

INFLUENCE OF HOME ENVIRONMENT ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ARUSHA MUNICIPALITY

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the influence of home environment on students' academic performance in the selected secondary schools. The areas of concentration were parents and students, social demographic factors, and other related factors. The research design used to collect data was descriptive survey, which employed questionnaires in collecting relevant data for the study. The sample size was one hundred and sixty (160) respondents (students), where forty (40) students were randomly selected from each selected secondary school. The findings revealed that there was no direct relationship between home environment and students academic performance in schools. The results shown the following percentages: tuition fee 71.9%, demographic factors 70.7%, and other factors including teaching and learning materials, infrastructure, home structures, electricity, peer group, home mass media and location had an average of 64.7% thus making the tuition fee the leading factor. The researcher therefore recommended that the Ministry of Educational and Vocational Training should educate parents, teachers, and society (community) to analyze the influence of home environment on students' academic performance and to find the ways to overcome those challenges for the betterment of students academic performance in secondary schools.

Keywords: Home environment, students' academic performance, and secondary school, Arusha/Tanzania.

INTRODUCTION

Many studies have been done within and outside of Tanzania on the influence of home environment and the socio-economic status of parents on the academic achievement of students (Ajala, 2007) reveal that there are many factors that influence the performance of students in secondary school. Extended families have become significantly less extended as mobility has increased. Parents are becoming isolated from their children and finding it difficult to keep a careful watch on what needs to be done to help them succeed in school (Carmen, 2007). Many families are not even led by parents, but by grandparents, guardians, or some other adult. Handerson (1990) states that there are positive academic outcomes stemming from parental participation with benefits beginning in early childhood, throughout adolescence and beyond. According to parental involvement continues to be the most influential factor in student academic performance and student motivation (Zhao, 2009).

According to studies done by Sukon (2005) titled "Influence of home related factors" students whose parents are closely involved in school life and who monitor their progress make good performance in high school. Machem (2005) stated that parent participation in relation to the student's performance at school refers to parent's participation in the teaching and learning process; that normally includes how students perform in their studies, how they behave both at home and school. All students are likely to excel in academic performance if their home environment is supportive. The study was guided by the following objectives:

- To identify parental socio-demographic factors that may influence students' academic performance.
- To examine the students' socio-demographic factors that may influence student's academic performance.
- To determine the relationship between home environment and students' academic performance.

Empirical Literature Review

Henderson (1990) indicates that there are positive academic outcomes stemming from parental involvement with benefits beginning in early childhood, through adolescence. Studies conducted over the last 30 years have identified a relationship between parent involvement and increased student participation in learning. World Bank (1999) parent helping students with homework enhances self-esteem, improved behavior, and better academic performance and good school attendance.

According to Walberg (2001) "family is a partner in education productivity". He argues that despite this evidence, family involvement in Schools throughout the United States remains minimal. Zappala (2002) said that regardless of educational level, income status, or ethnic background, parents want their children to be successful in school. However, for families facing adverse conditions, such as poverty and lack of resources, there are obstacles for involvement at school, in Educational discipline home environment is very significance to students' academic performance. Pappas (2001) added that forging home-school partnership, non-English speaking parents, and the inability to understand English is a major deterrent to their participation in school, as is the lack of knowledge about the school system. Without understanding English, and therefore, not understanding the demands of the tasks sent home, non-English speaking parents face an additional obstacle in their effort to get involved in their children's learning at home, coupled with parents' work schedules, inadequate child care, and lack of transportation.

