

## RELATIONSHIP AMONG HOME ENVIRONMENT, MENTAL HEALTH AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

This study was carried out to examine the relationship among home environment, mental health and academic achievements of secondary school students in Nasarawa state. The study was guided by two objectives, two research questions and two null hypotheses. The study adopted a correlational research design and the population of the study was 16, 456 with a sample size of 378 selected using Multi-stage sampling technique. A questionnaire tagged “Home Environment, Mental Health and Academic Achievements (HEMH & AA)” was used as an instrument for data collection. Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions while Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. Findings from the study revealed a significant positive relationship between home environment and mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa state. The findings of the study further revealed a significant positive relationship between home environment and academic achievements of secondary school students in the area. The study concluded that that the importance of home environment in children’s mental wellbeing and academic progress cannot be over emphasized as it lays the foundations for psychological, social, moral and spiritual development of a child before he/she goes to school. The study therefore, recommends among others parents should try as much as possible to create a peaceful, conducive and positive home environment that will enhance students’ mental wellbeing and also enhance their academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Home Environment, Mental health; Academic achievements

### Introduction

Home environment is the most important institution for the existence and continuance of human life and the development of various personality traits. A home is a place where students live with their parents or guidance and it is the place where they are groomed. It is a place where the child begins to learn the norms and values of the society in which they find themselves. The family is a social unit in any society and it is the source of early stimulation and experience in children (Collins, 2017). The home influences the students at the most possible time of his life at a time when his mind is most receptive. It provides the first impression which may last through the whole of the child’s life. The child often sees the parents, siblings and things in their immediate environment to be most significant and they are capable of promoting or diminishing him in self- worth and academic performance (Ekanem, 2014). The environment is the immediate surroundings in which the pupils find themselves. It is also referred to as the physical and psychological conditions that affect children. The parents or guidance of these children are responsible for providing the right home environment that will facilitate

effective learning for their wards and some factors that influence their academic performance include: parental educational background, background, parental economic status, parental marital status and parental home location (Collins, 2017).

According to Ogbemudia and Aiasa (2013), the parents or guidance of these children are responsible for providing the right home environment that will facilitate effective learning for their wards. Furthermore, in children's home environment so many factors influenced children's academic achievement such as parental educational background, parental economic status (At least an average financial status), parental marital status and parental home location. In assessing the parental marital status on students' academic achievement, much attention will be given to sound human relations, as the home environment that is tensed due to divorce or unhealthy atmosphere of quarrelling, fighting cannot favour learning in the home as the mind of these children will not be settled in order to give room for creativity. Ekanem (2014) further stated that harmonious home creates emotional stability in the child at home and subsequently improves his mental health or mental well-being.

Mental health is perceived as a positive source contributing to asset development individually, socially, and economically (World Health Organization, 2014). WHO (2014), conceptualized mental health separate from mental ill-health and defined the concept as: a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her own community. Better mental health outcomes among secondary school students are characterized by greater adaptation in family, society, and school environment, improved quality of life (Hoagwood et al., 2016; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2009). The rise in mental health issues among secondary school students in Nasarawa state is a growing concern in the school and for the community counsellors, and educators. Research has revealed an increasing incidence of depression and other mental health issues among youth (USDHHS, 2019). As the aim of education is to provide healthy personality for individuals and one of the important ingredients of education, the role of mental health is crucial not only in formal education centers but also, in informal education –such as family and societies.

Academic achievement is the measure of what a student has accomplished after exposure to educational program. Edinyang and Ubi (2012) defined academic achievement as the outcome of education which reveals the extent to which a student, teacher or institution have achieved their educational goals. Levin (2011), posits that academic achievement is important for the successful development of young people in every society as students who perform academically well in schools are better able to make good transition to adulthood and achieve occupational and economic successes. On the other hand, children unfavourable home environment faced so many challenges in their educational pursuit which lead to their low academic achievements.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The issue of poor academic achievements among secondary school students in Nigeria and Nasarawa State in particular has been a source of concern to the government, parents, teachers and even student themselves. This under achievement becomes eminent when one considers the achievement of secondary school students in external examinations such as WAEC, NECO, and NABTEB among others.

For instance, the WAEC chief examiner's report from 2020 to 2024 has justified the assertion. From the reports, in 2020, out of the total number of 23, 675 students that sat for the exams in the state, only 8766 representing 37.03% obtained five credits and above including English Language and Mathematics. In 2021, out of the total number of 25, 744 students that wrote for WAEC examinations in the area, only 7605 (29.50%) obtained five credits and above including English Language and Mathematics. In 2022, 27,673 wrote the exams in the area and only 10, 770 (38.92%) got five credits

and above including Mathematics and English Language. In the year 2023, 27, 667 students sat for the exams and only 8874 (32.07%) passed with five credits and above including English Language and Mathematics. In 2024, 29, 006 students sat for WAEC exams in the state and from the number, only 11294 representing 38.94% obtained five credits and above including English Language and Mathematics.

