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TEACHER-STUDENT AND PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS AS DETERMINANTS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL COMMERCE IN IBADAN, OYO STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of teacher-student relationship and parent-child relationship on students' academic performance in Senior Secondary Commerce in Akinyele Local Government Council Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. Six schools were used in the study, from which an intact arm each of Senior Secondary students were selected, making a total sample size of 250. Teacher-Student and Parent-Child Relationship Scale (TSPCRS) and students' raw examination score records in Commerce were the instruments that were employed to gather data for the study. Correlation and multiple regression statistics were used in analyzing the data. Results showed that both of teacher-student and parent-child relationship had influence on students' performance in senior school commerce.

INTRODUCTION

Commerce in the secondary school curriculum is geared towards preparing the students for the business world. It basically derives its being from economics as can be inferred from the various syllabi of examining bodies in the secondary education tier in Nigeria (WAEC, 2009; NECO, 2008; JAMB, 2007). The commerce syllabus is structured in such a way to cover the basic principles of commerce from its basic theories and concepts down to its application to modern business activities including the application of business law. The aims and objectives of commerce as stated in the syllabi of Nigerian examining bodies are to:

1. enable students appreciate the basic concepts, rule and principles of commerce
2. lay proper foundation for further study of commerce and allied courses at higher level.
3. enable students to appreciate the role and importance of Commerce and its relationship with other aspects of production.
4. assess students knowledge of basic principles of Commerce, practice and their application to modern business activities.

The school is a factory where future leaders are manufactured. It is the first place where students' behaviour, attitude and future endeavours are shaped. It is also a place where teachers and students interact and relate together to achieve a common goal—where teachers impart knowledge, skills and attitudes to and the same received and imbibed by students. This interactive relationship between the teacher and the student is meant to result in some permanent changes in the students' behaviour. Teaching and learning, though not mutually exclusive, yet are really two different functions—two separate and distinct processes. The process of teaching is carried out by one person (teacher) while the process of learning goes on in the student. If teaching-learning process is to work effectively, a unique kind of relationship must exist between these two separate parties.

When students are under-achieving, education policy makers and educational researchers often examine class size, curriculum, teaching methodology, instructional materials, funding, school type but other factors such as establishing relationships among the various players in the industry may be powerful and less expensive ways to improve students' performance. In this era of accountability and transparency, enhancing teacher-student relationship is no mere gainsaying rather it is fundamental to improving students' achievement. Bergin and Bergin (2009) state that secure teacher-student relationships predict greater knowledge, higher test scores, greater academic motivation and fewer dropouts or special education referrals. From observation, students who have inconsistent relationships with teachers tend to like school less, are less self-directed and cooperate less in the classroom.

A subsisting cordial relationship between teachers and students is just like a candle stick. A candle removes the darkness from a place. The teacher also removes the darkness of any student's life and therefore being able to solve his life problems. The attitude or disposition of the teacher makes a difference in the way students learn. When there is a good relationship between the teacher and student, it easily facilitates effective learning. It must be noted that teacher-student relationship is synonymous to student-teacher relationship or teacher-child relationship or student-instructor relationship.

Positive student-teacher or teacher-student relationships can be regarded as relationships that are mutually and supportive. Teacher-student relationship can be described as an open communication between teachers and students. This is a relationship which involves empathy, warmth and genuineness. Also, positive student-teacher relationship is characterized by mutual acceptance, understanding, warmth, closeness, trust, respect, care and cooperation.

Ikechukwu (2002) found out that teacher-student interaction as a significant determinant of achievement in Economics. According to Roeser, Midgley and Urdu (1996), students who reported more positive teacher-student relationships also said that they experienced more positive effect and felt more academically efficacious than others who felt otherwise. The fact that teachers' attitude to students also determines

the attitude of students to their teachers and also to the subjects they (such teachers) teach cannot be overstressed. A teacher carries a big responsibility in his or her classroom undertaking. Anything the teacher says or does will have either positive or negative impact on the relationship between him and his students which could make or mar the academic progress of such students. If the teacher feels joy or anger, it will be felt among the students because the attitude of teacher is contagious to the taught (students). If the teacher laughs the students will also laugh, if he is hostile, the students will be afraid of him and thus may not learn effectively under him/her. This is an indication that teachers are responsible for the social behaviour of students in the classroom and beyond.

It is imperative that an educator must be open-minded and accessible and should respect the students' ideas or opinions and give love and caring attitudes towards them. This trend will enable students believe in themselves. Ikechukwu also asserts that, psychologically, students could be affected if they have problems with their teachers. A positive teacher-student relationship can be established when both the teacher and student are engaged in effective communication, mutually respect each other in the classroom, the teacher showing interest in teaching and the student also shows interest in learning. It is pertinent to know that students come from different cultures and backgrounds and as teachers need to understand that the value of the students' sense of belonging, which can be of great value, could help students build self-worth in themselves.

