



ASSESSMENT OF THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF INADEQUATE PARENTING OF STUDENTS IN PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GWAGWALADA AREA COUNCIL, FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study was aimed at assessing the perception of students in the causes and effects of inadequate parenting of students of public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria. The study used a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 3,600 students from the 12 public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. The sample of the study was 720 (20%) public junior secondary school students selected from 6 sampled public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. 120 public junior secondary school students were sampled from each of the 6 sampled schools through a simple random sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection in the study was the researchers' self-designed questionnaire titled, "Causes and Effects of Inadequate Parenting of Students Questionnaire (CEIPSQ)". The instrument was validated by experts in Educational Psychology, Measurement and Evaluation. The instrument was pilot-tested on 40 students from two public junior secondary schools in Kwali Area Council, FCT, Abuja that were not part of the study and a reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained using the split half method of reliability. Two research questions guided the study, which were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages. The result of the findings showed that the respondents are aware of the existence of the causes of inadequate parenting stated in this study, such as parents' low sensitivity to child feelings; child's neglect; parents not setting rules and regulations; reprimanding the child excessively; inconsistent parenting; and being a teen parent, among others. The study recommended, among others, that the government, in collaboration with school authorities, should organize sensitization workshops or seminars for parents while experts are invited to speak on the causes of inadequate parenting on topical issues such as child's upbringing/parenting, health and socio-economic matters. The knowledge gained will help parents curb the identified causes of inadequate parenting of their children.

Keywords: assessments, causes and effects, inadequate parenting

Introduction

Globally, it is generally believed that the best place for a child to grow up is with the mother and father. In Nigeria's context, it extends possibly to grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins for better parenting and inculcation of cultural values. The urge to make every citizen educated in Nigeria has made it compulsory for the Federal Government through the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013) to declare free education for everyone. The National Policy on



Education (FGN, 2013) stipulates that “access to education is a right for all Nigerian children regardless of gender, religion and disability”. Education would help to improve our wealth, our living conditions and the way of producing our goals and services. It will also help in reducing socio-economic ills that plague the country to the high illiteracy level.

Parenting is both a biological and social process, the training given to a child to a large extent determines his or her self-concept. The parenting style of an individual also determines how the child will adjust to society emotionally. There are different styles of parenting being used which in one way or the other influence the children in the society. The parenting styles help in determining how an individual sees ‘his’ or ‘her’ physical, social and psychological aspiration and emotional adjustment in the society in which he or she lives. Physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse are the most serious and damaging behaviour traits that most of us equate with inadequate or bad parenting which needs urgent attention.

According to Gerlach (2013), the key role of a child’s family is to raise the young person in a healthy manner as possible. A parent must provide the child with safe, secure, nurturing, and loving as well as support the child’s environment as one that allows the child to develop the knowledge, values, attitude and behaviour necessary to become an adult, making a productive contribution to self, family, community and the world at large (Nwachi, 2014). It is parenting that will help to achieve all these.

Parenting is the role of both parents to enforce the tenets of sound values for effective family life, proper fitting in society and the economic growth of society (Ezeocha, 2015). Parenting is a term that summarizes the behaviour of a person usually a mother or father in the process of raising a child given to the family. According to Alao (2015); and Choji and Dakur (2017) parenting is the term summarizing a set of behaviours involved across life, in the reactions among organisms that are usually the same and typically members of different cohorts. Parenting interaction provides resources across the generational groups and functions regarding domains of individual survival reproduction nature and socialization. Parenting is a complex process involving much more than a mother or father providing food and succour to an infant or child. Bakari (2015) opined that parenting involves the bio-directional relationship between members of two or more generations and can extend through all major parts of the respective life spans of these groups which may engage all institutions within a culture comprising education, economic, political and design settings which the group left behind.

