

Influence of Single Parenting and Family Size on Learning Outcome Among Primary School Pupils in Gwale, Kano State

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of single parenting and family size on learning outcome among primary school pupils in Gwale, Kano State. The expo facto research design was adopted for the study. Three hundred pupils were randomly selected and were used as participants. The instrument for data collection was researcher's made questionnaire tagged "Learning Outcome Questionnaire" (LOQ). Three hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data were analyzed using t-test statistical tool. The findings indicated that there was significant difference in the learning outcome between pupils from single parents and those from small family size in favour of pupils from small family size. The study further found that there was significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from single parents and those from large family size in favour of pupils from large family size. The study also revealed that there was significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from small family size and those from large family size in favour of pupils from

small family size. It was recommended that school management should encourage the single parents to be involved in their children's academic work. Finally, parents should be sensitized on the need to raise small families in order to provide them with educational needs that will motivate the children to learn effectively and perform satisfactorily in their academic achievement

Keywords: Single parenting, family size, learning outcome

Introduction

During socialization, the family plays an important role, since a child is fully dependent on others, particularly friends and relatives, to live. The form of the family kids comes from monogamy (nuclear), polygamous, divorced parents, remarried parents, single parents, or stepparents typically influence the learning result of an infant. Great learning output plays a key role in providing learners of the best quality who might become great leaders and the country's manpower. A secure and so well-developed childhood can be maintained by a strong family which is essential for the financial and social growth of the country. An infant from families where his parents are involved would be well cared for and integrated into society in the best possible way (Ortese, 2004). This is because the socialization process is based on both parents playing supportive roles in the child's upbringing. Such a child would potentially gain self-actualization later in life. Children from single-parent families are prone to be stripped of such rights and privileges and denying them. Salami and Alawode (2000) are of the opinion that teens from dysfunctional families are generally associated with antisocial conduct and poor academic performance. The dilemma of depriving a second parent is difficult enough but a catastrophic circumstance occurs when the surviving parent is unable to deal with the resulting issues. In such a case the infant in society becomes a misfit.

Single parent's family consists of one parent raising one or more children on his/her own. Most times it involves a mother along with her children. Although, it involves only fathers in addition in some cases (Gabriel, 2013). It also involves a child who is raised by his step mother. Factors such as divorce, dismemberment, death of a parent, unintended gravidity or birth to unmarried couples, and single parent adoption are the major causes of single parenthood in some society today (Amato, 2000). Billings (2012) stated that such children become delinquent because they are most frequently bereft of security, protection and love that ought to come from both parents and these impacts negatively on academic success of the kid or children. Stone (2012) asserted that children from single homes are more likely to exhibit to a large extent, the effect of under nourishment, illness, insufficient rest similarly as negative attitude towards school, which manifest in infancy, which could be a factor which will affect achievement and performance negatively. Empirical evidences has shown that children from intact-homes will be taken care of and better socialized (Stone, 2012, Azuka-Obieke, 2013). This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complementary roles in raising such

children; which will definitely impact positively on the children during their school years. On the other hand, children from single parent homes are more likely to suffer deprivations and denials of some rights and opportunities and this will have negative psycho-social impact on them in school (Azuka-Obieke, 2013).

Although single motherhood is a phenomenon that has always existed, and which is as old as humanity but presently, they are fast growing family patterns in Nigeria, and have become even more common than the so-called “nuclear family”, consisting of a mother or father and the children. There are still no figures available for broken families in Nigeria, realistic experience, and media accounts indicate that the number of single parents in Nigeria is growing (Nwachukwu, 2000). Experience has shown that the number of primary school pupils from single parenting in Kano state and Gwale Local Government in particular is increasing every day and this has become an issue of concern among educators.

Family size in the context of this study refers to the total number of people (members) in a particular family. Typically it can be classified into two, small family size so called monogamy or nuclear family and large family size so called polygamy or extended family. The small size family consists of father, mother and their children. Family is said to have small size if it comprises father, mother and few children usually one to four. It is held in esteem by society as being the ideal in which to raising children. Children in nuclear families receive strength and stability from the two parents' structure and generally have more opportunities due to financial ease of two parents. Large size family on the other hand can be regarded as a family that is made of, father with two to four wives and more than four children. Large size family whether rich or poor are difficult to maintain, they are characterized with a high number of children, rowdiness and this does not create convenience for learning. They also generate certain known issues in the raising of children, such as food, inadequate hygiene, inadequate funding and lack of appropriate child care, behavioural problems and deprivation, which have a negative effect on academic success of children (Odok, 2013).

