

## Influence of parental attitudes towards basic education students academic achievements and motivation in basic science in Anambra state

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**Abstract:** A research on the influence of parental attitude towards students' motivation and academic achievement in Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. Four research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive research survey design. The population used was 2,604 students from Upper Basic 8. The sample size used is 160 basic science students. The method of reliability is Cronbach's alpha. The instrument used was a structured questionnaire, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.91. The method of analysis used was the arithmetic mean. The study found that parental attitudes, such as encouraging children to excel academically, attending school events, providing support during academic struggles, discussing the importance of education, praising and reinforcing good academic performance, supplying educational materials, ensuring regular school attendance, dismissing their efforts in school, showing a lack of interest in children's academic performance, blaming them for poor results without offering help, and negatively comparing their performance with other students, significantly influence students' academic achievement and motivation. The study's findings recommend that schools and educational authorities should implement regular workshops and seminars to educate parents on the importance of their attitudes and involvement in their children's academic journey. Educational policymakers should formulate policies that encourage or require schools to develop programmes for increased parental involvement.

**Keywords:** Academic performance, children, motivation

**Abstrak:** Penelitian tentang pengaruh sikap orangtua terhadap motivasi dan prestasi akademik siswa di Awka South Local Government Area, Anambra State. Empat pertanyaan penelitian memandu penelitian ini. Penelitian ini mengadopsi desain survei penelitian deskriptif. Populasi yang digunakan adalah 2.604 siswa dari Upper Basic 8. Ukuran sampel yang digunakan adalah 160 siswa sains dasar. Metode reliabilitas adalah alpha Cronbach. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah kuesioner terstruktur, yang menghasilkan koefisien reliabilitas sebesar 0,91. Metode analisis yang digunakan adalah rata-rata aritmatika. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa sikap orangtua, seperti mendorong anak-anak untuk berprestasi secara akademis, menghadiri acara sekolah, memberikan dukungan selama kesulitan akademis, membahas pentingnya pendidikan, memuji dan memperkuat kinerja akademis yang baik, menyediakan materi pendidikan, memastikan kehadiran sekolah secara teratur, mengabaikan upaya mereka di sekolah, menunjukkan kurangnya minat pada kinerja akademis anak-anak, menyalahkan mereka atas hasil yang buruk tanpa menawarkan bantuan, dan membandingkan kinerja mereka secara negatif dengan siswa lain, secara signifikan memengaruhi prestasi dan motivasi akademik siswa. Temuan studi ini merekomendasikan agar sekolah dan otoritas pendidikan menyelenggarakan lokakarya dan seminar rutin untuk mendidik orang tua tentang pentingnya sikap dan keterlibatan mereka dalam perjalanan akademis anak-anak mereka. Para pembuat kebijakan pendidikan harus merumuskan kebijakan yang mendorong atau mengharuskan sekolah mengembangkan program untuk meningkatkan keterlibatan orang tua.

**Kata kunci:** Prestasi akademik, anak-anak, motivasi

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is a foundation element of human development and societal progress. It is often described as a complex process involving the development of cognitive, moral and social capacities (Achor et al., 2022; Bantas et al., 2024; Bhure et al., 2021; Nwafor et al., 2023). Chazan (2022) opined that education is the deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to transmit, provoke or acquire knowledge, values, attitudes, skills or sensibilities as well as any learning that results from the effort. Education could either be formal or non-formal. Johnson and Majewska (2022) provided a much-cited definition of formal education as being “the institutionalized, chronologically graded and hierarchically structure system, spanning lower primary school and the upper reaches of the university. Thus Education is very crucial in the society and can be offered in schools as science education in secondary and tertiary institutions.

Science Education is the field that focuses on communicating scientific knowledge to people that are not typically members of the scientific community (Njoku & Edori, 2022). It is a field that focus on teaching and learning science concepts and processes. It focuses on understanding fundamental principle through observation, experimentation, and critical thinking. Nasir et al. (2024) opined that science education is an integrated field of study which considers both the subject matter of science disciplines such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Agriculture, etc. as well as the processes involved in the learning and teaching of science. However, it encompasses the instructions of basic science subject.

Basic Science formerly known as Integrated Science offers a holistic approach to understanding scientific concepts (Christian-Ike & Okoli, 2021; Musa et al., 2021). It is a branch of discipline focused on structured observation and experimentation (Christian-Ike et al., 2024). Basic Science is essential as it forms the bedrock of all scientific knowledge and understanding. It encompasses the fundamental concepts of biology, chemistry, physics, and earth science, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the natural world. Basic Science is crucial because it develops critical thinking, problem solving, curiosity and innovation. This supports constructivist principles where learner-centered environment is created and students engage with real-world problems, conduct investigations, and reflect on outcomes. This experiential process supports the development of both scientific knowledge and 21st-century skills. In Nigeria, Basic Science bridges the gap between theory and practice, allowing students as early from basic classes to apply scientific principles to real-world problems. This holistic approach to education not only prepares students for future scientific endeavors and cultivates a scientifically literate society but also encourages students' motivation to science learning.

