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INFLUENCE OF PARENTS' PROACTIVE STEPS ON CHILDREN'S UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS AT HOME: IMPLICATIONS FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence parents' proactive steps on children's unacceptable behaviours at home and its implications for academic achievements. Four research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The research design adopted for the study was a survey research design. The study was carried out in 42 Government owned primary schools and 10 schools were selected out of the 42 schools using simple sampling by balloting method. All the 126 parents from the 10 sampled schools that have wards in senior basic who attended the PTA meeting that marks the beginning of first term 2024 mid-term break were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a 4-point structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by experts and its reliability index tested with Cronbach alpha. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviations while Chi-square statistics was used in testing the hypotheses. The results of the study showed that the common unacceptable behaviours of children in Orumba south LGA include talking back at parents, refusing to do house chores, bulling etc. The results also revealed among others that parents use diverse proactive steps in preventing these unacceptable behaviours in children which have great positive influence on children's unacceptable behaviours and their academic achievements. Based on the results of the study, it was recommended among others that the government should organize counselling programs so as to provide literacy awareness to all parents in managing unacceptable behaviours in children.

Introduction

The concept of a child can be defined according to the child's age, physical appearance and also his/her ability to think and reason. Okechukwu (2016) defines a child as an offspring of a parent from the moment of his/her birth until the attainment of the age of puberty. National Research Council (2000) defined a child as a "person under the age of 18 years. A child is thus, a young human being who is

not yet an adult and can be strongly and easily be influenced by ideas and attitude of a particular time or person. Pere (2014) highlights that this broad age group includes non-school children, pre-primary and primary school children, secondary school and first year Polytechnic, College of Education as well as University students.

All over the world, children are regarded as very valuable and priceless for the future of human kind. Naturally, because of the small size and helplessness, children depend totally on parents/adults for their welfare, means of survival and behavior modification. Behaviour is generally a person's way of life. Behaviour is considered unacceptable if it is uncommon and different from the norms and does not conform to what the society expects (Aboh, Nwankwo, Agu & Chikwendu, 2014). Ejikeme (2019) states that a particular behavior is not acceptable or antisocial if any of these three criteria are seen- The behavior does not allow a person to function effectively with others as member of society, the behavior does not permit the person to meet his or her own needs and the behavior has a negative effect on the well-being of others. According to Bristol university dictionary (2019), unacceptable behavior may involve actions, words or physical gestures that could reasonably be perceived to be the cause of another person's distress or discomfort, such unacceptable behavior appears when a child fails to achieve the prime goal of acceptance in the classroom. Kagan, Kyle & Scott (2004) categorized unacceptable behavior into four types- aggression, breaking rules, confrontations and disengagement (ABCD). This will definitely affect the academic achievement of the child in school.

Academic achievement generally refers to the degree or level of success or proficiency attained in academic work. It refers to the knowledge attained and skills developed during the child's academic career which are assessed by school authorities with the help of teacher made or standardized test (Aroea, Liand & Ma-Tengy, 2017). Academic achievement is one of the most important goals of education. The success or failure of a child is measured in terms of academic achievement. Kumari (2001) also defined academic achievement as the sum total of information gained after completing courses of instruction (partially or fully) in a particular grade that he has obtained on an achievement test. It is one part of the wider term of educational growth. Academic achievement is affected by many factors which unacceptable behavior is largely one of the negative significant factor and which has to be prevented using proactive steps.

Proactive steps also known as proactive strategies refer to the approach parents adopt in preventing the occurrence of unacceptable behavior within the home. Parents' proactive strategies simply means the parents anticipating what will happen and when it will happen rather than waiting for something to occur and then reacting

oftentimes inappropriately. The approach requires tremendous preparation and vigilance to cut unacceptable behaviuors off before they escalate into full-blown meltdown or confrontations. Proactive parents do not give up or give in, rather they see themselves as responsible for creating a positive, moral environment for the child.

Being proactive entails a conscientious effort on the part of the parents to provide a home environment that allows children to be themselves, take risks, learn from mistakes and understand how to take responsibility for their actions and feelings. A proactive parents act in advance to deal with unacceptable behaviours. He or she controls the expected occurrence causing unacceptable behavior to occur. A proactive parent maintains high standards, set limits, applies consequences responsibly and most importantly creates a home environment that is fun and encouraging. The impact of home environment is taken to school by the child and this in turn will help the teacher to set up a learning environment that captivate the child's interest and attention and thereby create the context for high achievement for the child. Hence the present study investigated needs the influence of parents' proactive steps on children unacceptable behavior: Implication for academic achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The exhibition of unacceptable behaviors at home is held responsible for the rise in poor academic achievement of children in primary schools. Unacceptable behaviours when not properly taken care of at home will be transmitted to school which may lead to pupils drop out, delayed societal development and poor academic achievement. These unacceptable behaviours are not to the best interest of the pupils and will mar their efforts in the achievement of their careers. This problem has been of great concern to the researchers and therefore led the researchers into investigating the influence of parents' proactive steps on children's unacceptable behaviours at home and to find out its implications on their academic achievement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of parents' proactive steps on children unacceptable behaviours at home and its implications on academic achievement. Specifically, the study sought to:

1) Identify the unacceptable behaviours common among children at home in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.
2) Determine the influence of parents' proactive steps on children unacceptable behavior in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

3) Determine the extent to which parents' proactive steps influence children's academic achievement in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Research Questions.