Eristwhistle (1986), in a study carried out in Scotland found that children with relatively small size families performed better in verbal and non-verbal tests, than children from large family size in the same test. This according to him is because children from large families have less frequent interactions with adults. Similarly, parental attention by parents declines as the number of sibling's increases and latter born children perform less well than their earlier born siblings. Bysenk and Locksoh (2011), affirmed that most extroverted children come from smaller homes and that they adjust more easily to school environment, can express themselves easily in the classroom therefore, they achieve a greater academic performance as opposed to introverted children of larger family size. Booth and Kee (2009) confirmed that children from larger families have lower levels of education and also perform poorly in academics. However, Powell and Stellman (2010) argued that children's academic attainment depends on inputs of time and money from their parents, the more

children there are in family the less of both inputs. These inputs are not money alone, but other essential things like attention, resource dilution and so on.

Learning outcomes articulate the knowledge and skills you want students to acquire by the end of the course, Learning outcomes should be aligned with your assessment pieces and learning activities. Learning results are declarations of success, presented from the viewpoint of the learner (The Sky, 2002). According to Behringer and Cole (2003) 'Learning results are representations of what a learner is supposed to know, comprehend and/or be willing to explain once a learning process has been completed,' representations of what a learner should be supposed to remember, understand and/or do as a result of a learning experience. Results are commonly represented as information, abilities, or attitudes. A learning outcome is a straightforward indication of what a learner is supposed to be willing to really do, understand regarding and/or evaluate after completing a study task, and how well those results can be supposed to be accomplished. Learning results not only have the objective of guiding a research unit's content and architecture, they constitute the backbone for evaluation and are often related to the broader learning goals set by the institutions.

There is documented evidence of influence of family size on students' academic performance in various subjects in school (Odok, 2013). The studies of Odok (2013) and Eamon (2005) attests that small family sizes are linked to higher educational attainment.

In the same vein, Kessler (2013) blamed poor academic performance to a different family type called stepfamily. Individuals who divorce most times prefer to remarry. This kind of family constitutes two separate families merging into at least one unit (a new husband and new wife and their children from previous marriage or relationship). The researcher further stated that children from such families most frequently become depressed and would want to compensate themselves in acts of unrest and might go astray and loose academic focus. This is because the atmosphere at such homes is not likely to be conducive for the kids to create decisions of their own. Perry (2009) observed that children of female-headed families (single mothers) are at a greater risk of poor academic achievement, due to mother having very low incomes and inability to produce the essential needs of the youngsters which becomes responsible poor achievement of the children; but that poor performance could also occur even when income level is controlled. Contrary to the opinion that learning and reading begins in class, the primary foundation of the kid begins reception. A decent and conducive home environment with adequate learning facilities would help to spice up the intellectual and academic capability of the kid. Small family sizes and Monogamous families will most frequently accelerate positive influence on children's academic performance.

Keeping care of kids as well as caring for their wants, including learning needs, is quite crucial in evaluating the child's educational outcome. Some have suggested that the learning output of children relies on their parents' contributions of

time and resources. The effect of single parenting and family size on the academic performance of pupils and how they perform on a variety of social, emotional, and behavioral needs also needs to be measured. Henceforth, the present study examined the influence of single parenting and family size on learning outcome among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government area, Kano State.

Statement of the Problem

The problem attached to single parents is a global phenomenon, the single parents, either mother or father has negative implications on pupils learning outcome, the roles of mothers and fathers are quite different, combinations of this roles enhances pupil's learning outcome, many single parents encounter stress, psychological disorder, fatigue, frustration, trauma and economical in balance, owing to the fact that they always battling a lot of responsibilities, momentous family tasks and burden, which can result to negative effects on children upbringing and pupils' learning outcome.

It can be argued that the current poor social status of most parents and families in the country has subjected children to unpleasant difficulties that have adversely affected their academic performance, and this has resulted in school dropout, unwanted pregnancy, engaging in some acts of terrorism, kidnapping, especially in most of northern states of country. Large numbers of households (rich or poor) are hard to manage, they are marked by a high number of children, rowdiness, and this does not make learning convenient in some cases. In the case of poor families, they generate certain reported problems in the upbringing of children, such as food, inadequate clothes, inadequate funding, and lack of appropriate treatment for infant's behavioural problems, and malnutrition, which have a negative effect on academic performance of infants. Such children become criminals because most of the time they are stripped of the security, safety, and love that should come from both parents and these impacts negatively on academic success of the child or children.

