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HOME ENVIRONMENT AND SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT OF THE NIGERIAN CHILD

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Abstract

The nexus between home and school is the 'environment.' The framework of every successful and wholistic education towards the learning development of a child is the environment. The environment is a center of influence of a child to adulthood. Environment consists of all the elements that affect the inputs and outputs of a child in every clime. This research is partly library research and field research. This paper seeks to underscore the relationship between the home and the school environment as it affects the Nigerian child adjustment in school, the characteristics of the home environment in relation to the school environment and how the home environment influences learning in the school. The researchers identified learning styles and problem associated with learning and learning environment and how to integrate learners' differences to fit into the school environment for a smooth adjustment. This paper underscores the reasons why the Nigerian child finds it difficult to adjust in school by conducting findings from some premier boarding schools in Jos Plateau state and proffer solutions to curb such restiveness. This paper further gave recommendations that are pivotal to parents, learners, government, proprietors and head of schools on how to integrate learners of different backgrounds into their learning environment to reflect the home environment for easy integration.

Keywords: Environment; home environment; school environment; adjustment

Introduction

The environment is a broad term that means so many things to different people from different works of life. Creatures, and professions leverage on the place called the environment. Both living and the non-living interact in the environment, influences the existence of every creature in diverse ways positively or negatively. The term environment as defined according to (Marriam-Webster.com, 2024) is referred to as the circumstances, objects, or conditions by which one is surrounded **or** the factors and influences that affect the growth, health, progress, functioning, etc., of someone

or something. (Unacademy.com, 2024) posited that the term environment refers to everything that surrounds us, including living and non-living objects like soil, water, plants, and animals that adapt to their environments, It is also seen as all the elements that affect a system or its inputs and outputs, (Wikitionary, n.d.).The environment houses the variables that influence the development of an organism, it dictates the survival of the organism or how the organism will adapt to the environment. The environment shapes or conceives the human behavior especially the social behavior because it is acquired through the process of interaction with the environment rather than inherited (Labarba, 1981 in Ngwoke and Eze 2010). Basically there are two types of environment according to Unacademy.com (2024) namely

Geographical Environment

i. Man-made Environment

Geographical environment: It refers to the terrestrial environment, which is made up of a variety of natural and environmental factors. It is the complement of direct interaction involving nature and human society, even though it developed independently of people. The geographical environment involves geology, the sciences of climatology, and biogeography. They are outward representations of human society's perceptions of the earth's landscape. Because it interacts with nature, a geographical environment is often considered a natural environment. The natural environment includes the earth's surface, mountains, rivers, oceans, deserts, land, water, volcanoes, and so on.

Man-Made Environment: Because man is unable to live in his natural habitat, he creates some environmental circumstances to compensate. A man-made or human-made environment was created by humans. A social environment is considered a man-made environment.

There are two types of man-made environments which are as given below;

1. Inner Environment
2. Outer Environment

The inner environment: It is a social environment that endures for as long as a civilization does. It has to do with rules, traditions, organisations, and institutions. It includes customs and folkways that can be found in any human community. Non-material culture, social heritage, and other terms are used to describe it. This legacy is necessary for human social life to thrive, and it is recognised to have an impact on an individual's life. The artificial environment, which is a modified form of the economic and physical environment, is considered two distinct components of the man-made environment.

Outer Environment: Humans have tried to alter the parameters of their physical environment through advancements in science and technology. This outer environment is the result of these changes, which include modern infrastructure in cities, our homes and associated amenities, our modes of communication and transportation, our resorts to conveniences and luxury, various types of electrical appliances, industry manufacturing luxurious commodities, and so on, all of which ultimately aim at civilization and urbanisation. The inner and outer environments are inextricably linked and so inseparable.

Thus the home according to (Lawrence, 2002) refers to the physical and psychological setting in which individuals live and interact with family members or caregivers. The home environment is a complex system that influences an individual's physical, emotional and social development" (p. 12). It is where the child comes from; it is the first school of a child as it is posited by (Mbah, 2023). Mbah added; thus the home determines the success or the adjustment of the child in school. The adjustment of the child in school depends on the parental involvement in the child's academic development. Home environment is a crucial factor that affects the adjustment of children to a great extent. The milieu in which a child develops physically, intellectually, emotionally, culturally and socially is the home. Home plays a central role in the development of cognitive and non-cognitive characteristics of children. The family pays attention in the physical, moral and social development of their children. Home is the primary institution where children get an opportunity to learn, interact and socialize with other members. The first experience of socialization within the family is the most important step in the right growth and development of a child's personality (Kumari & Kamala2023).

Components of the home environment

1. Physical environment: the physical structure and layout of the home, including factors such as safety, accessibility, and aesthetics (Gifford, 2007).
2. Social environment: the relationships and interactions among family members or caregivers, including factors such as communication, support, and conflict (Parke & Elder, 2007.
3. Psychological environment: the emotional and cognitive atmosphere of the home, including factors such as stress, anxiety, and warmth (Bronfenbrenner, 19719)

The school is the second environment a child encounters in the early stage of his/her life. It is a place dedicated to teaching and learning. The people involved in the life of the child are totally strange to the child and have no family ties or a relationship. The child in this case learns to do the following to get acquainted to be able to stabilize in the new environment.

i. Accepts the new people in his/her life in the environment
ii. Adopt to the new environment
iii. Adjust to the changes within the new environment.