The following research questions guided the study:

1) What are the unacceptable behaviours common among children at home in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.
2) What are the influences of parents' proactive steps on children's unacceptable behaviours in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.
3) To what extent do the parents' proactive steps influence the children's academic achievements in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha level-

Ho_1: There is no significant influence of Parents' proactive steps on children's unacceptable behaviours.

Ho_2: There is no significant influence of Parents' proactive steps on children's academic achievement

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was a survey research design. Survey research design is a situation where data are collected and analyzed from few individuals considered to be a representative of the population and the results obtained is generalized to the entire population (Mbah and Udegbe, 2014).

The study was carried out in 42 government owned primary schools, Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The population of the study comprised of parents that have wards at the senior basic (4-6) in the 42 primary schools in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Simple random sampling by balloting method was used in selecting 10 out of 42 government owned primary schools in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State and all the parents that have wards in basic 4-6 who attended the PTA meeting that marks the beginning of first term 2024 mid-term break were used for the study and they are 126 in number.

The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three lecturers in Federal college of Education (Technical), Umunze. Two from Early Childhood Care Education and one from Measurement and

Evaluation. Their corrections were incorporated in the final draft of the questionnaire items. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha. Data were collected in different areas but similar situation (five primary schools in Aguata LGA) and the analysis yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.88 which shows that the instrument is highly reliable.

Data were collected with the help of headmasters and headmistresses of the selected schools who asked the parents that have wards at the senior basic to stay behind after the PTA meeting. One hundred and twenty- six (126) copies of questionnaire items were distributed to these parents who filled and returned back the questionnaire on the spot. This ensured 100% return of the questionnaire items. The data collected were analyzed using mean. The mean was determined by adding up the four points on the rating scale and dividing by the total number of scales to get 2.50. Therefore, a mean scale of 2.50 and above indicates agreement while mean below 2.50 indicated disagreement.

Chi-square statistics was used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. If the chi-square calculated is less than the chi-square critical, the null hypothesis is upheld, otherwise, it will be rejected.

Presentation of Results

The data collected were analyzed and presented in line with the research questions and hypotheses as shown below-

Research Question one- What are the unacceptable behaviours common among children at home in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State?.

Table I: Mean Responses of the Respondents on the Unacceptable Behaviours Common Among Children in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State?.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	DECISION
1	Talking back at parents	77	14	19	16	126	3.62	Agree
2	Refusing to do house chores	35	27	39	25	126	2.57	Agree
3	Bullying	62	36	28	-	126	3.27	Agree
4	Excessive noise making	86	40	-	-	126	3.82	Agree
5	Using foul languages	56	13	35	22	126	2.82	Agree
6	Stealing	60	32	26	8	126	3.14	Agree
7	Lying	84	22	14	6	126	3.46	Agree
8	Fighting	61	15	28	22	126	2.91	Agree
9	Destructive acts	66	20	24	16	126	3.08	Agree

All the items listed above is regarded as agreed because they all have mean scores that is above 2.50 which is the acceptable cut off mean score. This shows that all

talking back at parents, refusing to do house chores, bullying, excessive noise, using foul languages, stealing, lying, fighting and destructive acts are the common unacceptable behaviours exhibited among children at home in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Research Question Two: What are the influences of parents' proactive steps on children unacceptable behaviors in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State?

Table 2: Mean Responses of the Respondents on the Influence of Parents' Proactive Steps on Children's Unacceptable Behaviours at Home in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	MEAN	DECISION
10	Sense of cooperation and mutual respect derived from proactive steps prevent unacceptable behaviours in children.	83	17	20	6	126	3.33	Agree
11	The rules and regulations set by parents prevent children from misbehaving.	56	30	25	15	126	3.01	Agree
12	Assigning chaos to children based on their interest offers them the opportunity to misbehave.	18	3	14	91	126	1.59	Disagree
13	Counselling the children prevent them from engaging in unacceptable behaviours.	72	20	25	9	126	3.23	Agree
14	Educating them about the benefits of good behaviours guide them to comport well.	95	5	19	7	126	3.41	Agree
15	Monitoring the type of friends children keep do not prevent unacceptable behavior.	14	6	29	77	126	1.67	Disagree

All the items in the table above are the influence of parents proactive steps on children unacceptable behaviours at home except items 12 and 15 which were below the cut off mean of 2.50, thereby not agreed as one of the influence of the use of proactive steps on Children Unacceptable Behaviours at Home in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Research Question Three: To what extent does the parents' proactive steps influence the children's academic achievement in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State?.

