

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTING STYLES AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AWKA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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### ABSTRACT

*This study investigated the relationship between parenting styles and secondary school students' academic achievement in Awka south Local Government Area. Three research questions guided the study and one null hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlation research design was adopted for the study. The population for this study consisted of 3,130 senior secondary school (SS2) students. The sample of the study consisted of 310 students drawn through multi-stage sampling procedure. The instruments used for the study was Parenting Style Scale (PSS) with reliability coefficients alpha of 0.81 and 0.83. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used for data analysis. Results obtained from the study indicated that there is very high positive significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics. The results also showed that there is high positive significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics. Finally, the result revealed that low positive significant relationship between permissive parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics. The study concluded that authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles are correlates of students' academic achievement in mathematics, which permissive parenting style is a low correlate of students' academic achievement in mathematics. It was recommended, among others that counsellors, government, teachers and other stakeholders should come up with adequate sensitization programmes to discourage the use of permissive parenting style and encourage the adoption of authoritative parenting style by parents.*

**Keywords:** Relationship, Parenting Styles, Academic Achievement, Students, Secondary Education.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background to the Study

Education is the bedrock of every nation. That is why different measures are put in place to enhance the standard of education. In many countries of the world including Nigeria, the quality of teaching and the standard of education generally is greatly determined by the level of students' achievement in their school examinations. For this reason, academic achievement is interestingly an important issue; a fundamental premium upon which all teaching and learning processes are measured. It is very important for students, teachers and other stakeholders. This is why the government, teachers, psychologists, school counsellors, parents and examination bodies are greatly concerned with and are working very hard to unravel the mystery behind the poor academic achievement among students.

Reacting to the issue of poor academic achievement among secondary school students, Adeyemo (2017) emphasized that every stakeholder is concerned about how best to improve the academic achievement of students. This may be probably because educational attainment is highly fundamental to the realization of the scientific, technological, socio-economic and political development of any nation as well as the total empowerment and transformation of the citizens. Academic achievement is defined as the general performance of students in their offered subjects with respect to a specific standard called pass mark. Avoseh (2018) viewed it as how well an individual has done in a particular academic task. Steinmayr, Dinger and Spinath (2022) described academic achievement as the result of intellectual performance in schools; an education parameter which determines students' success in the school activities.

Academic achievement is a term usually employed to describe an individual's performance in subjects taught and tested in schools (Mkpae, 2014). It is the education goal that is achieved by students, teachers or institutions over a certain period (Manhood and Igbal, 2015). According to Mkpae and Obowu (2017), academic achievement is a term usually employed to describe a students' performance in subjects taught and tested in schools. Oguzie, Nwokolo, Mokwelu and Ezunu (2019) viewed academic achievement as students' scholastic ability and attainment, which signifies the overall level of knowledge they have acquired in school, a subject or a learning situation. Academic achievement is the overall measured cognitive, affective and psychomotor achievement of students with which they are judged academically fit or unfit (Okafor, Obi and Oguzie, 2018).

In clearer terms, academic achievement is the yardstick with which educational outcomes are measured (Ozuome, Oguzie, Mokwelu and Anyamene, 2020). In the view of Okudo and Obumse (2023), academic achievement is the outcome of education that indicates the extent to which the students, teachers, curricular, counsellor or the educational institution has achieved the predetermined educational goals. In the context of this study, academic achievement is defined as the students' ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate their knowledge orally or in writing form even in an examination condition.

Studies have shown that several factors such as students' self esteem, self concept, self-regulation, study habit, gender, socio-economic background and parenting style influence students' academic achievement (Adeyemo, 2010). Udoh (2012) maintained that academic achievement of students is a phenomenon that has educational, psychological and sociological connotation. It is therefore important to understand those factors that make students

susceptible to poor academic achievement. The researcher believes that one possible factor that can impact on students' academic achievement is the style their parents used in raising them up.

Conceptually, Parenting style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing; that is, the environment in which parent-child interactions occur (Slaten, 2016). It has to do with all the strategies (behaviours, attitudes and values) parents use to interact with their children and influence their physical, emotional, social and intellectual development (Njoku and Akaninwor, 2019). According to Gonzale-Pianda, Nunez and Garcia (2012), parenting style is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviours that work individually and together to influence child's outcome; thus, generally describing patterns or configuration of parenting behaviours. Parenting style may be specified into three major categories, namely; authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive styles of parenting, and are based on levels of warmth and control used by the parent in disciplining the child (Baumrind, in Okpala, 2023).