The child's response to the school environment is hinged on home environment.

The Involvement of Home Environment in the Adjustment of the Nigerian Child in School

The involvement of home in the adjustment of the child in school implies the contribution of parents in the academics of their children. Parents' involvement also implies that the school environment is replicated in the home. (Mbah, 2023) opined that parental involvement is a critical ingredient in academic success of any child. Parents provide some level of support and attention at the critical stages of child's educational ladder (Spreeuwenberg, 2022 in Mbah 2023).

(Duristic, 2017 in Mbah, 2023) noted the following advantages of parental involvement in the education of their children as follows:

i. It boosts the child's confidence in academics that he or she can make it as others.
ii. the child gets encouraged to put in more efforts even in challenging tasks
iii. It helps the child to know that he or she is not the worst. It gives hope to the child.
iv. It helps the child to develop healthy self-esteem and to have a good competitive spirit.
v. it improves the child's academic attainment

(Kumari & Kamala 2024) opined that, better educated and eager parents are more likely to mirror the academic style of classrooms at home by their praise and interaction with their children. It is rightly observed that the families are very powerful institutes and their influence over their young members is visible in every part of their lives.in an oral interview with some group of students in plateau state revealed that they don't have any excuse for non-performance in their academics because their parents have helped them to adjust properly in the new environment they found themselves, while in any group the students lamented the absence of both parents in their academics at home, which thereby affects their adjustment in school because they constantly default in their assessments.

(Schmid 2021 in Mbah, 2023) postulated the following gains of parental involvement as follows:

i. it helps parents to keep track of their children's academic progress and to render help as early as possible
ii. it helps to ensure that resources invested in the child's education is not a waste

iii. it builds positive relationship based on mutual respect between teachers and parents
iv. Parents and teachers are able to work together in promoting students learning and performance.

Understanding the child's learning model or style is key in addressing the learning needs of the child for a better and healthy adjustment in the part of the child which gives the school the clue on how to place the child and attend to his need earlier before it deteriorates. Teachers will know how to choose their learning materials in tandem with the learning needs of the child and part of this information will be first supplied by parents who are proactive and supportive in the academics of their children while for parents who give less attention to their children's academics will make the school to rise to the occasion in helping the students to curb well in the new environment.

The Relationship between Home Environment and School Adjustment of the Child

The relation between home environment and school adjustment of a child is sacrosanct. Research suggests that a supportive home environment can positively impact a child's academic performance, social adjustment, and emotional well-being. A home environment that is supportive, encouraging with parental involvement can foster child's academic achievement and social adjustment (Hill & Taylor, 2004, p. 161). (Jeynes, 2007) stated that "parental involvement in children's education is positively related to children's academic achievement (p.75).

School adjustment of a child is related to the relationship of the child with the parents'. Research suggests that a high quality parent-child relationship can mediate the association between home-based parental involvement and adolescents' socio-emotional adjustment (Wang et al., 2014, p. 686).

The impact of the home on the child's school adjustment cannot be over emphasized. Handerson & Berla (1994) said, "the family makes critical contributions to student achievement, from earliest childhood through high school" (p.24).

Parent-child relationship is a critical factor in a child's school adjustment.

Ways to Improve Parents Involvement for Healthy Adjustment of the Nigerian Child

Summarily, Mbah (2023) opined the following points as way forward to parents on how to support their children academics.

i. The need for reorientation/prioritization of children's wellbeing by parents: setting priorities aright. Parents should start seeing their

children as their greatest investment and their training should be parent's priority.

ii. Create time for the child's academics at time: parents should make out time in their busy schedules for the academics of their children.

iii. Parents should make it a point of duty to call their child's teacher to ask about the academic progress of their children: such action is a form of support to the school while it encourages easy flow of communication.

iv. assist the child with his/her home work

v. Parents should check children's communication books always and check their books to track their success. This will make the child to seat up.

vi. Parents should often ask their children's areas of challenge in their academics

vii. Always reinforce children's performance with verbal praise or gifts.

viii. Attend school programmes: this will make the child have confidence in his academic and will believe that his or her parents value their academic pursuits.

Conclusion

Home has greater influence and contributions to the academic achievement of a child when parents' play their roles in supporting the child will help the child's performance optimally. The absence of parents in their children's academics affects their academic performances. This research revealed that parents play critical roles in shaping a child's perspective and academic achievement. Therefore the involvement of parents in their children's academic adjustment and performance is non-negotiable because ignorance can never be an excuse, it is a role that must be played by parents and schools to help step up the performance and stability of the Nigerian child school.

Recommendation

1. Parents are encouraged to step up their role in the home in supporting the academics of their children.
2. Parents should be able to communicate school about the learning difficulties of their children to enable the schools to work extra in helping the child adjust appropriately.
3. The training of teachers should be the topmost priority of the school to train teachers periodically on newer ways of teaching approach.
4. Teacher's knowledge and teaching skills are key to helping the child adjust for optimum performance.
5. It behooves on the schools to create a continual communication between the school and the parents to monitor the child while on break and for the parents

to get current information about the progressive performance of the child in school.

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