A large number of children are likely to encounter problems relating to single parenting due to minimal parental interaction, economic deprivation, diminished parental influence, and defective supervision. This study investigated the influence of single parenting and family size on learning outcome among Primary School pupils in Gwale Local Government area, Kano State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to find out the influence of single parenting and family size on learning outcome among Primary School pupils in Gwale, Kano State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- examine the difference between the pupils from single parenting and those from small family size learning outcome among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

- find out the difference between the pupils from single parenting and those from

large family size learning outcome among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

investigate the difference between the pupils from small family size and those from large family size learning outcome among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

Research Hypotheses

Base on the above mentioned objectives the following null hypotheses were formulated:

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the learning outcome of pupils from single parenting and those from small family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the learning outcome of pupils from single parenting and those from large family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the learning outcome of pupils from small family size and those from large family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

Methodology

The research design adopted for the study was expo facto design involving quantitative approach. The data obtained from respondents in each school sampled using questionnaires and was summarized numerically as it appears in the filled questionnaires.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique(s)

The population of the study comprised of 1,375 primary 6 pupils of four randomly selected primary schools in Gwale Local Government area, Kano State. The selected schools were Gwale S.P.S, DorayiKarama S.P.S, Maitasa S.P.S and KofarWaika S.P.S with the total number of primary 6 pupils of 147, 394, 160 and 674 respectively. Out of 1,375 primary 6 pupils, 384 pupils representing 27.8% comes from small family size, 396 pupils representing 28.8% comes from single parenting family while 595 pupils representing 43.3% comes from large family size. However, out of the 1,375 pupils 794 representing 57.7% were male while 581 representing 42.3% were female between the ages of 12-14 years.

Simple random sampling technique was used to select four primary schools in Gwale Local Government area, Kano State. From each school 75 pupils, 25 from each group (single parenting, small family size and large family size) were randomly selected making the total number of 300 participants. Therefore, the sample size of this study stand at 300 pupils, 100 pupils from each group (single parenting, small family size and large family size).

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was tagged as *Learning Outcome Questionnaire (LOQ)*. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A contains the participant's demographic information which captured their parental marital status and their family size, which was used in identifying the group in which the pupils belong of either single parenting, small family size or large family size. Section B was the test instrument that was adapted from items of past questions of basic six examination questions extracted from approved English language and mathematics textbook by Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). The section B was further divided into two Parts. Part I consist of English Language test while Part II consists of Mathematics test, each consist of 10 items multiple choice questions (MCQ) having four option (A-D) from where the pupils were asked to pick the correct option. The total marks a pupils will obtained is 20 marks which was used to measure pupils learning outcomes.

The questionnaire used was thoroughly assessed and corrected by the experts in test and measurement. It was subjected to both face and content validity to ensure that the items contain in the questionnaire are capable in measuring what it intend to measure. Experts opinion in the Department of Educational Foundations, National Open of University of Nigeria was also obtained.

The reliability index of 0.78 was obtained for the instrument using test re-test method on twenty primary 6 pupils who were not part of the samples. The same instrument was administered to them after two weeks, the results of first and second test were correlated using the Pearson product moment correction.

The researchers visited the selected schools in the first instance and with the assistance of forms masters of primary 6 they have categorized the students into three groups as children from single parenting, small family size and large family size. Twenty five pupils were randomly selected from each category in each school. Therefore, 75 questionnaires were administered to the pupils in each of the sampled school which gives a total of 300 questionnaires. The administration lasted for two weeks due to the fact that the schools were in different locations. The completed questionnaires were collected immediately and there is no case of attrition.

Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained from the respondents were analysed using t-test for independent samples to test the three null hypotheses. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The t-test was used in analysing the result of this study because it is the appropriate statistical package for determining the significance of the difference between two groups.

Results

Testing of hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significance difference in learning outcome between pupils from single parenting and those from small family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

Table 1. : T-test for independent sample for learning outcome between pupils from Single Parenting and those from Small Family Size

Family Type	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	Std. Error		P-Value
					t-cal	Df (2tailed)	
Single Parenting	100	8.99	2.09	.209			
					-20.68	198	.000
Small Family Size	100	15.6	2.42	2.42			

❖ Sig. $P \leq 0.05$

Table 1 above shows the result of learning outcome of pupils from single parenting family and those from small family size. The result shows the calculated t-value of -20.68 and p-value of .000, tested at α level of 0.05 with degree of freedom 198. From the result the p-value of .000 is less than α level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significance difference in learning outcome between pupils from single parenting and those from small family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State is therefore rejected. This means that significant difference was observed in learning outcome between pupils from single parents and those from small family size in favour of pupils from small family size. This indicates that pupils from small family size performed better than those pupils from single parenting family.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from single parenting and those from large family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

Table 2. : T-test for independent sample for learning outcome between pupils from Single Parenting and those from Large Family Size

Family Type	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	Std. Error		P-Value
					t-cal	Df (2tailed)	
Single Parenting	100	8.99	2.09	.209			
					-6.62	198	.000
Large Family Size	100	10.89	1.97	1.97			

