

MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON PROMOTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF FIRST YEAR VOCATIONAL STUDENTS OF GOVERNMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE IN IJEBU-ODE, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine the maternal employment and its impact on the academic performance of the first year vocational students of Government Science and Technical College (GSTC) in Ijebu Ode Local Government of Ogun State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted by the study. The population of the study was the first year students of the GSTC, Ijebu Ode, Ogun State. Purposive sampling was used since all the students were used for the study. The students were three hundred and eighteen (318) in number of which two hundred and fifty (250) were males and sixty-eight (68) were females. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire and a four point scale which was a modified 5-point Likert scale was adopted. The reliability coefficient of 0.87 was established. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test statistical tool was used for testing the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level. The result of hypothesis one tested showed that there was no significant difference between the responses of males and females GSTC students on the attitude of employed mothers towards promoting their children academic performance and also the result of hypothesis two tested showed that there was no significant difference between the responses of males and females GSTC students on the impact of maternal employment on the children academic performance. The study concluded that most employed mothers have little or no time in assisting their children in their studies. They were found to have left everything to their school or lesson teacher. The study however, recommended that employed mothers should plan themselves well by not allowing their jobs to affect the academic performance of their children.

Key words: Maternal Employment, Vocational, Academic Performance and Adolescence

Introduction

Traditionally, women's roles is to take adequate care of their children in all facets of life by exposing them to various vocational training in the home which a child can have so that they would have been used to it when they eventually be on their own. However, over the years past, the employment rate of mothers with young children has increased drastically. When mothers engage in economic activities, the time spent on child care diminishes hence, this in turn may have social and psychological effect on the children (Adedokun, Bisiriyu and Obiyan 2008). Today, women put more energy in their working places and come back weak. Thus, they have less time to ask about their children's academic work. Also, female subjects whose mothers are employed outside the home during the high school years have greater tendencies to begin sexual relations before age 18 because some of them would have been matured physically more than their ages, but most mothers express less concern not minding the risk of unwanted pregnancy.

As the society moved from traditional to modern setting, mothers take up employment (paid jobs) outside their homes due to the impact of western education and economic pressure just to mention a few. The situation has now given rise to capable women occupying strategic posts in all fields in which vocational education career is one. The inevitable result of such development according to Jennifer, Jane,

Jean and Wen (2005) is consequent suffering of the home arising through lack of proper care. This may have adverse effects on the vocational students of the junior section of the government science and technical college who may find him or herself in such a home as majority of these students might have been in their adolescence stage of life.

According to Hall (2002), adolescents are characterized by emotional instabilities and hyper activities, which cause them to experience storms and stress. This period of adolescence is very important to the development of an individual. Hence, any laxity on the part of the parents in assisting and guiding the vocational students may result in their academic backwardness and development of unwholesome behaviors. It is a tradition that men always claim that their duty is to go out to search for the need of the home thereby leaving mothers to take care of the children.

Unfortunately, the reason for men to leave the care of the children to mothers alone may have a resultant effect on the children's academic performance as most mothers engage in white-collar jobs or are involved in one trade or the other thereby not having the required time to look after the academic performance of their children. According to Dunifon, Hansen, Nicholson and Nielsen (2013), 71% of mothers were working in 2011 (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2012). Ruhm (2004) found out that over 73% of all women with children were in the labor force. This according to Gibson (2012) demonstrates that more children are being raised in households with employed mothers compared to children generations ago, when most mothers did not work outside of the home. Gibson further stated that one of the most dramatic trends occurring over the last fifty years has been the increasing number of women with children who are working in the labor force. The implication of this is that maternal employment might incidentally restrict the amount of time or attention devoted to the child education because the woman would have been tired when returning from work and later continues with the household work. When this happens, the woman would not have enough time to monitor what the child has done in the school and when this occurs regularly, it may gradually affect the child's academic performance.

According to Ara (2012), academic performance means educational learning and achievement in schools, colleges and universities to obtain certain scores, grades, ranks and promotion to next class and to get jobs in future for livelihood. In some cases where students are supposed to perform credibly, one factor or the other may lead to his or her poor performances. Okonkwo (2010) attributed students' poor academic performance to indiscipline in schools and low level of educational standard. This shows that the school cannot do it alone, the home must as well complement the school's effort. The most unfortunate thing is that not many parents send their wards to private schools where there would be coaching or lesson after the school hours which may complement what most parents are expected to do most especially the mothers, because the fathers would always be on the road for the house survival whether genuine or not.