In addition, Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn and Dornbusch (2014) identified a fourth type of parenting style referred to as neglectful or uninvolved parenting style. These styles reflect the different approaches parents take in raising their children, each characterised by distinct levels of responsiveness and demandingness. Authoritative parenting, which combines high responsiveness with high demandingness, is often associated with positive self-esteem in children. This style is characterized by parents who provide clear guidelines and expectations while also offering warmth, support, and encouragement. Authoritative parents engage in open communication, set reasonable boundaries, and encourage autonomy, helping children develop a sense of competence and self-worth (Olusakin and Nabor, 2019). Research indicates that children raised in authoritative households tend to exhibit higher levels of self-esteem due to the balance of support and structure they receive.

On the other hand, authoritarian parenting, characterized by low responsiveness and high demandingness, can negatively impact self-esteem. Authoritarian parents are often strict, with rigid rules and high expectations, but offer little emotional support or open communication. This style can lead to children feeling undervalued and insecure, as their self-worth is primarily based on compliance and achievement rather than intrinsic value (Akunne, Etele and Akuezilo, 2023). The lack of warmth and autonomy in authoritarian households can result in lower self-esteem among adolescents, as they may internalize feelings of inadequacy and fear of failure.

Moreover, permissive parenting, marked by high responsiveness and low demandingness, also has distinct impacts on self-esteem. Permissive parents are nurturing and communicative but set few boundaries and rules. While children may feel loved and accepted, the lack of structure and guidance can lead to issues with self-discipline and self-regulation, ultimately affecting their self-esteem (Akunne, Etele and Akuezilo, 2023). Students from permissive households might struggle with authority and face challenges in environments that require discipline and accountability, impacting their self-perception and confidence. Neglectful parenting, characterized by both low responsiveness and low demandingness, could be the most detrimental to self-esteem. Neglectful parents are uninvolved and indifferent to their children's needs, providing neither emotional support nor guidance. This lack of engagement

can lead to feelings of abandonment and low self-worth in adolescents, as they may perceive themselves as unimportant and unvalued. The absence of a supportive and nurturing environment can critically undermine the development of a healthy self-esteem, leaving adolescents more vulnerable to negative influences such as peer pressure. If the style of parenting used in the family is not encouraging, students are more likely to see themselves as not capable enough to do well in school, which can lead to their increased susceptibility to poor academic achievement.

Since, student's academic achievement plays very vital role in determining their quality of teaching and learning in any school, as well as the standard of education in any country, the problem of poor academic achievement has raised a serious concern to teachers, counsellors, government, examination bodies and other stakeholders (Ozuome, Oguzie, Onwukwe and Emeji, 2024). Hence, establishing the impact of parenting styles on students' academic achievement of students cannot be overlooked. Based on this background, the present study was necessitated to explore the relationship between parenting styles and academic achievement of secondary school students in Awka South Local government Area of Anambra State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In recent times, the rate of students' poor academic achievements has assumed a serious dimension in Anambra State generally and Awka South in particular. This is evident in the examination results of these students both in their internal and external examinations. A look at the general secondary school internal examination shows that students in Awka South perform poor especially in Mathematics. In education process, this subject is compulsory for students who may wish to gain admission into Nigerian Universities.

In the time past, students in Awka South studied very hard and wrote their examinations with strong belief that they can achieve academic success through dexterity and diligence. However, the narrative seems to have changed towards the opposite direction as the rate of poor academic achievement has become a major source of worry to students, parents, teachers, counsellors, researchers, examination bodies, government and the general society. Different measures have been put in place by parents, schools, counsellors, examination bodies and the government to curb the problem of poor academic achievement. Such measures include the use of corporal punishment such as flogging and cutting of grasses on students who achieved poor in school, repeating class, demotion or total expulsion for failure in examinations, while students who achieved academic success are provided with reinforcing packages such as scholarships and accelerated promotion to higher classes. Other measures taken to solve the problem of poor academic achievement among students are organization of orientation, provision of home lessons, extra-mural classes and counselling intervention services.

Unfortunately, these efforts of parents, schools, examination bodies and the government seem to have met with limited success when compared with the level of poor academic achievement recorded in the Nigerian education system. The current researchers' personal observation shows that there are some cases whereby students had to pay huge amount of money or use their bodies to settle machineries or examiners just to scale through in schools. Such negative acts instead do more harm than good to the students. Consequently, the poor academic

achievement of secondary school students has been a big problem that needs adequate empirical investigations to be solved.