These results from the area are quite disturbing and frustrating. It has of course become a serious concern to stakeholders in education. Therefore, there is an urgent need to address the situation so as to save the secondary education in the area from collapsing which is supposed to be the bed rock for further education. There are numerous factors responsible for poor students' academic achievement. These factors may be home, school and peers oriented, from the aforementioned factors, students' home environment is seen as the most significant factor influencing students' mental wellbeing as well as their academic achievements. It is worthy of note that the proper utilization of home time of child means provision of educational environment at home, which plays a dominant role in improving the educational achievements of students. There is a wide dissatisfaction with the current situation of schooling in many countries and parents come in for the blame. This is because majority of the parents involve their children in garden and other domestic work. This make students have limited time with their teachers and no time for revision, thereby affecting their academic achievements negatively. It is against this background that study examined the relationship among home environment, mental health and academic achievements of secondary school students in Nasarawa State.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship among home environment, mental health and academic achievements of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa state. The specific objectives were to:

- i. determine the relationship between home environment and mental health among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa state;
- ii. examine the relationship between home environment and the academic achievements of secondary school students in Nasarawa state.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the aim and objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised for the study:

- i. What is the relationship between of home environments and mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa state?
- ii. What is the relationship between home environment and academic achievements of secondary school students in Nasarawa state?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H01: There is no significant relationship between home environment and mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa state;

H02: There is no significant relationship between home environment and academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa state.

### **Methodology**

Correlational survey research design was adopted in this study. Correlational survey design establishes relationships or association between two or more variables. It also establishes the direction and magnitude of relationships or association between and among variables. According to Anikweze (2013), correlational research design attempts to determine the extent and the direction of the relationship between two or more variables. Correlational survey research design was used in this study

because the study seeks to establish the relationship between home environment, mental health and academic achievement among secondary school students in Nasarawa state Nigeria.

The target population for the study was sixteen thousand, four hundred and fifty- six (16, 456) SSII students from all the public senior secondary school in Nasarawa State. There are 235 public senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. These schools are distributed across the three Senatorial zones of the state as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Population of the Study**

S/N	Zone	No. of schools	No. of students
1	Nasarawa South	105	6123
2	Nasarawa North	60	2849
3	Nasarawa West	70	7475
	<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>16, 456</b>

*Source: Nasarawa State Ministry of Education, 2022/2023*

The sample size for the study comprises of 378 SS II secondary school students from nine selected public senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. The sample size was adopted using a table for determining sample size for research activities by Paul C. Boyd, Educational and Psychological Measurement (2006) which stipulated that for a population of more than 10, 000 and less than 25, 000, a sample size of 378 is recommended and appropriate for the study. The study adopted a multi-stage stratified random sampling. The schools for the study were clustered into three (3) Senatorial zones, Nasarawa South, Nasarawa North and Nasarawa West. A non-proportionate stratified random sampling procedure was used to draw three (3) schools from each zone; this is to accommodate zones with few schools, a total number of nine (9) schools were drawn to represent the entire schools. A proportionate stratified random sampling procedure was used to select students from the sampled schools in each senatorial zone.

The researcher purposely used SS II students as the respondents considering the fact that students at that level have been academically exposed and may be able to handle the questionnaire, while those in SS III, are preparing for their final examination and may not have time to participate in the study, and SSI are new in the school and may not be stable enough to participate as respondents.

**Table 2: Sample Size of the Study**

Senatorial Zones	Schools	Population	Sample
Nasarawa South	GSS Lafia	236	55
	GSS Doma	158	37
	GSS Keana	139	32
Nasarawa North	GSS Akwanga Central	143	34
	GSS Nasarawa- Eggon	212	49
	GSS Gudi	126	29
Nasarawa West	GSS Karu	228	53
	GSS Yelwa- Keffi	217	51
	G. C. Nasarawa	161	38
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1620</b>	<b>378</b>

A standardized instrument tagged “Home Environment, Mental Health and Academic Achievements (HEMH &AA) was adapted by the researchers and used as instrument for data collection. The instrument was also designed on four- point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

The research instrument was administered by the researcher directly to the respondents and were collected back by the researcher immediately after completion. The questionnaires were administered

to public senior secondary students when the school is in session and during school hours. This is important because the schools will provide the most suitable pool of students within the target population. The researcher was assisted by two trained research assistants that were recruited among the secondary school teachers in the sampled school.

Mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions. Inferential statistics of Pearson’s product moment correlation co- efficient was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance by comparing the p-value (probability values) of Pearson's product moment correlation obtained from SPSS application with the significance level at 0.05. For hypotheses whose p-values were found to be less than 0.05 were rejected while for those greater than 0.05 were accepted.

**Results**

**Answers to Research Questions**

The research questions raised for the study was answered using mean and standard deviations.