Academic performance is one of the problems facing many secondary schools today. We can correctly say that the sole aim of schooling is to prepare the child for life, but this objective can hardly be attained when thousands of Nigerian technical college graduates were half baked because the facilities to study were not just there or the teachers did not transfer the needed skills to the students who later becomes Okada riders and also get involved in dirty dealings due to frustration and failure. Deficiency in school performance could in most cases be regarded as a warning that there is absence of supervision on the part of the parents especially the mother (Aiza, 2004). Durojaiye (2005) in his research into child rearing practices, observed that students of working class mothers receive limited physical attention from their mothers with little personal and emotional interactions and also unable to receive encouragement and support for their educational efforts. This coupled with frequent changes of house-helpers or servants means rapid changes in the way children are handled. Children have to learn to adjust to these maids and this affects their education and social adjustment. Mothers' occupation was also found to be related to achievement in school work because it reduces the time available to invest in children (Ruhm, 2004). Little or no reports of past studies on the relationship between maternal employment and students' academic performance especially that of the adolescent vocational students of government science and technical college in Nigeria is available and this prompted this study.

Statement of the Study

In Nigeria today, there is a saying that what a man can do, a woman can do it even better. In the olden days, men were known for a particular job or assignment in their matrimonial home while the women were naturally believed that they are to take care of the children and also see to their well being by being house wives with little petty trading around their environment or take fully the responsibility of an housewife.

The developments over the years is that we now have thousands of maternal employment thereby facing the rigour at workplace and after the close of work for the day come back home to face the marital challenges as well. According to Dunifon, et al (2013), these increases in maternal employment leads to concerns about the trade-offs working mothers must face in terms of time investments in work and time spent at home. According to Gibson (2012), it is due to the high level of maternal workforce participation that researchers, policymakers, and families need to question what ways maternal employment impacts a child's development.

Again, personality characteristics in a child can have a strong impact on whether or not the child will excel academically (Ridgell and Lousbury, 2004). For example, a study by Gosing, Rentfrow and Swann (2003) in Gibson (2012) indicated that a child's personality characteristics affect a student's level of conscientiousness, and curiosity to learn. This simply shows that whether the parents care about their studies or not the children will surely perform very well because of their innate characteristics. However, the main concern about this study is to determine the maternal employment and its impact on academic performance of vocational students of government science and technical college in Ijebu-ode local government area Ogun State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the maternal employment and its impact on academic performance of first year vocational students of government science and technical college in Ijebu-ode local government area Ogun State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. identify employed mothers' attitude towards promoting their children's academic performance.
2. determine the impact of maternal employment on promoting their children's academic performance.

Research Questions

1. what are the attitudes of employed mothers towards promoting their children's academic performance?
2. do maternal employment have any impact on promoting children's academic performance?

Research Hypotheses

1. there is no significant difference in the responses of males and females first year government science and technical college on the attitudes of employed mothers towards promoting their children's academic performance.
2. there is no significant difference in the responses of males and females first year government science and technical college on the impact of maternal employment on promoting children's academic performance.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted the survey design which is suitable for the research work since the study solicited information from the first year vocational students in Government Science and Technical College (GSTC) in Ijebu – Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Population and Sample

The population consists of all first year students of GSTC in Ijebu – Ode Local Government Area of Ogun State. The total number of the students is three hundred and eighteen (318). The population of the students were obtained from the 2013/2014 students enrolment of the college. Two hundred and fifty (250) are males while the females are sixty-eight (68). Purposive sampling was used since all the students comprised the study.

Table 1: Sample Distribution of first year GSTC Ijebu-Ode Students Enrolment for 2013/2014

S/N	DEPARTMENT	TOTAL	MALE(S)	FEMALE
1	Catering	50	1	49
2	Furniture Craft	21	21	Nil
3	Painting and Decorating	39	32	7
4	Printing Craft	18	14	4
5	Computer Craft	16	14	2
6	Carpentry and Joinery	28	23	5
7	Brickwork	33	33	Nil
8	Plumbing and Pipe Fitting	35	35	Nil
9	Welding and Fabrication	21	20	1
10	Electrical Installation	57	57	Nil
	TOTAL	318	250	68

Source: Admission list for 2013/2014 Government Science and Technical College, Ijebu Ode, Ogun State.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was subjected to face validation by two experts in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education Vocational and measurement. The items were vetted and based on the experts' corrections, suggestions and modifications, the items were amended as recommended.

Reliability of the Instrument

To establish the reliability, the instrument was administered on twenty (20) students of GSTC, Epe, Lagos State. The sample was outside the population of the study. The score of each student was determined and Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the reliability of the instrument and was found to be 0.85. This is an indication that the instrument is reliable.