❖ Sig. $P \leq 0.05$

Table 2 above shows the result of learning outcome of pupils from single parenting family and those from large family size. The result shows the calculated t-value of -6.62 and p-value of .000, tested at α level of 0.05 with degree of freedom 198. From the result the p-value of .000 is less than α level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis

which states that there is no significance difference in learning outcome between pupils from single parenting and those from large family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State is therefore rejected. This means that significant difference was observed in learning outcome between pupils from single parents and those from large family size in favour of pupils from large family size. This indicates that pupils from large family size performed better than those pupils from single parenting family.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from small family size and those from large family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

Table 3. : T-test for independent sample for learning outcome between pupils from Small Family Size and those from Large Family Size

Family Type	N	Mean	S.D	Mean	Std. Error		P-Value (2tailed)
					t-cal	Df	
Small Family Size	100	15.6	2.42	2.42			
					15.08	198	.000
Large Family Size	100	10.89	1.97	.197			

❖ Sig. $P \leq 0.05$

Table 3 above shows the result of learning outcome of pupils from small family size and those from large family size. The result shows the calculated t-value of 15.08 and p-value of .000, tested at α level of 0.05 with degree of freedom 198. From the result the p-value of .000 is less than α level of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significance difference in learning outcome between pupils from small family size and those from large family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State is therefore rejected. This means that significant difference was observed in learning outcome between pupils from small family size and those from large family size in favour of pupils from small family size. This indicates that pupils from small family size performed better than those pupils from large family size.

Specific findings

Based on the result of the study the findings revealed that there was significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from single parents and those from small family size in favour of pupils from small family size. The second finding of the study indicates that there was significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from single parents and those from large family size in favour of pupils from large family size. The third finding of the study also revealed that there was significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from small family size and

those from large family size in favour of pupils from small family size.

Discussion

Research hypothesis one, which stated that there is no significant difference between learning outcome of pupils from single parenting and those from small family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State. The result shows significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from single parents and those from small family size in favour of pupils from small family size. This indicates that pupils from small family size performed better than those pupils from single parenting family. This result is in line with the finding of Johnson (2005) who asserted that children of unmarried parents/separated families often fail and are at risk emotionally. Therefore, Parents are primarily responsible for the educational and career development of their children (Salami & Alawode, 2000). Literatures on academic performance among children suggest that children's academic performance improve when both parents are actively involved in their education. Salami and Alawode (2000) in particular pointed out that both parents have roles to play in the child's education. The father is to provide the necessary tools for the educational advancement while the mother is to supplement the father's effort in this regard. When the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the basic needs as well as supervise the academic performance of the child, he/she (the child) will be backward or withdrawn. The same thing occurs when the mother is absent and the father is not privileged enough.

Research hypothesis two stated that there is no significant difference between learning outcome of pupils from single parenting and those from large family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State. Based on the result from this hypothesis significant difference was observed in learning outcome between pupils from single parents and those from large family size in favour of pupils from large family size. This indicates that pupils from large family size performed better than those pupils from single parenting family. This finding also supported the first finding of this study which shows that the presence of two parents contribute more to child academic performance even if the family is large compared to single parenting. This is in line with the finding of Ibrahim and Rukayya (2020) in their study of single parenting and teacher's qualification as predictors of primary school pupils' academic aspiration in Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State. The result indicates that pupils whose parents are married significantly reported higher level of academic aspiration compared to those who are divorced or separated. The result is also in line with finding of Scroate, Cooper and Dehat (2006) observed that a lot of differences exist in behaviour between children brought up by one of the two parents' and those brought up by both parents.

Research hypothesis three which stated that there is no significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from small family size and those from large family size among primary school pupils in Gwale Local Government Area, Kano State.

The finding from this study reveals that there is significant difference in learning outcome between pupils from small family size and those from large family size in favour of pupils from small family size. This indicates that pupils from small family size performed better than those pupils from large family size. This finding is in line with what was confirmed by Eamon(2005) that a child coming from a small family size has higher chances of greater learning outcome than a child coming from a bigger family. Booth and Kee(2009) also confirmed that children from larger families have lower levels of education and also perform poorly in academics.

Conclusions

The study investigated the influence of single parenting and family size on learning outcome among primary school pupils in Gwale, Local Government area, Kano State, Nigeria. Based on the result of the findings the following conclusions were made:

Pupils from small family size performed better than those pupils from single parenting family.

Pupils from large family size performed better than those pupils from single parenting family.

Pupils from small family size performed better than those pupils from large family size.

Recommendations

Based on the above conclusions the following recommendations were important for adoption in order to improve pupils' learning outcomes at primary school level. The study recommends that:

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. Therefore, Parents should be mindful of their children especially their education before contemplating divorce separation.

The school management should encourage the single parents to involve themselves in their children's academic work. This can be done through regular meetings arranged between single parents and teachers.

Parents should be sensitized on the need to raise small families in order to enable them provide for their educational needs that will motivate the children to learn effectively and perform satisfactorily in their academic performance.

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