



JOURNAL

OF

**EARLY CHILDHOOD
ASSOCIATION OF
NIGERIA (ECAN)**

**Special
Edition**

JOURNAL
OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD
ASSOCIATION OF
NIGERIA (JECAN)

Vol. 3, No. 1

ISSN 978-33641-2-X

MARCH, 2013

CONTENT PAGE

1	Chairman's Opening Address From Dr. (Mrs) Tuwere Utuama	v-vi
2	Speech Delivered By The Honourable Minister of Education, Prof. Ruqqayatu Ahmed Rufai.....	vii-viii
3	Welcome Address from Prof. (Mrs) F. Ajike Osanyin	ix-x
4	The Child in The 21st Century: Can ICT Change the Face of Learning? by Prof. Francisca Aladejana.....	1-17
5	Child Abuse - The Concept, The context And Educational Practice by Prof. Oluremi Ayodele-Bamisaiye.....	18-25
6	Nigerian Student Teachers' Perceptions of the Roles of Early Childhood Education Teachers/Caregivers-Olusegun Akinbote and Joseph Bako Atumba.....	26-37
7	Promoting Good Nutrition and Healthy Feeding Habits among Nigerian Children in the 21st Century-Dakup, Juliana John.....	38-47,
8	Financing and Management of Early Childhood Education in Nigeria - Dr. S.C. Madumere.....	48-59
9	Studies of the relationship between Classroom-based Sociometric variables and academic achievement of Nigerian Primary School Pupils in Oyo State - Dr. E.A. Oduolowu and M.D. Amosu.....	60-70
10	Religious Influence in the activities of selected Nursery and Primary Schools in Lagos - Dr. Francis O. Falako and Michael Nkemdirim.....	71-82
11	Age and Gender As Determinants of Refugee Pupils Acquisition of Self Esteem - Iyanuoluwa Oluwasakin and Ayodele Babalola	83-95

12	A Holistic View of Meeting the Needs of the Child in The 21 st Century – Dr. Adefunke T. Komolafe.....	96-102
13	Safety of Nigerian Child in the Environment: Prospects – Dr. Pauline Urenwa Ademiju, Taibat Usman-Abdulqadri and Titilayo Omowunmi Ogunleye	103-116
14	Step-parenthood in the Moral Development of the 21 st Century Child: Christian Ethical Perspective – Dr. A. I. Omojuwa.....	117-126
15	Implementation of ECE Policy in Nigeria: Teachers' Knowledge, Use and Perception of the Yoruba Indigenous Child's Play to Pre-Primary and Primary Levels – Ishola Akindele Salami and Motunrayo Kafilat Oyaremi.....	127-150
16	Professional Development, Motivation and Gender As Correlates of Early Childhood Caregivers' Attitude Towards Early Childhood Care and Education Delivery Dr. Olumide Olakunle Ige	151-164
17	Family/Community participation in the provision of Quality Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) Programme in Nigeria – Yahaya AbdulRasheed and Aisha Kadiri.....	165-173
18	Early Childhood Education Teachers and Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP): A study of Lagos and Ondo States' Preschool Teachers – Dr. Christy Omotuyole.....	174-192
19	Appraisal of Home-Grown School Feeding Programme and its Implication on Health Status of Nigerian Child - Dr. Sopekan Sarah.....	193-198
20	Early Childhood Teachers' Perception of Their Roles in Early Childhood Centres -Dr. Hannah Olubunmi Ajayi and V. O. Adediran	199-212

**Relationship Between Classroom-
Based Sociometric Variables and Academic Achievement of
Nigerian Primary School Pupils in
Oyo State**

By

Oduolowu, E. A. Ph. D
Omorinola2000@yahoo.com
Department of Teacher Education
Early Childhood Education unit
University of Ibadan

And

Amosun, M. D.
amosunmoses@yahoo.com
Department of Early Childhood and Care Education, Adeyemi
College of Education, Ondo

Abstract

One of the ways by which learning needs of Nigerian children can be met is to provide enabling environment for them both at the school and classroom contexts for their holistic development. However, when both contexts are not conducive, it will be impossible to meet children's learning needs. This study therefore investigated relationship between some selected classroom-based sociometric variables and academic achievement among Nigerian primary school pupils in Oyo State. A survey research design of the ex-post facto type was adopted, using 587 primary 5 pupils from fourteen randomly sampled primary schools in five local government areas of Oyo State. Two research questions were raised and answered. Four instruments were developed and validated for the study. Data collected were analysed, using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings showed a significant positive relationship between social behaviour, sociometric status, friendship status and academic achievement, but there was no significant

relationship between group membership and academic achievement. It was concluded that social behaviour, sociometric status and friendship status can predict academic achievement of primary school pupils. Appropriate recommendations were therefore made.