Table 3 : Mean Responses of the Respondents on the Extent to Which Proactive Steps Influence Children's Academic Achievement in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

S/N	ITEMS	VGE	GE	LE	VLE	N	MEAN	DECISION
16	Proactive steps develop confidence in children to succeed in learning environment.	49	35	24	18	126	2.91	Agree
17	Proactive steps used at home increase greater pupils' participation in the classwork.	58	27	5	36	126	2.85	Agree
18	Proactive steps used by parents at home motivate to grow academically in school.	96	15	11	4	126	3.61	Agree
19	Proactive steps used by parents at home make children to be humble and pay attention in class.	88	17	13	8	126	3.47	Agree
20	Proactive advice given to children at home help them to obey school rules and regulations.	63	29	13	21	126	3.06	Agree
21	Proactive steps do not promote high academic achievement.	16	13	10	87	126	1.67	Disagree

Table 3 above shows parents' proactive steps influence the children's academic achievement because proactive steps develop confidence in children to succeed in learning environment, it increases greater pupils' participation in the classwork, It motivate children to grow academically in school, It makes children to be humble and pay attention in class and also help them to obey school rules and regulations. The respondents also indicated that proactive steps promote high academic achievement

Hypothesis One

Ho_1: There is no significant influence of Parents' proactive steps on children's unacceptable behaviours.

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis on the Influence of Parents' Proactive Steps on Children's Unacceptable Behaviours

X^2-cal	α	Df	X^2-crit	Decision
353	0.05	15	25	Reject Null Hypothesis

Decision Rule: Since the X^2cal of 353 is greater than X^2 crit of 25, then we reject the null hypothesis which implies that parents' proactive steps have significant influence on children's' unacceptable behaviour.

Hypothesis Two

Ho_2: There is no significant influence of Parents' proactive steps on children's academic achievement.

Table 5 : Chi-Square Analysis on the Influence of Parents' Proactive Steps and Children's Academic Achievement.

X^2-cal	α	Df	X^2-crit	Decision
261	0.05	15	25	Reject Null Hypothesis

Decision Rule: Since the X^2cal of 261 is greater than the table X^2 of 25, then we reject the null hypothesis which implies that parents' proactive steps have significant influence on children's' academic achievement.

Discussion of Results

Findings from the study revealed among others that the common children unacceptable behaviours in Orumba South Local Government Area include talking back at parents, refusing to do house chores, bullying, excessive noise making, using foul languages, stealing etc. This is in support of the claims of Brackett (2011) and Dada (2014), who in their different studies found out that such unacceptable behaviours are common among children.

Research question two sought information on the influence of parents' proactive steps on the children unacceptable behaviours at home. Data generated from this indicates that the use of proactive steps by parents make children to have sense of cooperation and mutual respect. Rules set by parents minimize children from misbehaving, counseling and educating children on the benefit of good behavior also help to minimize unacceptable behaviour. This is also seen in hypothesis one which states that a significant relationship exists between proactive steps and children's unacceptable behaviours. This is in line with the view of Furret and Skinner (2013) who agreed that proactive steps help children to have self-comportment.

Research question three showed that parents proactive steps have influence on children academic achievement in school because it does the following- develop confidence in children, increase greater children participation in academics, motivate children to grow academically, make children to obey school rules and regulations etc. This is also seen in hypothesis two which found out that there is a relationship between parents' proactive steps and children's academic achievement. This is in support of the view of Brackett (2011) who stated that proactive measures help children to have greater participation and seriousness in their academic works which result to great academic achievement.

Conclusion

Behaviour is generally a person's way of life. Behaviour is considered unacceptable if it is uncommon and different from the norms and does not conform to what the society expects. Unacceptable behavior may involve actions, words or physical gestures that could reasonably be perceived to be the cause of another person's distress or discomfort. Such unacceptable behavior appears when a child fails to achieve the prime goal of acceptance in the classroom.

Unacceptable behaviours when not properly taken care of at home will be transmitted to school which may lead to pupils' drop out, delayed societal development and poor academic achievement. Parents adopt proactive steps in order to prevent the occurrence of unacceptable behavior within the home. These proactive steps have great positive influence on children's unacceptable behaviours and also help in their academic achievements.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made-

1) Parents should provide warm and social climate for their children at home and should play active role in the academic pursuance of their children by monitoring their academic progress.
2) Parents should develop proactive strategies at home which will show sense of love and belonging, mutual respect and cooperation so as to prevent the exhibition of unacceptable behaviours by their children.
3) Government should organize counseling program so as to provide literacy awareness to all parents in managing unacceptable behaviours in children.
4) PTA should put in place meetings that support the training of proactive steps for parents so as to equip them on how to manage unacceptable behaviours of children through proactive measures.

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