Ekwukoma and Nkemdilim (2014) opined that the home environment has a powerful effect on what children learn, not only in school but also outside school. This environment is considered more powerful than parent’s income and education in influencing what children learn in the first six years of life. The strongest reason why parental influence is so strong is that children spend more than ninety percent of their time from infancy through childhood under the influence of their parents. Parents are the first and most vital teacher of a child. Children look to parents to define what boundaries are and the consequences that can occur if the child crosses the boundaries (Yero, 2017). Adequate or effective parenting is when parents do perform several



roles in the home about the children these could be economic, social or psychological. The parents have to interact with their children from birth through adolescence to adulthood. Parents participate in many areas which are of concern to the child such as the choice of school to attend and the nature of education to acquire (White and Woollett, 2013). The parents in some cases also participate in the choice of subjects, friends to associate with, careers and marital partners.

It is a dream of a parent to have his/her child grow up into a responsible person. Every parent wishes the best for his/her child but sometimes inadequate parenting gets in the way of that goal. Inadequate parenting has many negative effects on the life of a child, so it is paramount for every parent to evaluate their parenting skills to know the effects they have on their child. Some causes of inadequate parenting skills include: being a teen parent and parents that have a substance abuse problem (Alao, 2015). Alao (2015) further stated that teen parents might have a hard time developing parenting skills, as they may not have the emotional or financial support to parent effectively. Inadequate parenting tends to lead to several problems in children such as the inability to keep friendships and relationships; poor academic performance in school; and depression, truancy, and withdrawal in school.

According to Choji and Dakur (2017) and Global Support for Kids Initiative (2022), the following are causes of inadequate parenting of school children: poverty of parents; drug abuse; mental disorders of parents, withholding affection; comparing your child with other children; lack of support; unrealistic expectations of parents from their child; psychological abuse; blended family conflicts; inconsistent parenting; low sensitivity to the child's feelings; child neglect; not setting rules; physical health problems of parents; over-reprimanding the child, among others. The causes of inadequate parenting of students include: when a parent withholding affection; all advice; no encouragement; lack of support; not setting rules; comparing your child; not being proud of his or her achievements; disciplining the child in front of everyone; reprimanding the child too much among others (Queenoleen, 2020). Similarly, Gerlach (2013) pointed out that children without positive parenting are more at risk for their relationship troubles, depression, anxiety and aggression among other negative outcomes. Inadequate parenting is far more pervasive and persistent than AIDS. Gerlach (2013) further added that inadequate parenting promotes diseases and premature death and days and nights miserable for millions, which distracts many from attending to their goals and realizing their full potential. The epidemic of inadequate parenting which passed from one generation to subsequent generations creates major national challenges (Folayan, 2018).

Working parents who would have had the time after their day's work (especially mothers) may be too busy in the kitchen preparing the family meals and will be too tired to look at the children's schoolwork. This lack of attention kills motivation and interest in children's education and does not create an incentive to learn. For those grown-up children who are in post-primary schools and higher institutions of learning, the situation aggravates during the holidays when they will be at home watching the television, reading all sorts of magazines, being with peer groups discussing evil things and watching all kinds of pornographic films. Television programmes are meant to create awareness and educate the public about the nation's aspirations,



cultures, policies and direction but on the contrary, programmes promoting violence and its associated crimes such as smuggling, sexual cruelty, assassinations, arm-robbery, sadistic and senseless acts on children are usually shown at odd hours (Ogunmakin, 2018).

According to White and Woollett (2012), inadequate parenting has the following effects on students: inability to keep friendships and relationships; depression which may sometimes lead to suicide; poor achievement in school; delinquency; increased aggression; affectionless psychopathic (inability to show affection or concern for others); low self-confidence; anxiety; no guilt for anti-social behaviour, among others. The Global Support for Kids Initiative (2023) pointed out the following effects of inadequate parenting: it promotes diseases and premature and premature death; it promotes false self-perception which naturally leads to premature marriage and child conception; lack of adequate attention of parents to their children; it leads to child's abuse; and makes the child to be absent from school most of the times which may later result in dropping out-of-school among others. Odebunmi (2018) viewed that student values their education when they see the interest shown by their parents. This not only leads to higher academic performance but also to better attendance and improved behaviours at home and school. When school and home work together collaboratively using a competent approach to education, it can make a huge difference in a student's academic achievement.