Student motivation refers to the internal and external factors that stimulate students' desire and persistent to learn, achieve, and succeed in their academic endeavors. Motivation can significantly impact students' engagement, effort, and performance in educational settings. The two main categories of student motivation are intrinsic and extrinsic. Nasir et al. (2023), and Sirait et al. (2022) highlights that intrinsic motivation plays a significant role in academic success. Students who are intrinsically motivated tend to engage more deeply with the material and exhibit higher levels of perseverance and achievement. Furthermore, Augustyniak et al. (2016), Aydin et al. (2014), and Harso et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of extrinsic motivation, such as rewards, grades, and parental expectations, in driving students' academic performance. While extrinsic factors can boost motivation in the

short term, combining them with strategies that foster intrinsic motivation leads to more sustainable academic achievement.

Academic achievement tells the level to which a student has attained their educational goals, which are typically measured through assessments such as, grades, standardized test scores, and other academic evaluations. In the opinion of Setyantoko et al., (2023), and Suleiman (2023), academic achievement refers to the performance results that show how well an individual has met particular objectives targeted within educational settings such as school, college and university. It is the outcome of instruction (Nasir et al., 2020; Ufommadu & Okoli, 2019). Academic achievement is determined through test taking or examination. But it had been observed that students' academic achievement has been unsatisfactory according to researchers' report (Christian-Ike et al., 2024; Nasir et al., 2024). Many researchers had attributed the students' academic challenge to poor methodology, lack of infrastructures among others but it is pertinent to investigate if students' achievement and motivation towards Basic Science subject could be as a result of Parental attitudes.

Parental attitudes refer to the overall approach and mindset that's parents adopt in raising their children (Bodur & Aktan, 2021). Parental attitudes include the beliefs, values, and emotions that parents hold about their child's education and learning. These attitudes shape how parents interact with their children, which in turn affects their motivation and academic achievement. According to Hornby and Blackwell (2018), Parental attitude is the parents' perceptions, expectation, and involvement in their children's education, which plays a role in shaping students' academic motivation and achievement. Parental attitudes towards school and the learning process are a wide-ranging factor that naturally affects the support they provide for students, the connections they build with school management and how they interact with teachers (Bodur & Aktan, 2021). Parental attitude has over time affected or rather influenced the achievement or motivation of the student academically. Parental attitudes could either be positive or negative

Aliero et al. (2022) argued that a positive parental attitude toward education creates a support system for children, which is especially crucial when they encounter academic difficulties or social or extracurricular challenges. Furthermore, in their research they suggested that demonstrating a positive attitude involves consistent participation in a child's school activities and providing proper care for their education and behaviour. This involvement helps children value education and recognize the purpose behind their efforts. Wang and Sheikh-Khalil (2014) stated that supportive parental attitudes significantly enhance students' academic engagement and success. Children with positive parents tend to have higher self-esteem, better discipline, stronger motivation and achieve superior academic results.

Negative parental attitudes, including criticism and indifference, negatively impact a child's motivation and academic outcomes. Cheung and Pomerantz (2015) "Negative parental attitudes can significantly decrease children's academic motivation and performance." Children who perceive their parents as unsupportive often experience reduced motivation and lower academic performance. Be it positive or negative parental attitude, either way parents attitude affects students' academic achievement and motivation. Though researches have been made in this line by different authors but the

study seek to investigate on Parental attitude and its influence on student academic achievement and motivation in Awka South LGA of Anambra State.

This study aims to investigate on the influence of parental attitude towards students' motivation and academic achievement. Specifically, this study sought to investigate:

1. The positive parental attitudes on students' motivation in basic science in Awka South LGA of Anambra State
2. The positive parental attitude on students' academic achievement in basic science in Awka South LGA of Anambra State
3. The negative parental attitudes on students' motivation in basic science in Awka South LGA of Anambra State
4. The negative parental attitude on students' academic achievement in basic science in Awka South LGA of Anambra State

The following research questions guided this study.

1. What is the influence of positive parental attitude on student motivation in Awka South LGA?
2. What is the influence of positive parental attitude on student academic achievement in Awka South LGA?
3. What is the influence of negative parental attitude on students' motivation in Awka South LGA?
4. What is the influence of negative parental attitude on student academic achievement in Awka South LGA?