Administration of the instrument

The copies of the questionnaire were personally administered to the respondents by the researchers and were collected the same day after filling in order to avoid bias in the filling by the students. All the three hundred and eighteen (318) copies were duly responded to by the students.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used for testing the hypotheses at 0.05 significant level.

Decision rule

Any item with the mean rating less than 2.50 is regarded as disagreement to the responses while mean rating equal to 2.50 and above is regarded as agreement to the responses. Also, if the t-calculated (t_c) is less than the table value (t_v) at 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis is accepted. On the other hand if the t-calculated (t_c) is greater than the table value at 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis is rejected.

Results

The results were presented and discussed based on the research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of employed mothers towards promoting their children's academic performance?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on the Responses of males and females first year GSTC vocational students on the attitudes of employed mothers towards promoting their children's academic performance.

S/ N	ITEMS	FIRST YEAR TECHNICAL COLLEGE VOCATIONAL MALE STUDENTS						FIRST YEAR TECHNICAL COLLEGE VOCATIONAL FEMALE STUDENTS					
		SA	A	D	SD	X	STD	SA	A	D	SD	X	STD
1	My mother assists me academically by buying all my subjects textbooks.	100	85	30	35	3.00	1.04	20	25	10	13	2.76	1.08
2	My mother pays attention to any problem concerning my studies.	36	44	81	89	2.11	1.05	7	5	41	15	2.06	0.84
3	She delights interest in knowing my teachers in order to inquire about my performances in my studies.	30	38	113	69	2.12	0.95	8	7	38	15	2.12	0.89
4	She always send me on errand after school hours.	78	69	55	48	2.71	1.10	23	27	8	10	2.93	1.03
5	She encourages me to read at night	105	88	39	18	3.12	0.92	20	27	12	9	2.85	0.99

Table 2 shows the responses of males and females first year GSTC vocational students on the attitudes of employed mothers towards promoting their children's academic performance. Item 1, Table 2 indicates that the male and the female students agreed that their mothers assisted them academically by buying all their subjects' textbooks with a mean of 3.00 and 2.76 respectively but disagreed in item 2 that their mother pays attention to any problem concerning their studies with a mean of 2.11 and 2.06 respectively. Item 3 shows that the responses of the students (males and females) indicates that their mothers had no delighted interest in knowing their teachers in order to inquire about their performances in their studies with a mean of 2.12 and 2.12 respectively and a standard deviation of 0.95 and 0.89 .

Items 4 and 5 on table 2 indicated that both male and female first year Vocational students in the Technical College in Ogun State agreed in their responses that their mothers always sent them on errands after school hours with a mean of 2.71 and 2.93 respectively and as well encourages them to read at night with a mean of 3.12 and 2.85 respectively.

Research Question 2: Does maternal employment have any impact on children's academic performance?

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on the Responses of males and females first year GSTC vocational students on the impact of maternal employment on children's academic performance

S/ N	ITEMS	FIRST YEAR TECHNICAL COLLEGE VOCATIONAL MALE STUDENTS						FIRST YEAR TECHNICAL COLLEGE VOCATIONAL FEMALE STUDENTS					
		SA	A	D	SD	X	STD	SA	A	D	SD	X	STD
6	My mother ensures always that my homework is done.	30	21	132	67	2.06	0.91	8	5	30	25	1.94	0.96
7	She always asks about what we did in school on a daily basis.	28	42	88	92	2.02	0.99	10	7	33	18	2.13	0.98
8	My mother serves as a role model in my studies by coming home earlier after her working hours in order to assist/attend to my studies so that there can be a positive impact in my academic performance in school.	44	26	92	88	2.10	1.07	8	5	21	34	1.81	1.01
9	She always checks my result every time.	97	78	40	35	2.95	1.05	21	38	2	7	3.07	0.87
10	She draws my reading time table and make sure I adhere to it	39	33	86	92	2.08	1.06	6	11	19	32	1.87	0.99

Table 3 indicates the responses of male and female first year GSTC Vocational students on the impact of maternal employment on children academic performance. Item 6 on Table 3 reveals that both male and female first year GSTC disagreed in their responses that their mothers ensure always that their homework is done with means of 2.06 and 1.94 respectively. The students also disagreed that their mothers always asks about what they did in school on a daily basis with means of 2.02 and 2.13 respectively. On item 8, both male and female students as well disagreed that their mothers served as role models in their studies by coming home earlier after her working hours in order to assist/attend to their studies so that there can be a positive impact in their academic performance in school, with means of 2.10 and 1.81 respectively. On the other hand, the students, both male and females agreed that their mothers always checked their results every time with means of 2.95 and 3.07 respectively. Above all, the students, both males and females disagreed that their mothers draw their reading time table but they are not bothered whether they adhere to it or not with a mean of 2.08 and 1.87 respectively.