Inadequate parenting has been identified as a major problem responsible for the poor academic performance of school children. Many parents believe that the best way they groom their children, especially adolescents by being oppressive, authoritative and autocratic. In light of these, the study tends to assess the causes and effects of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered in this study:

1. What are the causes of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria?
2. What are the effects of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria?

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 3,600 students from 12 public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The sample of the study was 720 (20%) junior secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. 120 junior secondary school students were sampled from each of the 6 sampled schools. The schools and students were sampled through a simple random sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection in the study was the researchers' self-designed questionnaire titled "Causes and Effects of Inadequate Parenting of Students' Questionnaire (CEIPSQ)". The questionnaire was divided into three sections, A, B and C. Section A sought information from the personal data of the respondents. Sections B and C contain 20 items (10 items for each of them) seeking students' responses on their perception of



the causes and effects of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. Sections B and C elicited responses on respondents' views on options of "Agreed" and "Disagreed". The instrument was pilot-tested on 40 students from 2 public junior secondary schools in Kwali Area Council, FCT, Abuja that were not part of the study and a reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained using the split half method of reliability. Statistical analysis used to analyze the research questions were frequency and percentage.

Results

Research Question One: What are the causes of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria?

Table 1: *Causes of Inadequate Parenting of Students in JSS in Gwagwalada Area Council*

S/N	Statements	Agree		Disagree		Total	%
		F	%	F	%		
1	The inability of parents to care for children due to poverty	270	37.5	450	62.5	720	100
2	Low sensitivity to the child's feelings by parents	405	56.3	315	43.7	720	100
3	Children neglect by parents	540	75.0	180	25.0	720	100
4	Not setting rules and regulations by parents	590	81.9	130	18.1	720	100
5	Reprimanding the child excessively by parents	575	79.9	145	20.1	720	100
6	Physical health problems of the parents.	540	75.0	189	25.0	720	100
7	Inconsistent parenting	462	64.2	258	35.8	720	100
8	Being a teen parent	610	84.7	110	15.3	720	100
9	Parents having a substance abuse problem	583	81.0	137	19.0	720	100
10	Persistent family conflicts	462	64.2	258	35.8	720	100

The results of findings in Table 1 indicate that respondents on items number 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 agreed that: low sensitivity to the child's feelings; child's neglect; not setting rules and regulations; reprimanding the child excessively; physical health problem of the parents; inconsistent parenting; being a teen parent; parents having a substance abuse problems; and persistent family conflicts are the causes of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria with the highest percentage scores of 56.3; 75.0; 81.9; 79.9; 75.0; 64.2; 84.7; 81.0 and 64.2 respectively. However, respondents on item number 1 disagreed that the inability of parents to care for their children due to poverty is one of the causes of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria with the highest percentage score of 62.5.



Research Question Two: What are the effects of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria?

Table 2: *Effects of Inadequate Parenting of Students in JSS in Gwagwalada Area Council*

S/N	Statements	Agree		Disagree		Total	%
		F	%	F	%		
1	It causes psychological disorders in the child	644	89.4	76	10.6	720	100
2	The inability of the student to have long and lasting friendships and relationships	405	56.3	315	43.7	720	100
3	It results in depression and Low self-esteem of the student	682	94.7	38	5.3	720	100
4	It makes the student prone to criminal behaviours	660	91.7	60	8.3	720	100
5	Poor parenting leads to poor academic performance in school	640	88.9	80	11.1	720	100
6	Students exposed to inadequate. parenting are more likely to persistently absent or withdraw from school	590	81.9	130	18.1	720	100
7	It makes the student feel no guilty or anti-social behaviours	660	91.7	60	8.3	720	100
8	The inability of the student to show affection or concern for others	180	25.0	540	75.0	720	100
9	Increased aggression in the student	170	23.6	550	76.4	720	100
10	It makes the student to excessively and persistently worry and fear about everyday worry situations (anxiety)	650	90.3	70	9.7	720	100