Introduction

The pupil to pupil relationship in a classroom is an important element of learning. The reason is that if a child does not get along with other children, it may be difficult for him/her to learn and participate with others. Pupils who have positive relationships with each other tend to benefit inside and outside the classroom (Juvonen, 2006). Interaction with one another helps pupils to tolerate other classmates who are different from them and also helps them gain from the ideas and knowledge of others. It also allows them to share thoughts and time together, therefore strengthening the relationships (Gilbons and Telhaj, 2006). However, where pupils have negative relationships with each other, the gains that learners will have both inside and outside the classroom contexts will be minimal (Marks, 2000).

The importance of the school context as a social arena for pupils is acknowledged not only by using classroom sociometry as a socio status criterion, but also by concentrating on the future adjustment of the learners (Zettergren, 2003). The reason is that, a substantial amount of research has documented that, peer relations in childhood are important determinants of social development and adjustment and that being rejected by peers, place pupils at a risk of a wide range of subsequent adjustment difficulties (Joo-Young and Doris 2008). Also, empirical evidence have shown that pupils who have problems with peer relationships are at risk for a variety of adjustment problem in later life and pupils who have positive peer relationships have little or no adjustment problem among their peers (Oduolowu and Amosun, 2010). Falaye and Gesinde (2003) submitted that problem of social interaction in the school and classroom contexts is a serious problem in Nigerian primary schools which interferes with making friends and their learning.

Thus, in the classroom setting, sociometric variables such as social behaviour, sociometric status, friendship status; and group membership are pupils' characteristics which may either make or mar the social relationship which is essential for pupils' learning and academic

achievement. For example, research on negatively behaved pupils indicated that compared with more sociable peers, negatively behaved pupils tend to have underdeveloped social problem-solving skills, make fewer requests of peers, comply more during peer interactions, and tend to be ignored by peers when they do make social overtures (Rubin, 1983). The implication of this is that, such pupils that are ignored may not be accepted by their peers, this may make the ignored pupils to withdraw from social interactions in the classroom situation, because the environment in the classroom is not friendly and accommodating.

Sociometric status has to do with individual position a pupil finds himself or herself in the classroom context due to the pattern of nominations received by the pupils. Thus a pupil may be popular, rejected, neglected, controversial or having average status among his or her peers (Kaya and Suyes, 2008). Researchers have shown that sociometric status of a child can influence his/her academic achievement. Salami (2005) investigated some sociometric variables and gender as determinants of secondary school students' achievement in the English and Yoruba Languages in Lagos State; he reported that sociometric status has significant direct effects on pupils' achievement in English Language and Yoruba Language. Babarinde (1986) worked on relationship between sociometric techniques and their levels of academic achievement. The result confirmed that there are significant differences between the means of the low, middle and high sociometric status in academic achievement.

Also, friendship status has been found to impact pupils' academic achievement. It was observed by Cowie, Smith, Souton and Laver (1994) that for pupils who are not acknowledged by their peers for being friendly, sociable, kind, competent, willing to help and supportive as they do to popular pupils, school can be a very unpleasant place. The reason is that friendship as a sociometric variable continues to impact pupils' attitude towards schooling and academic achievement through childhood. Coleman (1996) supported this premise by maintaining that a single friendship in the classroom can be sufficient to contribute to the pupils' overall well-being in school.

Group membership is another attribute that may influence pupils' classroom interaction and achievement. Wentzel (2003) and Caldwell

(1997) observed that group membership in sixth grade was related to grade point average in sixth and seventh grade respectively even when social and emotional characteristics are taken into account. In fact, it was found that group membership was the most consistent predictor of sixth and eighth grade, grade point average.