A study done by Greenberg (2009), entitled "Parent as a partnership in young children" states that, there is need to stretch the conceptualization of how families can be involved in education and contributes to their children academic performance depending to their home environment and clarity about roles and responsibilities between families and educators this depends to the student influences of students home environment. Coleman (1991) stated despite the consensus about how important it is for family and school to work together across developmental stages, theories of parent involvement in education have been based on the elementary school students in their context and do not focus on the changes that occur with middle school and early adolescent development

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that: "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise" (Act 1996). Parents have a right to educate their children at home depending on their home environment and the historical background of the family.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology

Research Design

The research design used for in study was quantitative approach where data on influences of home environment on students' academic performance in selected secondary schools in Arusha Municipality was collected. According to Kothari (2004), a research design is a plan, a roadmap and blueprint strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions; it is the heart of any study. Research design is a systematic planning of research, which includes formulation of a strategy to resolve particular questions, collect data as well as record evidence.

Population and Sampling Procedures

The population of the study was 160 from four selected secondary schools. According to Gay (1991), a good sample representation should be at least 10% for small populations and 20% for large populations. Therefore, 10% of 160 respondents made the sample size to be 40 respondents from each secondary school. The study population involved the secondary schools students from form three in selected secondary schools in Arusha Municipality from Muriet, Olasiti, Oljoro, and Kinana secondary schools. Form three students were the targeted respondents for filling questionnaires, because they had experienced in both national and internal examinations, and they had stayed for a long time in school. Furthermore, the study was based on purposive sampling in order to get the actual information from the group with similar characteristics. Also the study composed 160 of total population as respondents from four secondary schools where each school forty was represented by (40) randomly selected students in order to acquire accurate data for the study.

Data Collection

The study population involved Form III secondary school students from selected secondary schools in Arusha Municipality: Muriyet, Olasiti, Oljoro, and Kinana secondary schools which sampled were four from each school forty (40) students to fill the prepared questionnaires.

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Data Analysis and Technique

Numerical data was summarized and presented in tables of frequency, percentile, and calculated to facilitate understanding this study. In interpreting the results, frequency was used to determine the number of times concepts had been mentioned. Responses were tallied and frequencies of responses for each item quantified and calculated into percentages using Microsoft excel. Depending on requirement of each data, analysis was based on identifying a theme. The researcher categorized related topics, where major concepts or topics were identified and analyzed; all data was categorized into research tasks, and Likert scale was used. Responses were presented in scale (weighted mean) where 5= strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3= Undecided, 2= Disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree.

Findings

Parent socio-demographic information that influences student's academic performance

The result shows that 113 (70.7%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed that parental occupation positively influences students' academic performance, 32 (20%) respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, while only 14 (8.8%) were undecided. This result reflects that majority of respondents 113 (70.7%) agreed. The high number of agreed responses reveals that parent's socio- demographic factors largely affect student's performance. This is consistent with Studious' (2007) study which maintains that parents contribute and influence academic achievement of children.

The result on the influence of parent educational background shows that 90 (56%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed, 55 (34.4%) disagreed and strongly disagreed, and only 14 (8.8%) were undecided. These results show that the majority of respondents 90 (56%) agreed and minority disagreed which means that parent educational background largely affects and influences students' academic performance. This is consistent with the study done by Machem (2005) where involvement in classroom activities affects how students perform in their studies and how they behave both at home and school.

On the aspect of parent or guardian socio-economic status, the results shows that 109 (68%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the influence of home environment on academic performance, while 24 (15%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, and only 25 (15.6%) were undecided. This indicates that parent or guardian socio-economic status largely influences students' academic performance in secondary schools. This is consistent with Henderson (2002) study, which shows that what families do to support children's learning accounted for more than who families are.

The result on the influence family size shows that 96 (60%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed 45 (28.1%) disagreed and strongly disagreed, and only 18(11.3%) respondents were undecided. This indicates that a majority of respondents 96 (60%) agreed on the influence of family size on students' academic performance in secondary schools. This is consistent with the study done by Clark (2005) indicate that parents of high-achieving students have distinct styles of interacting with their children. They create emotionally supportive home environments and provide reassurance when the youngsters encounter achievement. Academic gains are the greatest when there is consistency between home and school.

