

An Evaluation of the Ramifications of Single Parenthood on the Academic Performance of Students in Second Cycle and Tertiary Institutions at Agogo Asante Akyem North District

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Abstract: The researchers delved on the ramifications of single parenting on adolescents' academic performance in second cycle and tertiary institutions at Agogo Asante Akyem North district-Ghana. The research methodology was descriptive research survey and primary data collection through questionnaires. Against this backdrop, the study was quantitative. Overall, the population of the study was about 6812 students from two secondary schools and three tertiary institutions. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 2150 students, depicting 39% of the population. The researchers provide justification that the sampling frame of targeting respondents from single parenthood background aided the collection of tentative and accurate responses from the respondents leading to discovery of pragmatic findings for practical decision making. Data was analyzed using Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 22.0. Hypotheses testing were formulated at 5% significant level and found to have significant but adverse impact on the academic performance of adolescents within the district.

The researchers recommended a collaborative effort between school administrators and parents to provide psychological and economic assistance to students with single parenthood background for effective academic performance. The researchers further recommended that scholarship schemes should focus on needy but brilliant students from single parenthood background so as to cushion them off economic burdens and hardships and foster serene academic environment for all.

Key terminologies: Single parenthood, academic performance, parental neglect and Agogo Asante Akyem North-Ghana

I. BACKGROUND

Single parenthood has been a growing family pattern in recent times globally (Oyedemi, 2019).

Single parenthood has gained dominance in traditional media and various stakeholders across the globe in recent times for varied reasons. Despite increased research on the subject matter, its prevalence in developing countries and ramifications on societal growth ought to be a concern as the researchers posit that failure to adequately address the impact

of single parenthood could soon lead to streetism, armed robbery, moral decadence among the youth etc.

The researchers define single parenthood as the situation where only either of the parents takes sole responsibility in the upbringing of children due to divorce, broken homes etc

The researchers hypothesized that single parenthood has tremendous negative effect on academic performance of affected students. In line with this hypothesis, Nyarko, (2010) posited that the immediate environment of a child has a direct but tremendous influence on the child's academic performance and overall achievement.

In the light of the above, the researchers ask "To what extent has single parenthood negatively impeded academic performance of affected students in their respective schools?"

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis is tested at $P < 0.05$ and hypothesized as follows:

H₀₁. There is no significant association between types/styles of parenthood (single parent or intact parent) and adolescent academic performance at Agogo Asante Akyem North.

II. REVIEW OF EXTANT LITERATURE

Review of extant literature is chronicled on the "family deficit model" explained as the ideal and expected kind of family accepted within the norms of the society. This connotes the nuclear type of family, which is the popular two-parent family system (Odeyemi, 2019). This model upholds that single-parent families tend towards deviant and negative attitudes, which have a strong influence on children due to the absence of the nuclear family structure (Odeyemi, 2019). The structure shows the effect that family and economic factors have on the academic performance of the child (Odeyemi, 2019).

The fact is that students' academic laurels at school are linked to the homes such children are brought up. To this end, the family structure of any child is a major determinant of a

child’s academic success and life accomplishment. There are varied types of family structures in Ghana; they are the intact and the single parenthood families. A single parent family is characterized by having either a father or a mother alone, living and raising the children alone without the woman (wife) or man (husband), this could be as a result of divorce, loss of one of the parents or when either of the two is not married (Wendy, 2004; Odeyemi, 2019). Most times, it would be the mother, though single fathers also exist, but as common in Nigeria compared to other parts of the world. On the other hand, an intact family is a family where the two parents are present (father and mother). Where the responsibilities of the children’s upbringing are shared by both parents, thereby producing a balanced child.

The impact of single parenthood on adolescent educational success should be an issue of concern among stakeholders in education. In cases of divorce or demise, where one of the parents is late or dead, parental separation or single, mothers or fathers that are never married generally are called single parents. Plethora of studies have shown that children raised through single parenthood often experience increased psychological distresses including health and behavioral issues, deviant activities and possible high rates of poverty. These psychological distresses often lead to poor academic performance (Odeyemi 2019; Odeyemi-BSD, 2018).

Empirically, researches have proven that students from single parent homes perform averagely as compared to their counterparts from intact homes (Odeyemi, 2019; Nyarko, 2010).

III. METHOD OF RESEARCH

Relying on the family deficit model, descriptive research design was employed in the study using quantitative research approach. Questionnaire was administered dubbed “Questionnaire on Student Academic Performance” (QSAP).