It is apparent that children, who are yelled at, may feel rejected and frightened. Most times, excessive disciplinary measures taken on students by teachers could hamper cordial teacher-student relationship, which is essential to creating an enabling atmosphere for learning. Durowoju (2009) opines that the secret to effective discipline is positively building relationships, and not reacting punitively to students' misbehaviour or exerting disciplinary measure to correct students' misconduct. Teachers who demonstrate respect towards their students usually have active and participative learners in their classes. Therefore, to achieve success in the teaching-learning process and have improved students' learning outcomes, teachers should blend their warmth and firmness towards their students in their classroom within reasonable limits.

If there are students who are disruptive and find learning boring, their disposition can be disastrous to both parties, in the that it will affect the students' academic performance negatively and thus make the teacher unhappy that his effort is not yielding the expected results. Though, learning cannot be forced on the learner, however learning can become an appealing process for the student when he or she feels comfortable with learning whether in the classroom or at home as a result of certain level of relationship between them and the teachers or parents. What is central to effective learning is the relationship teachers established with their students through the provision of guidance and counselling services to students who feel

inadequate or threatened.

Strong teacher-student relationships have been linked to many positive outcomes such as good classroom behaviour and the concomitant improvement in learning. The quality of the subsisting relationship regular classroom teachers have with their students, determines how easy it is for the latter to talk with and learn from someone who already knows them as individuals. An excellent relationship between the teacher and the students particularly during adolescence is very significant and useful in engendering positive learning. It is easier for students to talk about personal matters with someone they know will listen to them with deep affection. It is equally easier for them to absorb the material and become more interested in what they were talking about with their regular teachers in the classroom.

The child is a product of a marriage relationship between a man and a woman, therefore, the child is an extension of his parents and as the extension of his parents he possesses their characteristics to a great extent. Children inherit their parents' features and stature and their mental attributes as well as both their intrinsic and extrinsic traits. These qualities and traits comprise both the good and bad aspects. Children are part of their parents' heart and pieces of their body. Parent-child(ren) relationship is just like any other relationship. Considering the enormous task involve in rising up children, it is evident that parenting is demanding and it is a tough job that requires tolerance, humility and forbearance on the part of the parents. Hence, building a positive relationship between parent and child though not an easy task; yet it is essential and requires work and efforts on the part of the parents to make it strong and successful.

Close relationship and open communications are necessary ingredients that can help parents and their children stay connected through all ages of their upbringing. Zoller (1996) believed that parents' absence from the home has been shown to create tensions, family breakup and disciplinary and motivational problems, and as such, it could have lasting negative effect on children's academic progress. This implies that in a family where the father or the mother is absent or does not have close relationship with the child(ren), it could impede the smooth relationship between the parents and the child(ren) and this would have harmful effect on the academic achievement of the child(ren).

Ichado (1998) concludes that the environment in which the student comes from can greatly influence his performance at school. The family lays the psychosocial, moral and spiritual foundations for the overall development of the child. While the mother's significant role in the overall development cannot be over-emphasized, Agulanna, (1999) in his study on father-child relationship asserts that the presence of a father in the home also has significant influence on the development of a child. Nzewuwah (1995) posits that the home environment or family has been recognized as having a lot of influence on the academic performance of students. Thus, parenting is a responsibility requiring the full cooperation of both parents who must ensure the total development of their offspring(s). According to Ajila and Olutola (2007) a Daily

Sketch Publication on “Causes and Cures of Poor Performance at West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE)” in 2006 identifies and categorizes the problems responsible for students' poor performance to issues of teachers' incompetence and sometimes indolence, inadequate facilities in the schools, students' ill-preparedness, indolence, disrespectful acts and poor attitude to learning, problems caused by parents and society at large and the challenges of government policies and inadequate funding of the education sector. The importance of home environment or family influence on pupils' /students' academic performance cannot be overstressed.

From the foregoing it is desirable to investigate the role parent-child relationship and teacher-student relationship could play in determining students' performance. This study investigated the extent these variables (teacher-student and parent-child relationship) individually and jointly determine students' academic achievement in Akinyele Local Government Area of Ibadan, Oyo state.

In this study, three null research hypotheses were generated

- 1. Teacher-student relationship has no significant effect on students' academic performance in Commerce.*
- 2. Parent-child relationship has no significant effect on students' academic performance in Commerce.*
- 3. Teacher-student relationship and parent-child relationship have no effect on to students' academic performance in Commerce*

METHODOLOGY

The study design is a survey research adopting ex-post facto procedure to collect the data for this study.