Zirzmann (2005) reported that groups are formally established in primary school classroom due to the need for group acceptance and that certain properties of groups have the potential to shape the experiences of individual within the group. For example, pupils who are labelled either positively or negatively by a peer group may be reluctant to explore new identities within the classroom and especially among his/her classmates. Thus when the classroom atmosphere does not provide the need for personal adequacy, security and group acceptance which the pupils needs for their learning, it may negatively affect them psychologically, emotionally, socially and academically (Wentzel, 2003, Burke and Sass, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

The need for individual and group acceptance which pupils need to function and to fully participate in classroom situation is vital to their social, emotional and cognitive development. However, empirical evidence have shown that classroom atmosphere that are unfriendly and unstimulating may hinder pupils from participating be actively involved in the classroom. This is because the attitudes of the pupils to one another have a direct relation to the perception of themselves which may either make or mar their classroom interactions and their subsequent academic achievement. Thus, the study investigated relationship between classroom-based sociometric variables and academic achievement of some Nigerian primary school pupils in Oyo State.

Research Questions

- 1 Is there significant relationship between:
 - a. Social behaviour and academic achievement?
 - b. Sociometric status and academic achievement?
 - c. Group membership and academic achievement?

- d. Friendship status and academic achievement?
2. What is the relative contribution of the selected classroom-based sociometric variables on pupils' academic achievement?

Methodology

This is an ex-post facto survey that investigated relationship between classroom-based sociometric variables and academic achievement of some selected Nigerian primary school pupils in Oyo State. The population for this study consisted of all pupils in the five local government areas within Ibadan city. A total of 587 (five hundred and eighty seven) pupils were randomly sampled for the study. Three validated instruments were used - Peer Assessment of Social Behaviour Scale (PASBS); Sociometric Nomination Instrument (SNI); and Pupils' Academic Achievement Record Tool (PAART) to carry out the study. A significant level of 0.05 was set to test the two research questions raised in the study. The researchers successfully administered the instruments on the participants and the data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression resulting in the following findings.

Results

Research Question One

- 1 Is there significant relationship between:
 - a. Social behaviour and academic achievement?
 - b. Sociometric status and academic achievement?
 - c. Group membership and academic achievement?
 - d. Friendship status and academic achievement?

Table 1: Descriptive Aspect of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Social Behaviour	55.4889	22.9501	587
Sociometric status	55.6252	20.8680	587
Friendship status	2.7070	2.3403	587
Group Membership	1.2078	1.9228	587
Achievement	48.6167	23.8596	587

The table 1 presents the descriptive aspects of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis in Table 4.2. The descriptive statistics show the school-based sociometric variables investigated in the study the achievement score, mean, standard deviation and the total number of the sampled subjects.

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation showing Relationship between the School-Based Sociometric Variables and the Pupils' Academic

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables			
School-Based Sociometric Variables	Pupils' Academic Achievement			
	N	r	Sig. (P)	Remark
Social Behaviour	587	0.132	0.001*	Significant, Positive
Sociometric status	587	0.125	0.001*	Significant, Positive
Friendship status	587	0.077	0.031*	Significant, Positive
Group Membership	587	0.055	0.090	Not Significant

* Significant at $P < 0.05$

Table 2 reveals that there is a significant, positive relationship between (i) social behaviour and academic achievement of the pupils ($r=0.132$; $p < 0.05$); (ii) sociometric status and academic achievement of the pupils ($r=0.132$; $p < 0.05$); (ii) sociometric status and pupils' achievement ($r=0.125$; $p < 0.05$); (iii) friendship status and pupils' academic achievement ($r=0.077$; $p < 0.05$). There is no significant relationship between (i) group membership and pupils' academic achievement ($r=0.05$).

Research Question Two

What is the relative contribution of the selected classroom-based sociometric variables on pupils' academic achievement?

Table 3: Relative Contributions of Classroom-Based Sociometric Variables on Pupils' Academic Achievement.

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient Beta (PJ)	Rank	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error				
(Constant)	35.139	4.321			8.133	.000
Social Behaviour	9.979E-02	.060	.496	1st	4.661	.009*
Sociometric Status	5.051E-02	.067	.144	3rd	2.753	.042*
Friendship Status	2.451	1.402	.340	2nd	3.748	.018*
Group Membership	-2.257	1.707	-.182	4th	-1.323	.186

*** Significant at P<05**

Table 3 shows that social behaviour has the highest significant contribution to the academic achievement of the pupils ($\beta=0.495$; $t=4.661$; $p<0.05$) followed by friendship status ($\beta=0.340$; $t=3.748$; $p<0.05$) and sociometric status ($\beta=0.144$; $t=2.753$; $p<0.05$). Group membership ($\beta=0.182$; $t=1.323$; $p>0.05$) was not significant.