The problem of this study is that, while many studies have tried to look at factors associated with students' academic achievement, not much local studies have availed their research milieu to understanding the impact of parenting styles on students' academic achievement. To close this gap, the present study examined the relationship between parenting styles and academic achievement of secondary school students in Awka South local government area.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between parenting styles and academic achievement of secondary school students in Awka South local government area. Specifically, the study determined the:

1. Relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement among secondary school students in Mathematics.
2. Relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement among secondary school students in Mathematics.
3. Relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement among secondary school students in Mathematics.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study covered the relationship between parenting styles and academic achievement of secondary school students in Awka South local government area. The independent variable is parenting styles, while the dependent variable is academic achievement. The study focused on determining the relationships that exists among the three major categories of parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian & permissive) and academic achievement using SS2 students in Awka South. Senior secondary two (SS2) students were chosen because they were not in final examination class, hence the readiness to participate in the study was very much high. The SS3 was not considered because of the stated reason, SS1 was not included in the study because they were considered not fully mature to respond to the questions in the instruments.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement among secondary school students in Mathematics?
2. What is the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement among secondary school students in Mathematics?
3. What is the relationship between permissive parenting style and academic achievement among secondary school students in Mathematics?

### **Hypothesis**

The following null hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement among secondary school students in Mathematics.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the correlation research design. Nworgu (2015) opined that this type of study seeks to establish the relationship between two or more variables. Usually, correlation studies indicate the direction and magnitude of the relationship between the variables. Egereonu (2014) also observed that the result of a correlation study is expressed in correlation coefficients, that is, the degree of relationship is expressed in numerical forms, between -1.00 to +1.00. Furthermore, primary interest can be effectively predicted from information on the values of the other variables. The correlation design is considered to be most appropriate for this study because it sought to establish the relationship among parenting styles and secondary school students' academic achievement in Awka South local government area. This study was carried out in Awka South local government area of Anambra state, Nigeria. Awka South is the capital city of Anambra State. The target population of this study consisted of all 3,130 senior secondary two (SS2) students from all public secondary schools in Awka south local government area (Source: Anambra State Post Primary School Service Commission, 2025). The sample size for the study consisted of 310 SS2 students drawn through multi-stage sampling procedure. The sample represented about 10 percent of the total population. Instrument for data collection was Parenting Style Scale (PSS) developed in India by Abdul and Abidha in 2014 but was revalidated in Nigeria by Okoro 2022. Students Examination Result Sheet is another questionnaire used, it is a record book where students' scores are recorded by their teachers. Hence, the students' scores in mathematics in their last central promotion examinations were used to represent their academic achievement scores (Source: Anambra State Post Primary School Service Commission, 2025). Parenting Style Scale (PSS) was reported to have good psychometric properties (Okoro, 2022). Abdul and Abidha (2014) obtained coefficients reliability of 0.81 and 0.83 respectively, for responsiveness and demandingness/control variables in the scale. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of reliability obtained from the Nigerian samples ranged from 0.90 to 0.86 (Okoro, 2022). Therefore, the instrument was deemed reliable enough to be adopted for this study. The researcher administered copies of the instruments through direct delivery method. The researcher with the help of four research assistants who were duly briefed about the study and what were expected of them administered copies of the instrument to the students and also retrieved the completed copies of the instrument for scoring and analysis. The data collected for this study were scored following the scoring instructions of the Parenting Style Scale instrument. All the data collected for this study were organised in tables and analysed. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyse the data collected for the study. The decision rule for judging the resulting correlation coefficients was as follows:

|                                             |   |                             |
|---------------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| No Relationship                             | = | 0.00                        |
| Very low positive or negative relationship  | = | + or – 0.01 to 0.20         |
| Low positive or negative relationship       | = | + or – 0.21 to 0.40         |
| Moderate positive or negative relationship  | = | + or – 0.44 to 0.60         |
| High positive or negative relationship      | = | + or – 0.61 to 0.80         |
| Very high positive or negative relationship | = | + or – 0.81 and above (Agu, |

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Research Question 1

What is the relationship between authoritative parenting style and students' academic achievement in mathematics in Awka South LGA?

**Table 1: Pearson r on authoritative parenting style and students' academic achievement**

| Source of Variation | N   | Authoritative style r | Achievement r | Remark                          |
|---------------------|-----|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Authoritative style | 310 | 0.00                  | 0.83          | Very high positive relationship |
| Achievement         | 310 | 0.83                  | 0.00          |                                 |

Table 1 showed that there is very high positive relationship of 0.83 between authoritative parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics.