The target population for this study comprised Senior Secondary School (SS2) students in Akinyele Local Government Council Area of Oyo State of Nigeria. Two-stage sampling technique was employed namely: Ibadan was clustered along the existing two educational zones, educational zone two (2) was randomly chosen and Akinyele Local Government was then randomly selected from the zone; thereafter six secondary schools were randomly selected from a total of thirty-six secondary schools in Akinyele Local Government Area of Ibadan for use in the study. An arm of SS II was each selected from the six schools and used as an intact class, giving a total number of two hundred and fifty students sample

One instrument and records of students' scores in Commerce were used in gathering data for the study. They are namely:

- 1. Teacher-Student and Parent-Child Relationship Scale (TSPCRS)*
- 2. Students raw examination score records in Commerce*

The instrument used for this study was titled “Teacher-Student and Parent-Child Relationship Scale”. It was designed and validated by the researchers. The

instrument was made up of three sections: section A elicited information about the background of the respondents, section B contains 25 items on teacher-student relationship while section C contains 25 items on parent-child relationship which the respondents have to indicate the degree of their agreement.

The initial scale was administered on 30 students who did not participate in the study. The reliability was computed using Cronbach Alpha statistic yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.81 for items in section B and 0.73 for items in section C. Items on section B and C were then reduced to 22 and 21 items respectively as a result of the validation exercise. The construct validity coefficients for the two sections were 0.75 and 0.76 respectively.

The items in the *Teacher-Student and Parent-Child Relationship Scale (TSPCRS)* were scored as follows:

Strongly Agree	=	4, Agree	=	3
Disagree	=	2, Strongly Disagree	=	1

Data Collection Procedure

The *Teacher-Student and Parent-Child Relationship Scale (TSPCRS)* was administered on the students and all the instruments were retrieved, while the records of the students' scores during the period were obtained from the respective commerce teachers.

Correlation was used to analysis hypotheses 1 and 2, while multiple regression was used to analyse hypothesis 3. The raw scores were converted to standard scores before being used in the analysis

Results and Discussion

Research Hypothesis 1

Teacher-student relationship has no significant effect on students' Cognitive academic performance. The results are presented on Table

Table 1: Teacher-student relationship and students' cognitive achievement in Commerce

VARIABLES	N	X	SD	R	p
Teacher-Student relationship	250	63.55	17.437	.135(*)	<.05
Cognitive Achievement		28.16	16.390	.135(*)	

Results in table 1 show P value $0.033 < 0.05$, this implies that teacher-student relationship has significant contribution to students' academic performance in Commerce.

Research hypothesis 2

Teacher-student relationship makes no significant contribution to students' academic performance in Commerce.

Table 2: Parent-Child(ren) relationship and students' academic performance in Commerce.

VARIABLES	N	X	SD	R	Sig.
Parent-Child(ren) Relationship	250	28.16	16.390	.132(*)	<.05
Cognitive Achievement		66.26	9.502	.132(*)	

Results in table 2 show P value $0.037 < 0.05$, this implies that parent-child relationships has significant contribution to students' cognitive achievement in Commerce.

Research hypothesis 3

Teacher-student and parent-child(ren) relationships has no significant effect on students' academic performance in Commerce.

Table 4: Joint contribution of Teacher-student and parent-child(ren) relationships to students' cognitive achievement in Commerce.

VARIABLES	N	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	p
Teacher-student and parent-child(ren) relationships	250	0.182	.033	.025	<.05

Results in Table 3 showed P value $0.016 < 0.05$, this implies that teacher-student and parent-child(ren) relationships have significant contribution to students' academic performance in Commerce

Discussion

The result revealed that teacher-student relationship significantly contributes to the students' cognitive achievement in Commerce. This implies that teacher-student relationship has significantly determines the cognitive achievement of students in Commerce. This finding, therefore, agrees with Ikechukwu (2002), who found that teacher-student interaction was a significant determinant of achievement in Economics. The result also corroborates the finding of Roeser, Midgley and Urdan (1996) who reported that students who perceived positive teacher-student relationships also said that they experienced more positive academic efficacy.

From the result, teacher-student relationship plays significant role in students' academic achievement in Commerce, because the communication link between the teacher and the students was a two-way process and effective. It implies that the teachers in the study, usually listen to and respond very promptly to their students' questions, complains, opinions and views because they had an established with their students, thereby embolden the students to interact freely with them, and this process has promoted good interpersonal relationship between these teachers and their various students thereby improving the academic performance of the students.