## **METHOD**

This research adopted a descriptive survey design. This design is suitable to this study because the opinion of the respondent will be collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study was conducted in Awka South LGA. The population consisted of 2,604 Basic 8 (JSS 2) students from 19 Public Secondary schools in the Area. The sample size was 160 basic science students of upper basic 8 selected using multi-stage sampling technique. 8 secondary schools were randomly selected. Using disproportionate sampling technique, 20 students were selected from the selected schools. The decision of the researchers to use disproportionate sampling technique is to give the selected schools equal chances irrespective of their individual tutorial population. The respondents are 160 in total. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Influence of parental attitude towards students' motivation and academic achievement" (IPATSMMAA) developed by the researchers. The questionnaire had two sections; Section A gathered biographic information about the respondents while section B consists of 28 items arranged according to the research questions. Responses were measured on a four-point scale; Strongly Agree (SA); Agree(A); Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) for all research questions. The instrument was validated by three experts from Faculty of Education. The researchers personally distributed copies of the questionnaires to the respondents in their schools. The collected data were analyzed using the arithmetic mean to address the research questions. However, a criterion mean of 2.50 was set as the decision benchmark; any mean score of 2.50 or above indicated agreement while scores below 2.49 indicated disagreement.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result in Table 1 reveals that all the items has mean scores of 3.71, 3.59, 3.26, 3.29, 2.89 and 3.83 respectively . Since the mean score were above the mean point of 2.50, it indicates agreement. Thus, the result reveals that positive parental attitude such as encouraging students to do well in school, praising them when they do well, asking about their academic progress, attending school events, offering support or advice when you notice them struggling with school works and always talking to them about the importance of education will influence the motivation of students in Awka South LGA. The result is in cognizance with the study of Ogunleye (2018) stating that Parental encouragement plays a critical role in fostering a positive learning environment, which significantly enhances students' motivation to excel academically. When parents regularly encourage their children, it cultivates a determined attitude towards academic success. In support of the above findings Ige (2016) also stated that praise from parents for academic achievements serves as an effective reinforcement mechanism, boosting students' self-esteem and motivating them to maintain or improve their academic achievement.

Table 1. The influence of positive parental attitude on student motivation

No	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1.	My parents encourage me to do well in your studies	3.71	0.507	Agree
2.	My parents praise me when I perform well in school	3.50	0.541	Agree
3.	My parents often do ask me about my academic progress	3.26	0.584	Agree
4.	My parents do show interest in attending my school event (e.g., PTA meetings, inter-house sports etc)	3.29	0.547	Agree
5.	When I am struggling with my school work, my parents often offer support or advice	2.89	0.658	Agree
6.	My parent always talks to me about the importance of education for my future	3.83	0.453	Agree
Mean Cluster		3.41	0.548	Agree

Table 2. The influence of positive parental attitude on student academic achievement

No	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
7.	My parents do ask me for my exam results and we often discuss them	3.41	0.593	Agree
8.	My parents encourage me to aim for higher grades	3.88	0.395	Agree
9.	My parents react very bad if I perform poorly academically.	3.94	0.244	Agree
10.	When exam is approaching my parents will encourage me to make sure I am well prepared for the exam.	3.82	0.464	Agree
11.	My parent provides me with the materials (text books, books etc.) needed for my studies.	3.07	0.684	Agree
12.	My parents make sure I attend school regularly and punctually too.	3.62	0.734	Agree
Mean Cluster		3.62	0.519	Agree

The result in Table 2 shows that items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 with mean score 3.41, 3.88, 3.94, 3.82, 3.07 and 3.62 respectively were all accepted since their mean score were above the mean cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that the cluster mean of 3.62 also shows that, parents asking their children for their exam results and discussing it with them, parents encouraging their children to aim for higher grades, parents encouraging their children to prepare for exams when it's approaching, among others are positive parental attitude that influences students' academic achievement in Awka South LGA. The findings of the study showed that the perceived influence of positive parental attitude on student academic achievement were high as they agreed that parents asking their children for exam result and discuss it with them, parents reacting very bad when their children perform poorly academically, parents encouraging their children to be adequately prepared when exams approaching, parents providing educational materials and parents making sure children are school regularly and punctually, are positive attitude that influence student's academic achievement. This result is in line with the findings of Adeyemi et al. (2018), Akinwumi and Falemu (2024) who explained that when parents actively ask about their children's exam results, it shows concern for their academic progress, which positively impacts students' performance by motivating them to take their studies more seriously. In support of the above findings, Ojo (2020) added that the role of parents in encouraging children to prepare for exams, noting that this proactive attitude helps students adopt effective study habits and boosts their confidence during exams, leading to better academic outcomes.