### Research Question 2

What is the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and students' academic achievement in mathematics in Awka South LGA?

**Table 2: Pearson r on authoritarian parenting style and students' academic achievement**

| Source of Variation | N   | Authoritarian style r | Achievement r | Remark                     |
|---------------------|-----|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| Authoritarian style | 310 | 0.00                  | 0.62          | high positive relationship |
| Achievement         | 310 | 0.62                  | 0.00          |                            |

Table 2 revealed that there is high positive relationship of 0.62 between authoritarian parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics.

### Research Question 3

What is the relationship between permissive parenting style and students' academic achievement in mathematics in Awka South LGA?

**Table 3: Pearson r on permissive parenting style and students' academic achievement**

| Source of Variation | N   | Permissive style r | Achievement r | Remark                    |
|---------------------|-----|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Permissive style    | 310 | 0.00               | 0.37          | low positive relationship |
| Achievement         | 310 | 0.37               | 0.00          |                           |

Table 3 indicated that there is low positive relationship of 0.37 between permissive parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics.

### Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and students' academic achievement in mathematics.

**Table 4: Significant of Pearson r on authoritative parenting style and their students' academic achievement using probability table of r**

| N   | cal. R | Df  | Pvalue | Cal.pvalue | Remark |
|-----|--------|-----|--------|------------|--------|
| 310 | 0.83   | 309 | 0.05   | 0.00       | S      |

S = Significant

In table 4, it was observed that at 0.05 level of significance and 309df, the calculated  $r=0.84$  has pvalue 0.00 which is less than the critical pvalue 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was rejected. This signifies that there is significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and students' academic achievement in mathematics.

### Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings for this study is arranged under the following sub-headings:

#### **Relationship between Authoritative parenting style and students' Academic achievement in Mathematics**

The result of the study revealed that there is very high positive significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and the students' academic achievement in mathematics. This finding indicated that the type of parenting style used by parents in raising their children at home has great impact on the students' level of academic achievement. It also showed that students raised by authoritative parents are more likely to obtain good grades in mathematics examinations. This finding is in line with the report by previous researchers (Nijhof and Engels, 2017; Olusakin and Ngbor, 2019; Adeleke, 2020) who concluded that there is very high positive significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and students' academic achievement.

#### **Relationship between Authoritarian parenting style and students' Academic achievement in Mathematics**

Another finding of this study showed that there is high positive significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics in Awka South. This finding signifies that students from authoritarian parents are also likely to obtain good grades in mathematics examinations than those who are from permissive homes. This finding of the study agreed with the previous findings by (Ong, 2018; Younesian, 2021) who reported that there is significant correlation between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement. Zhang (2021) observed that authoritarian parents exhibit low responsiveness and they are highly demanding.

#### **Relationship between Permissive parenting style and students' Academic achievement in Mathematics**

Finally, another finding of this study revealed that there is low positive relationship between permissive parenting style and students' academic achievement in mathematics. This showed that although permissive parenting style correlated with students' academic achievement in mathematics, the correlation is low. This means the impact of permissive parents on their children's academic achievement is negligible. It equally means that students from permissive parents are likely to achieve poor grades in their mathematics examinations. This finding of this study supported the previous findings by (Kremers, Brug, De- Vries and Engels, 2013;

Nijhof and Engels, 2017; Obi, 2021) who found out in their studies that permissive parenting style has low correlation with academic achievement.

### **Summary of Findings**

Findings of the study were summarized as follows:

1. There is very high positive relationship of 0.83 between authoritative parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics.
2. There is high positive relationship of 0.62 between authoritarian parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics.
3. There is low positive relationship of 0.37 between permissive parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics.
4. There is significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and secondary school students' academic achievement in mathematics.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study summarized above, the researcher concluded that authoritative parenting style is a very high positive significant correlate of secondary school students' academic achievement in Mathematics. The study also concluded that authoritarian parenting style is a high positive significant correlate of secondary school students' academic achievement in Mathematics, while permissive parenting style is a low positive significant correlate of secondary school students' academic achievement in Mathematics.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Since authoritative parenting style is highly related to students' academic achievement in mathematics, parents should try to adopt this style of parenting so as to enable their children to achieve high grades in mathematics examinations.
2. Counsellors should fashion out counselling programmes aimed at encouraging parents to adopt authoritative parenting style on their children so as to facilitate high academic achievement among students.
3. Counsellors, government, teachers and other stakeholders should come up with adequate sensitization programmes to discourage the use of permissive parenting style and encourage the adoption of authoritative parenting style by parents.

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