The population was about 6816 students from the two second cycle institutions (Agogo State College and Collins SHS) and the three tertiary institutions within Agogo Asante Akyem North (Agogo Nursing Training College, Agogo Presbyterian Women’s College of Education and Presbyterian University College of Ghana (PUCG-Agogo). The population of the second cycle institutions is limited to first and second years since third years had completed school as the time of the study whilst that of the tertiary institutions were final years especially the university and the nursing. Purposive sampling of only students from single parenthood origin was employed to select a sample size of 2150 students, depicting 32%. The sample size is justified since majority of students were home at the time of conducting the study due to the covid -19 pandemic except the second years or final years.

In order to analyze the correlation between parental involvement and style on ward’s performance, the following generic panel regression model was established:

$$y_{it} = \alpha_{it} + \beta_{it}X_{it} + u_{it}$$

Where: $i = 1, \dots, n$ = the cross-sectional unit

$$t = 1,$$

y_{it} = dependent variable (DV)

X_{it} = independent variables (IVs)

α_{it} = constant or intercept.

β_{it} = parameters/estimators or coefficients (if estimated)

u_{it} = idiosyncratic disturbance term

Based on the above generic panel regression model, the following regression model was formulated to test the null hypothesis that parental involvement and style has no association with child’s academic performance:

$$A_{cit} = \beta_0 + \beta_1Pin_{it} + \beta_2Pst_{it} + \beta_3Psu_{it} + \beta_4Pneg + \mu_i + v_{it}$$

Where: A_{cit} : Overall mean academic performance of wards $i = 1, \dots, n$ = the cross-sectional unit

$$t = 1,$$

β_0 = constant or intercept

Pin= Parental involvement

Pst= Parental style

Psu= Parental support

Pneg= Parental neglect

u_i = individual child-specific error component

v_{it} = idiosyncratic disturbance term

The content and face validity of the data collection instrument were ascertained through expert opinion, while its reliability was empirically ascertained by test-retest procedure using three week time lag which yielded a coefficient value of 0.63.

Data collected was analyzed using the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS), 22 version.

Table 1. Research Institutions, population and sample size

Institution	Population	Sample size	Percentage Sampled
Agogo State College (SHS)	2512	300	14%
Collins SHS	1450	450	21%
Agogo Presbyterian Nursing Col.	700	250	12%
Agogo Presbyterian Women’s College of Education	1200	1000	47%
Presbyterian University College of Ghana-Agogo	954	150	6%
TOTAL	6816	2150	100

Source: Authors’ construct (2020)

IV. SYNOPSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study found a significant association between parental assistance of ward and academic performance. Thus parental nurture corroborated with ward's nature as regards performance even though the study also found significant but weak association between no parental involvement and academic performance. The respondents posited that where parents assisted their wards in studies, the wards performed well which is aligned to similar findings in Norway and other parts of Europe, that, children from divorced families experienced a lot of academic shipwreck even though a handful of which equally perform well without parental support (Lauglo, 2008; Odeyemi, 2019). The data from types of parental involvement and academic performance confirms the assertion that parent's involvement and encouragement improve their performance positively leading to acceptance of the alternative hypothesis.

The findings also unraveled a positive association between parenting styles and academic performance which corroborates with similar findings by Nyarko (2010), that children from authoritarian background are perceived by their teachers to be lagging behind in their school tasks; most times they lack desired persistence, motivation and satisfaction.

The data from types of parental involvement and academic performance confirms the assertion that parent's involvement and encouragement improve students' performance positively. The findings also present a strong positive relationship existing between adolescent academic performance and single parenthood as established by Odeyemi (2019), it was noted that most adolescents from single parenthood homes experience lower school graduation rates and a higher level of drop outs due to paucity of funds.

V. CONCLUSION

Conclusively, the researchers found significant positive association between parental involvement, parental support

etc on academic performance even though some few exceptional ones from broken homes still performed above average. This confirms similar findings by Odeyemi (2019) who posited that there was direct significant relationship between parental support and academic performance of wards. The researchers thus recommend that at any time parents intend to divorce, they should consider the psychological and academic implications of such decisions on their children and stay in the marriage. The district assembly, Churches and major stakeholders are encouraged to intensify public education on marital havoc and academic performance of children so that Agogo Asante Akyem North would fully harness the tremendous benefits of the plethora of second cycle and tertiary institutions around.

Scholarship packages could also give premium to students from single parenthood so as to ease the economic burden of school fees of single parents and further augment and ameliorate the academic performance of students from single parenthood even though the implementation of Free SHS by the NPP government has enabled majority of students from poor background to be able to taste secondary education which hitherto would have been impossible previously.

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