The results on the aspect of marital status show that 61 (38.1%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the effect of marital status on students' academic performance, 78 (48.8%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 19 (11.8%) respondents were undecided. These results reflect that a majority of respondents disagreed to marital status' influence on students' academic performance.

The result on the aspect of tuition fee shows that 115 (71.9%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed that tuition fee affects students' academic performance, 28 (17.6%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, and 13 (8.1%) respondents were undecided. This indicates that majority of respondents (71.9%) agreed to tuition fee influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools. This result is consistent with a study done by Tylor (2004) Parent involvement is so important that no child is left behind in a federal policy that puts a mandate on

parental involvement in education and family school relations across elementary and secondary school level which attributes student's academic performance depend from student's home environment and parent economic status.

Student's socio demographic factors that may influence students' academic Performance in secondary schools

The result shows that 108 (67%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed, 41 (25.6%) disagreed and strongly disagreed, and only 10 (6.3%) were undecided. This result shows that the majority of respondents agreed that previous schools attended had great influences on students' performance in secondary schools. The result on students' self-motivations shows that 113 (70.7%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed, 31 (19.4%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 13 (8.1%) were undecided. This shows that a majority of respondents (70.7%) agreed that self-motivation of students highly influenced academic performance in secondary schools. This is consistent with Mahlangu (1990) study which argues that intensive motivation from students positively affected academic performance.

Result on the influence of age of students shows that 105 (65.6%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed that age affected students' academic performance, 52 (32.6%) disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 29 (18.1%) respondents were undecided. This result reflects that most of the respondents agreed (64.6%) that age of students greatly influenced students' academic performance in secondary schools. This finding supported by the study done by section 7 of the education Act 1996 which argued that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive, efficient, full time education suitable depending to their age, ability and aptitude. On the aspect of student learning preferences, the results revealed that 105 (65.6%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed that students' learning preferences affected academic performance, 36 (22.5%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 19 (11.9%) undecided were undecided. These findings indicate that respondents 105 (65.6%) revealed that learning students preferences had mostly great influences on students' performance on secondary schools.

The result on the aspect of students' entry qualifications shows that respondents who agreed or strongly agreed were 88 (55%); 40 (25%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 27 (16.9%) respondents were undecided. This reflects that the majority of respondents (55%) agreed that entry qualifications of students had positive influences on students' academic achievement in secondary schools. The result on the aspect of students daily private study hours shows that 91 (56.9%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed on the effect of private study hours on students' academic performance; 49 (30.6%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 20 (12.5%) respondents were undecided. This shows that private study has a significant influence on students' academic performance.

For accommodations as hostels or for day scholars, the result show that 78 (48.7%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the influence of accommodation on students' academic performance; 58 (36.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 24 (15%) were undecided. This shows that accommodation has influences on students' academic performance in secondary schools. On the aspect of students' schooling/ school background – the results show that 102 (63.8%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed on the influence of students' schooling/ school background on academic performance; 40 (25.1%) disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 17 (10.6%) were undecided. This result shows that a majority of respondents agreed students' schooling has great influence on student's academic performance in secondary schools.

Other home factors influencing students' academic performance.

In the item on infrastructure, the results shows that 113 (70.7%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed to the influence of infrastructure on academic performance, 34 (21.3%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 11 (6.9%) were undecided. This result shows that a majority of respondents (70.7%) agreed that infrastructure greatly influenced students' academic performance in secondary schools. For students teaching and learning materials, the results show that 126 (78.8%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the influence of teaching and learning materials on academic performance; 18 (11.2%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, while 14 (8.8%) were undecided. This shows that a majority of respondents (78.8%) agreed and strongly agreed that teaching and learning materials greatly influenced students' academic performance in secondary schools. This is consistent with Henderson (1990) study arguing that teaching and learning materials improve student's achievement in schools.