**Research Question One:** What is the relationship between of home environments and mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa state?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviations on the Relationship between Home Environment andMental Health among Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	I enjoyed a very good relationship with my parents and other members of the family	150	158	45	25	3.14	872	Agree
2	The necessary facilities that will make me comfortable are available in our home	78	56	82	162	2.13	1.18	Disagree
3	My problems are always attended to by my parents and other members of my family	140	127	42	69	2.89	1.10	Agree
4	I am always involved in affairs that concern me and other important issues.	144	112	71	51	2.92	1.05	Agree
5	As a student , I do not face any issue of harassment or isolation from my parents and other members of my family	128	116	75	59	2.83	1.14	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>						<b>2.78</b>		

Table 3 shows the responses of students on the relationship between home environment and mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa state. The table revealed that the respondents have disagreed with item 2 as indicated by its mean score of 2.17 which is less than 2.50 bench mark set for the study. On the other hand, the respondents have agreed with items 1, 3 4 and 5 as revealed by their mean scores of 3.14, 2.89, 2.92 and 2.83 respectively which were all above the bench mark (2.50) and also the overall mean score of 2.78 was also above the bench mark of 2.50 indicating that home environment is correlated with mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa state.

**Research Question Two:** What is the relationship between home environment and academic achievements of secondary school students in Nasarawa state?

**Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviations on the Relationship between Home Environment and Academic Achievements of Secondary Schools Students in Nasarawa State**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev.	Remark
1	My parents have been good role models which enhances my moral and spiritual development.	117	92	87	82	2.72	1.07	Agree
2	My home environment has been supportive towards my academic career	104	107	75	92	2.59	1.12	Agree
3	I always learn a lot of skills and values from my parents and other members of my family which has assisted in my academic life.	124	98	87	69	2.63	1.09	Agree
4	My parents have never failed in providing all my educational needs	88	96	109	75	2.47	1.10	Disagree
5	The economic status of my parents has help in enhancing my educational career.	71	89	113	105	2.33	1.17	Disagree
<b>Grand Mean Score</b>						<b>1.09</b>		

**Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2023**

Table 4 revealed mean scores of 2.47 and 2.33 for items 4 and 5 respectively which were all below the bench mark (2.50) indicating that the respondents have disagreed with the two items. However, the respondents have agreed with items 1, 2 and 3 as revealed by their mean scores of 2.72, 2.59 and 2.63 respectively which were all above the bench mark (2.50) set for the study and also the overall mean score of 2.55 was also above the bench mark (2.50) indicating that there is relationship between home environment and academic achievement of secondary school students in Nasarawa state.

**Testing of Hypotheses**

The null hypotheses formulated for the study were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC).

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between home environment and mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa state.

**Table 5: Relationship between Home Environment and Mental Health among Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State**

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	Std Dev.	Df	r-value	Sig. (2- tailed)	Decision
Home Environment	378	2.91	.72	376	.868	.002	Reject (H0 <sub>1</sub> )
Mental Health	378	2.85	.82				

**Significant at 0.05 level**

Table 5 revealed a positive significant relationship with n= 378, R= .868 and p value (0.002) is less than the alpha value of 0.05 level of significant. This therefore indicated a significant positive relationship between home environment and mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa State, hence the null hypothesis one was rejected.

**H02:** There is no significant relationship between home environment and academic achievement of

senior secondary school students in Nasarawa state.

**Table 6: Relationship between Home Environment and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Nasarawa State**

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	Std Dev.	Df	r-value	Sig. (2- tailed)	Decision
Home Environment	378	2.67	1.06				
Academic Achievement	378	2.55	1.08	376	.768	.010	Reject (H <sub>0</sub> )

**Significant at 0.05 level**

Table 6 revealed a significant positive relationship between home environment and academic achievements of secondary school students in Nasarawa state. From the table, n= 378, R= .768 and p value was 0.10 which is less than the alpha value (0.05) implying that home environment has significant positive relationship with academic achievement of secondary school students in Nasarawa State, hence the null hypothesis two was also rejected

**Discussion of Findings**

Findings from research question one and null hypothesis one revealed a significant positive relationship between home environment and mental health among secondary school students in Nasarawa State. This has indicated that student’s home environment has significant impact on his mental wellbeing. This finding is in line with the findings of Ekanem (2014) that harmonious home creates emotional stability in the child at home and subsequently improves his mental health or mental well- being.

Results from the study also showed that home environment has significant positive relationship with academic achievement of secondary school students in the area. This findings has agreed with the findings of Collins (2017) which shows that the parents or guidance of students are responsible for providing the right home environment that will facilitate effective learning for their wards and some factors that influence their academic performance include: parental educational background, background, parental economic status, parental marital status and parental home location.

**Conclusion**

The influence of students’ home environment on their mental wellbeing and academic achievement cannot be over emphasized as it lays the foundations for psychological, social, moral and spiritual development of a child before he/she goes to school. Therefore, the mental wellbeing and academic achievements of students in schools is to a large extent determined by the conditions of child's home environment. The study recommends among others that there is the need for parents to create a peaceful and conducive home environment that will enhance students’ mental wellbeing as well as guarantee to their academic successes.

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