Research Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the responses of male and female first year students of government science and technical college on the attitude of employed mothers towards promoting their children's academic's performance.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on the Responses of males and females first year GSTC vocational students on the impact of maternal employment on promoting children's academic performance

VARIABLE(S)	X	STD	t _c	t _v	Df	Sig Level	DECISION
MALE	2.61	1.01	0.51	1.97	316	0.05	Accepted
FEMALE	2.54	0.97					

From Table 4 above, the calculated 't' (t_c) is 0.51 and is lower than the table value (t_v) of 1.97 at 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the responses of males and females first year government science and technical college students on the attitudes of employed mothers towards promoting their children academic performance is hereby accepted.

Research Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the responses of male and female first year students of government science and technical college on the impact of maternal employment on promoting children's academic performance.

Table 5: t-test Analysis of Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation on the Responses of males and females first year GSTC vocational students on the impact of maternal employment on promoting children's academic performance

VARIABLE(S)	X	STD	t _c	t _v	Df	Sig Level	DECISION
MALE	2.24	1.02	0.58	1.97	316	0.05	Accepted
FEMALE	2.16	0.96					

Table 5 above indicated that the 't' calculated (t_c) is 0.58 which is lower than the table value (t_v) of 1.97 at 0.05 significance level. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the responses of male and female first year government science and technical college students on the impact of maternal employment on promoting children academic performance is however accepted.

Discussion

The result of the study on table 1, item 1 indicated that even though the mothers did engage in one work or the other they still wanted the best for their children so that they would not lack any textbook at all. Be that as it may, item 2 on table 1 revealed that some employed mothers have no time to pay attention to their children's problems in their school because of their jobs and this may cause the children not to do well in their studies and when there is no time to pay attention to the studies of the children, how would she now have delighted interest in knowing the teachers in order to inquire about the children's performances in their studies. What can bridge this gap according to Dunifon et al (2013) is that mothers whose children are not doing well may reduce their work hours to invest more in their children's studies. Items 4 and 5 on table 1 revealed that most mothers always send their children on errands after school hours and encourage them to read at night. This is due to the fact that the children's energy would have been exhausted during the day. Since the students have no time to study during the day due to errands sent by their mothers they have to be encouraged to read at night.

The result on Table 3, item 6 revealed that majority of the employed mothers of the technical college students do not bother whether their children do their homework or not, talk less of asking what was done in school that very day. Also majority of the students indicated on item 8 that their mothers do come home late after their day's work not bothering about their studies. This is an indication that their mothers do not have any impact or serve as role model in their academic performance. According to

Dunifon et al, maternal employment may improve school performance if working mothers serve as role models, motivating hard work among their children. The result of items 9 and 10 on Table 3 indicated that mothers always check their children's results every term despite their failure to draw reading time table and make sure that their children adhere to it. These results indicated that while mothers have interest in their children's schooling, they do not have enough time to monitor the studies of their children when the need arises.

Results on Table 4 indicated that there is no significant difference in the responses of males and females first year government science and technical college students on the attitude of employed mothers towards promoting their children's academic performance. The null hypothesis was not significant. This result shows that the attitude of the employed mothers does not affect their children's academic performance positively. This result is not in line with Ara (2012) that working mothers are in a better position to manage more effectively a pull to work and to take care of children at home. However, the reverse is the case in this study as it shows that some mothers love social activities more than their children's performance in school.

The result in Table 5 revealed that the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the responses of males and females first year government science and technical college students on the impact of maternal employment on children's academic performance is not significant. This result negates Ruhm (2004) that mothers' occupation was also found to be related to achievement in school work because it reduces the time available to invest in children (Ruhm, 2004). According to Ara (2012), it is the responsibility of mothers to educate her children according to the requirement of contemporary economic and social needs.

Conclusion

The study has identified a number of flaws hindering maternal employment and academic performance of first year vocational GSTC students. Prominent among these factors are leaving the house very early every day; coming home late and the likes. These in turn make them have little or no time to assist their children in their studies and thereby making no impact in their academic performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made:-

1. Mothers should not allow their working status affect academic performance of their children negatively by planning themselves well.
2. They should plan themselves well and be made organized so as to be able to cope with their job, house chores and children's academic work.
3. Mothers should help their children desire studying at home
4. Employed mothers should have interest in their children's academic progress and also encourage and allow their children engage in academic work while at home.

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