Furthermore it is not a gainsaying that learning cannot be forced, hence learning becomes an appealing process for the student when he or she feels comfortable with the teacher, whether in the classroom or outside the class. Therefore, it becomes imperative that the teacher must build a subsisting cordial relationship with students if the latter were to realize his goal of teaching. It is paramount that such relationship guidance and counselling oriented so that no student feels inadequate or threatened and as such can thus open up for genuine academic assistance by the teacher.

The results of the second hypothesis indicates that parent-child relationship significantly determined the academic performance of students in Commerce as the cordiality between the child and his parents enables the child to manage himself, time and academic well, thereby engendering better and progressively improved academic performance. This result, therefore, is in consonance with the findings of (Nzewuawah 1995; Ichado (1998); Ajila and Olutola, 2007) that the state of the home (including parent-child positive relationship) affects the individual child with regard to his performance since the parents are the first socializing agents in an individual's life.

The implication of this finding is that parents' absence from the home could create tensions, family breakup and disciplinary and motivational problems, and as such, it could have lasting effect on children's academic progress. It is also true that an absentee could hardly relate personally with the child, a firm kind of relationship that

enhances the future of the child better and faster. The effect of this is that in a family where the father or the mother is absent or does not have close relationship with the child, there is likely to exist some impediments to smooth relationship between parents and the child and this might have negative effect on the academic achievement of the child. On the other hand, students who live in an enabling home environment where there is good parents-child relationship, have the propensity to attain high level of academic achievement, if such cordial relationship produces the enabling environment as well.

The outcome of this hypothesis unveiled the fact that Teacher-student and parent-child relationships significantly contribute to students' cognitive achievement in Commerce. This result is in harmony with the report of a Daily Sketch Publication on "Causes and Cures of Poor Performance at West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE)" in 2006 which identified and categorized problems responsible for students' poor performance as including problems of teachers, problems of inadequate facilities in the schools, problem traceable to students, problems caused by parents and society at large and problems of government policies and low funding of the education sector as cited by (Ajila and Olutola, 2007). This trend might or could be traceable to the fact that both the parents and teachers play significant roles in moulding students' lives. They (teachers and parents) also significantly influence students' attitude to study, and attitude to school, which in turn determine students' academic performance. In essence, the contributions of teachers and parents either have positive or negative effect on students' academic performance in any course of study or life endeavour depending on the direction of such relationships. In other words, positive parent-student and teacher-student relationships would invariably engender good student academic performance and the reverse also is true: negative relationships impact negatively on academic achievement of the student other things being equal.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study showed that teacher-students relationship had significant contribution to students' academic achievement in Commerce. They equally reveal that parent-child is an essential factor or variable that determines students' academic performance in Commerce. It is therefore not gainsaying to stress that positive teacher-students' and parent-child relationships respectively are germane for ensuring high level of students' academic achievement in Commerce as well as in other life endeavours.

The findings of this study have implications for head-teachers, teachers, parents, educational planners, educational evaluators and learners and all other educational stakeholders. Therefore, teachers and parents who have direct interactions with the students should make serious efforts to provide an enabling and healthy school and home environments for their students and children. This is needful because students

spend between 25% and 33% of the day at school interacting with teachers and other members of the school, while they spend 75% to 67% of the day home interacting with their parents and other members of the family. Hence, it is imperative that home and school conditions should be conducive enough for students to interact freely with their parents and teachers.

Healthy and enabling home and school environments are characterized with openness, effective communication, trust, care, love, self efficacy, discipline, firmness on the part of teachers and parents, freedom of expression of feelings, motivation, sincerity and optimistic spirit which are prerequisites for effective student learning. When all these virtues exist between teachers and students on the one hand, and parents and child(ren) on the other hand, they engender a positive teacher-students' and parent-child(ren) relationships which will enable students to achieve a high level of academic achievement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:-

- ❖ Teachers should be sensitized to accept the fact that their responsibility is not restricted to teaching alone but also as *loco parentis* and friends to their students. They should be trustworthy, sincere, dependable, reliable, firm, open-minded and tolerant so that their students will be free to express their views, opinions and discuss personal matters with them.
- ❖ Parents should be encouraged to establish cordial relationship with their children in order to encourage the latter to learn effectively. Parents should also be sensitized about their parental responsibility towards their children.
- ❖ Parents and teachers should make themselves accessible to their children and students respectively so as to promote intimacy with them.
- ❖ All educational stakeholders such as teachers, parents, governments, corporate bodies etc should deliberately ensure that cordial home and school environments are created to make the students feel at home with both their parents and their teachers so as to engender greater level of achievement person students in Commerce and other subjects.

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