Results of findings in Table 2 showed that respondents on items number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10 agreed that: psychological disorder to the child; inability of the student (child) to have long and lasting friendships and relationships; depression and low esteem of the student; student prone to criminal behaviours; poor academic performance in school; persistent absent or withdrawal from school; student's feeling no guilty of anti-social behaviours; and excessive and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations (anxiety) are effects of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools, FCT, Abuja with highest percentage scores of 89.4; 56.3; 94.7; 91.7; 88.9; 81.9; 91.7 and 90.3 respectively. However, results also showed that respondents on items number 8 and 9 disagreed that the inability of the student to show affection or concern for others; and increased aggression in the student is not an effect of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja with highest percentage scores of 75.0 and 76.4 respectively.

Discussion

The findings of research one attempted to investigate the causes of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The result in Table one indicated that the causes of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja include: parents' low sensitivity to the child's feelings; child's neglect; parents not setting rules and regulations; reprimanding the child excessively; physical health problem of the parents; inconsistent parenting; being a teen parent; parents having a substance abuse problem; and persistent family conflicts. The finding of this study is in tandem with the findings of Choji and Dakur (2017) and



Global Support Kids Initiative (2022) who reported that parents' poverty; parents' involvement in drug abuse; parents' mental disorders; blended family conflicts; low sensitivity to child's feelings; child neglect; and excessive reprimand of the child, among others are some of the causes of inadequate parenting of students in learning. However, the result of the findings showed that: the inability of parents to care for their due to poverty is not one of the causes of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. This finding disagreed with the finding of Yero (2017) who stated that parents' low economic status is a causal factor influencing students' moral upbringing and academic achievement in school.

The findings of research question two attempted to assess the effects of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. The result in Table two revealed the effects of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, this comprised psychological disorder of the child; the inability of the student (child) to have long and lasting friendships and relationships; depression and low esteem of the student; student prone to criminal behaviours; poor academic performance in school; persistent absent or withdrawal from school; student's feeling no guilty of anti-social behaviours; and excessive and persistent worry and fear about everyday situation (anxiety). The findings of this study supported the findings of Choji and Dakur (2012); White and Woollett (2013); Odebunmi (2018) and Global Support for Kids Initiative (2023) who opined that, the inability of a child to retain friendships and relationships; anxiety; depression; delinquency; child's prone to criminal acts; low self-confidence; child's truancy and drop-out from school; and poor students' performance in school among others are some of the effects of inadequate parenting of children. However, the result of findings in Table two also showed that: the inability of students to show affection or concern for others; and increased aggression in the students were not considered as effects of inadequate parenting of students in public junior secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. This finding contradicts the findings of White and Woollett (2013) who opined that lack of affection and concern for others and aggression in the child are some of the effects of inadequate parenting of school children.

Conclusion

Parents' low sensitivity to the child's feelings; child's neglect; parent not setting rules and regulations; reprimanding the child excessively; physical health challenge of parents; inconsistent parenting; being a teen parent; parents having a substance abuse problem; and persistent family conflicts are considered to be causes of inadequate parenting of students. In addition, the psychological disorder of the child; inability of the student (child) to have long and lasting friendships and relationships; depression and low esteem of the student; student prone to criminal behaviours; poor academic performance in school; persistent absence or withdrawal from school; student's feeling no guilty of anti-social behaviours and persistent worry and fear (anxiety) are effects of inadequate parenting of students.



Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that:

1. The government in collaboration with school authorities should organize sensitization workshops or seminars for parents while experts are invited to speak on the causes of inadequate parenting on topical issues such as child's upbringing/parenting, health and socio-economic matters among others. The knowledge gained will help parents curb the identified causes of inadequate parenting of their children.
2. The government in collaboration with school authorities should organize sensitization workshops or seminars for parents and students while experts are invited to speak on the effects of inadequate parenting on topical issues such as mental disorders, depression, and poor social interaction among other students, delinquency behaviours among students, poor students' learning motivation and academic performance among others. The knowledge gained will assist them in knowing and overcoming the identified effects of inadequate parenting that may pose to individuals, the family and the society at large.

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