 5322 respondents which comprised of 3991 girls and 1331 boys in all the senior public secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone 1 of Imo State. The sample size for this study is 783 respondents made up of 87 boys and 696 girls drawn from the population of 5322 respondents (15%). The sampling was done through multi stage stratified proportionate random sampling technique,

Two instruments are used as data collection for this study. They are researcher made rating scales titled "Family Type Scale (FTS)" and "Students' Wellbeing Scale (SWS)", which respectively focused on the relationship between family type and students' wellbeing in secondary schools. The rating scales contained closed ended questions, each of the respondents were asked to check for an option that best suits the question(s) and fill in their responses as appropriate on the scales spaces provided. The scales were divided into two sections A, and B. the first section contained bio data of the respondents, while the second section tries to find out the respondents opinion on issues relating to the research questions. For face validity of the instruments, the researcher gave the instruments to two experts in the field of Education Measurement and Evaluation and one expert in the area of Education Psychology for corrections as well as checks the suitability of items, the clarity of language, the content coverage and the appropriateness of the item. Thereafter, their inputs were used to fine tune the instrument with the assistance of the supervisor.

The reliability of the instruments was determined through one short reliability technique. The instrument was administered on one occasion to 30 respondents not involved in the study. The data collected on the two tests were subjected to Cronbach Alpha Analysis. A computed reliability coefficient of 0.88 for FTS and 0.74 for SWS were obtained indicating that the instruments

were reliable for the study. Pearson "r" statistics was used to answer the research questions while t-test significance of simple linear correlation was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of confidence.

Data Analysis and Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools?

Hypothesis 1: Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone 1 of Imo State.

Table 1: Pearson r and t-test significance of simple linear correlation for the relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State.

n	r	OC	df	t _{cal}	t _{cab}	Decision
783	0.63	0.05	781	7.56	1.96	Reject H ₀

Summary of Pearson r and t-test significance of simple linear correlation for the relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State analysis on table 1 shows that there is a high relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing. On the test statistics, the calculated t of 7.56 is greater than the tabulated t of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, with degree of freedom of 781, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected, concluding that there is significant relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone 1 of Imo State.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between single-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools?

Hypothesis 2: Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between single-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone 1 of Imo State.

Table 2: Pearson r and t-test significance of simple linear correlation for the relationship between single-parent family and students’ wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State.

nr	oc	Df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	Decision
783	0.360.05	7	813.5	31.96	Reject H0

Summary of Pearson r and t-test significance of simple linear correlation for the relationship between single-parent family and students’ wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State analysis on table 2 shows that there is a low relationship between single-parent family and students’ wellbeing. On the test statistics, the calculated t of 3.53 is greater than the tabulated t of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, with degree of freedom of 781, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected, concluding that there is significant relationship between single-parent family and students’ wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone 1 of Imo State.

Discussion

The result of research question one indicated that there is high but significant relationship between two-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education zone I of Imo State. This indicates that students from two-parent family have access to psychological development, social relations, moral advancement, and socio-economic attainments among their counterparts. In agreeing to this finding, Peter (2016) contends that two-parent families are able to give more time, affection, and supervision to their children than single parents. This is so because the two parents can relieve one another when they find that parenting is becoming difficult. This kind of family is also likely to offer more social and emotional supports as the children would be exposed to both father- and mother-figures that are yardstick for achieving positive wellbeing. Ella. Odok and Ella (2015) opine that nuclear family, which consists of two parents and children, is held in esteem by society as being the ideal in which to raise children. In their opinion, such children receive strength and stability from the two parents¹ structure and generally have more opportunities due to financial ease of two parents and they tend to fare better on a number of cognitive, emotional and behavioural needs which are indices that measures the wellbeing of the Nigerian child.

It was also revealed in the findings of the study that there is low but significant relationship between single-parent family and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone I of Imo State. This implies

therefore that students from single-parent family find it difficult to get access to the basic amenities that improve children's wellbeing. This is so because single parent families have on the average, lower income than two parent families and are therefore, more constrained in ensuring adequate financial resources to meet their children's social needs. It is usually more difficult for single parents to provide and maintain a supportive and conducive environment for their children since they must cope with the double responsibility of work and child rearing. The ability of the custodial single parent to successfully provide a nurturing environment for the children appeared to be affected by the family's socio-economic status. In general, single mothers have a harder time making ends meet. As a result of the financial strain experienced by many single mothers, they tend to be more anxious, depressed and over whelmed with parenting issues. These findings are incongruent to the view of Billings (2012) who argued that children from such homes become delinquent because they are most often denied security, protection and love that should come from both parents and these affect their academic activities negatively. In the same vein, Stone (2012) claims that children from single parents are more likely to show, to a large extent, the effect of under-nourishment, illness, insufficient rest as well as negative attitude towards school, which manifest in infancy, which is a factor that can affect their wellbeing negatively.

Conclusion

The intention of this study was to examine the relationship between family type and students' wellbeing in secondary schools in Orlu Education Zone 1 of Imo State As slated earlier, this finding may be explained by the fact that children from two parent families experience sufficient care, attention, warmth, father- and mother-figure attachment and emotional stability that are characteristic of two parent families. On the hand, children from single parent families may suffer distraction, emotional problems, disciplinary problems and insufficiency as the single parent may find it difficult to cater for the socioeconomic needs of the child/children alone. However, Apia and Olutola (2007) noted that this position may not be true at all times as there are some children in single parent families that have improved general wellbeing than children from two parent families. According to them, such may be attributed to other factors inherent in the personality of such children. It can therefore be concluded that family type is a great predictor to the overall wellbeing of the Nigerian child and such family type is the two-parent family because both parents work in collaboration towards

meeting the basic needs of their children which to a great extent improve their general wellbeing.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study:

1. Parental separation (in the form of divorce or disagreement) should be avoided. This can be done when partners learn to tolerate each other's individual differences.
2. Parents should not allow matrimonial issues to degenerate and are both commuted to the welfare of their family.
3. Religious leaders and government should engage in enlightening parents about the importance of family type on the life of children and in ensuring a well-ordered society.
4. Marriage/ Family counseling services should be intensified and expanded to cover a larger population in order to sensitize couples on the need to reduce the incidence of divorce and broken homes in the society so as to enable children benefit from intact family upbringing.

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