Results on home structure show that respondents who agreed and strongly agreed were 100 (62.6%) while respondents who disagreed and strongly disagreed were 37 (19.4%), and undecided respondents were 28 (17.5%). This indicates that a majority of respondents (62.6%) agreed that home structure greatly influenced students' academic performance in the selected secondary schools. This coincides with Sukon's (2005) study which maintains that schools become successful when there is a strong and positive relationship among students, parents, teachers,

and the community. On the aspect of availability of electric power, the results show that respondents who agreed and strongly agreed were 93 (58.2%), while 46 (28.8%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, and only 19 (11.9%) were undecided. This indicates that a majority of respondents agreed that availability of electric power greatly influenced students' academic performance.

The results on home geographical location show that 107 (66.9%) respondents agreed and strongly agreed to the influence of home geographical location on academic performance, while 37 (23.1%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, and 15 (9.4%) were undecided. This shows that a majority of respondents (66.9%) agreed that home geographical location had a positive influence on students' academic achievement in secondary schools. However, on the aspect of social interaction (peer group), results show that respondents who agreed and strongly agreed were 97 (60.7%), while 34 (21.3%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, and 22 (13.8%) were undecided. This shows that a majority of respondents agreed that social interaction greatly influenced students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Results on the influence of home mass media show that respondents who agreed and strongly agreed were 88 (55%), while 40 (25.1%) respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed, and 30 (18.8%) were undecided. This shows that a majority of respondents agreed (55%) that home mass media influenced students' academic performance. This is consistent with Christenson's (2012) study done in 2012 reporting family factors that affected academic performance; for example, absenteeism, variety of reading materials at home and amount of television watching as factors over which parents have control.

Academic Performance of the surveyed secondary schools

The data below presents the different academic performances from the four selected secondary schools. The results indicate that Olasiti secondary school had higher performance compared to Olojoro, Kinana, and Muriet secondary schools on the aspect of home environment influence on students' academic performance. The results reveal that Kinana F 3 (7.5%) D, 20 (50.0%), C, 16 (40.0%), B, 1 (2.5%), while Muriet secondary results were: F, 6 (15.0%) D, 14, (35.0%) C, 19 (47.5%) B, 1 (2.5%). In Olasiti secondary school, the results were: F, 4 (10.0%) D, 10 (25.0%), C, 19 (47.5%), B, 1 (2.5%). In Olasiti secondary school, the results were: F, 4 (10.0%), D, 10 (25.0%), C, 19 (47.5%), B, 7 (17.5%), while in Olojoro the results were: F, 9 (22.5%), D, 19 (47.5%), C, 9 (22.5%), and B, 3 (7.5%). The performance of the surveyed school was generally poor, and Olasiti performed higher than other schools.

The study revealed that there was a significant influence of home environment on students' academic performance in the selected secondary schools, because a majority of the respondents indicated the availability of influences of home environment on student's academic performance in selected secondary schools.

The study revealed the kinds of influences of home environment on students' academic performance in secondary schools to be: parents' occupation, age, residence allocation, economic status, family size, family income, pre-primary school, self-motivation, learning preferences, entry qualification of students, daily private study hours, boarders or day scholars, students schooling, tuition fees, family status, infrastructure, Teaching-Learning materials, home structure, availability of electricity power, and social interaction.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that there is a great correlation on influences of home environment and students' academic performance in the selected secondary schools. The researcher provided different alternatives to help students develop their academic performance depending from their home environmental challenges. The study came up with ways which the respondents accepted. These alternatives include: positive motivation, students readiness, hardworking, home restructuring, and consideration for home geographical location.

The researcher discovered that there was a close relationship between home environment and students' academic performance, hence the need for educationists, psychologists, and the government to educate educational administrators, educational policy makers, teachers, and students on the influences of home environment and challenges on academic performance.

The researcher therefore recommends the following:

- Parents should improve home environment like home structure, home furniture, supply of electric power, teaching and learning materials to motivate students.
- The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) should support programs in
- educating parents, teachers, and society at large about the influence of home
- environment on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

The Government should support home environment especially through provision of good and conducive infrastructure.

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