Table 3. The influence of negative parental attitude on students' motivation

No	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
13.	My parents usually compare my academic achievement with that of other students especially my neighbors in a negative way.	3.80	0.439	Agree
14.	My parents often dismiss my efforts in school, even when I put in all the hard works and try my best.	3.69	0.645	Agree
15.	My parents punish me harshly for performing poorly academically	2.87	0.735	Agree
16.	My parents show little or no interest in my school works or academic progress	2.44	0.933	Agree
17.	My parent discourages me from extracurricular activities that I have picked up interest in	2.58	0.801	Agree
18.	My parent always blames me for my poor performance and yet don't offer help or guidance	1.89	0.856	Disagree
	Mean Cluster	2.89	0.735	Agree

The result in Table 3 shows that item 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 with the mean score of 3.80, 3.69, 2.87, 2.44 and 2.58 respectively were all accepted since their mean score were above the mean cut-off point of 2.50 while item 18 with the mean score of 1.89 was rejected as it has a mean score below 2.50. The Mean Cluster of 2.89 implies that parents comparing their child's academic achievement with other student in a negative way, parents often

dismiss their child's effort in school, parents showing little or no interest in their child's school works, among other negative attitude from parents, influences student motivation in Awka South LGA. This result aligns with the finding of Adetola (2016) who noted that parents who often dismiss their children's efforts in school, regardless of whether the results are good or not, tend to lower the child's motivation to strive for better performance. When children feel that their efforts are not valued, they may lose interest in academic pursuits. In support of the above finding, Arikewuyo and Babatunde (2020) argued that, when parents show little or no interest in their children's academic progress, it sends a message that education is not important. This lack of involvement can significantly reduce students' motivation to engage with their schoolwork, as they do not feel supported or encouraged.

Table 4. The influence of negative parental attitude on student academic achievement

No	Item	Mean	SD	Decision
19.	My parent ignores my academic achievement and down play their importance	2.22	0.647	Disagree
20.	My parent often discourages me from seeking help with difficult subjects.	1.75	0.784	Disagree
21.	My parent refuses to provide the necessary materials (books, text books) for school work.	1.93	0.585	Disagree
22.	My parents make me feel achieving more academically isn't important	1.51	0.676	Disagree
23.	My parents limit my study time or academic activities because they don't prioritize my education	1.80	0.433	Disagree
24	My parent makes negative remarks about my ability to succeed in school	1.93	0.305	Disagree
Mean Cluster		1.86	0.572	Disagree

The result from table 4 shows that item 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 with the mean score of 2.22, 1.75, 1.93, 1.51, 1.80 and 1.93 were all rejected as their mean score below 2.50. The mean cluster of 1.86 implies that these parental attitude in item 19, 20 ,21, 22, 23, and 24 don't influence student academic achievement in Awka South LGA. This result is not in line with the findings of Boonk et al. (2022), Fan and Williams (2010), and Gonida and Urdan (2007) who stated that when parents ignore their children's academic achievements, it sends a signal that education is not valued or celebrated, leading to a decline in students' motivation and academic performance. Children who feel their efforts are overlooked may lose interest in striving for better outcomes. In support, Okoye (2021) argued that parents who discourage children from seeking help in different subjects limit the students' ability to overcome academic challenges. Such discouragement fosters a sense of helplessness, as students may struggle alone without the necessary support, negatively impacting their overall academic achievement.

The findings of the study reveal that positive parental attitudes such as encouraging students to do well in school, praising them for academic success, inquiring about their academic progress, attending school events, and offering support influence students' motivation. Parents who encourage their children to prepare for examinations and who

request their children's exam results also demonstrate positive attitudes that contribute to improved academic achievement. Conversely, parents who compare their children's academic performance negatively with that of others or who ignore their children's academic outcomes exhibit negative parental attitudes. Such behaviors do not motivate students and may, in fact, hinder excellent academic achievement.

## CONCLUSION

The study is on the influence of parental attitude towards students' motivation and academic achievement on Basic Science student in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The findings suggest positive parental attitude like encouraging children to do well academically, attending school event, showing support when they are academically struggling, talking to them on the importance of education, praise and reinforce them when they perform well academically, provide academic material for their children, making sure they attend school regularly and negative parental attitude like dismissing their effort in school, not showing interest in children's academic performance, always blaming them for poor academic performance even when you didn't offer help and comparing their academic performance with other student negatively. This attitude either motivate student positively and gear their willingness to achieve more academically or not motivate them to do more academically.

Recommendations were made based on findings:

1. Schools and educational authorities should implement regular workshops and seminars to educate on the attitudes and involvement of parents on their children's academic journey.
2. Educational policymakers should formulate policies that encourage or require schools to develop programs for increased parental involvement.
3. Schools should provide additional support for students whose parents exhibit negative attitudes toward education.
4. Public awareness campaigns through traditional and social media could help to educate the broader community about the impact of parental attitudes on students' academic success.

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