Discussion of Findings

Research question one was based on whether or not there would be significant relationship between each of the selected classroom-based sociometric variables and academic achievement. Table 4.2 indicates a significant, positive relationship between social behaviour and academic achievement, sociometric status and pupils' academic achievement, friendship status and academic achievement but there was no significant relationship between group membership and academic achievement.

The significant relationship established here is consistent with several results on sociometric status and academic achievement (Blatner, 2008; Salami 2005) who found that sociometric status was positively associated with academic achievement and that, rejection was associated with academic difficulties, peer acceptance among primary school

pupils might serve as a social resource that facilitates academic achievement.

The significant relationship found between social behaviour and academic achievement is consistent with that of Roseth" Johnson and Johnson (2008) who confirmed that sociability competence concurrently and positively related to academic achievement. The explanation for this may be that pupils prosocial and cooperative behaviour help create a classroom environment that is conducive and enabling to enhance instructional exchanges that facilitate the learning and consequence positive academic achievement.

Also, the significant relationship recorded in Table 4.2 between friendship status and academic achievement is in line with Zitzman (2005) who reported that reciprocated friendship was significant predictor of pupils' academic achievement concurrently and overtime. The reason for this positive significance may be that the quality of the relationship between pupils who are interacting with each other might have contributed to their cognitive growth and development; pupils who are friends are more likely to talk openly and challenge each other's thoughts and feelings in the company of friends than non-friends. This interaction might have impacted on their academic achievement.

Finally, the non- significant relationship between group membership and academic achievement is inconsistent with Wentzel (2003) who established significant relationship between group membership and pupils' grade point average. It may be that cohesive social groups might particularly be influential in promoting and enforcing sets of norms and values among the pupils that can either undermine or facilitate academic achievement of the pupils.

Conclusion

The findings of the study have revealed that sociometric variables like pupils' social or sociometric status, social behaviour, friendship status are very vital pupils' characteristics which should be considered very important as determinants of pupils' academic achievement. Therefore these variables should be enhanced among the young learners so as to allow adequate positive social interaction in the classroom in order to facilitate their academic achievement.

Recommendations

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

Teachers have to deliberately study classroom interaction processes of the learners in order to reduce social interaction problems among the pupils to allow effective teaching and learning to take place without stress and discomfort. This is because pupils learn best in an atmosphere where their needs for personal adequacy and acceptance as well as their needs of belongingness and security are met. Also, the teacher should assist each pupil to discover his/her own educational status and requirement by carrying out; a periodic sociometric test in his/her classroom. This enables the teacher to think with each child rather than view him as an object to label either bright or dull.

Teachers should be prepared for the importance of attending to the whole child. The reason is that children do not develop in particular domains independent of other domains. Teachers should be made to be fully aware of the fact that classroom sociometric variables considered in this study and academic achievement are inextricably connected.

References

- Babarinde, S. A. (1986). The Relationship between Sociometric Status and Academic Achievement of Secondary Students, Unpublished M. Ed Dissertation, University of Ibadan, Ibadan.
- Blatner, A. (2006). Sociometry: The Dynamics of report. HLM; Available from <http://f:/Sociometrynotes htm>.
- Burke, M. A. and Sass, T.M (2008). Classroom effects and Student Achievement NCALDER Working Paper 2100. Washington DC. Retrieved March 23, 2011 ' from <http://www.urban.org/ur/ctm710=10011190>.
- Coleman, J. (1966). *Equally of educational Opportunity*. Washington, DC Government Printing Office.
- Falaye, A. O. and Gesinde, A. M. (2003). Chronic School absentees

Too-Young, K and Doris, D. M (2008). The academic achievement and social emotional development of the third grade Asian-American children: an explanatory study. Assessed March 17, 2011 from <http://www.proquest.com><http://www.doctsoc.com/dres/470179>.

Wentzel, K. R. (2003). Sociometric Status and Adjustment in Middle School. A Longitudinal study. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 23, 1:5-28.

Wentzel, K. R. and Caldwellm K. (1997). Friendship, Peer acceptance and group membership Relations to academic achievement in Middle School. *Child Development*, 68. 6:1198-1209.

Zettergren, P. (2003). School adjustment in Adolescence for previously rejected, average and popular children, *British Journal of Educational Psychology* 73:207-221 Retrieved March, 17 2011 from <http://www.bps.org.uk>.

Zitzmann, N. A. (2005). Peer Relations and academic achievement in early elementary school. Unpublished M.Sc. Thesis Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College.