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An Examination of Parental Involvement in Homework and Implication for Adult Education (Pp 451-469)

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Abstract

Homework, as an instructional adjunct, has been found by educational psychologists to improve primary school pupils study habits, time management, learning responsibility, amongst others. Accordingly, parents are being encouraged to guide their children whenever homework tasks are assigned by class teachers. This study therefore examined the contribution of parents' profile (demographic variables) to their involvement in children's homework in Cross River State, (CRS) Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. 622 out of 2,898 parents whose children are attending twelve heavily populated primary schools in three of the eighteen Local Government areas in CRS were randomly sampled for investigation. A three-

part questionnaire, with reliability co-efficient of 0.89, was administered to the subjects, of whom 523 were accessed. The study employed descriptive and the independent t- test analytical statistics. The results showed that parents are not participating actively in helping children with their homework. Only one out of ten possible areas of assistance was consistently mentioned. Also, the study proposition that parental profile does not influence their involvement in homework was not wholly accepted. Four variables (age, education, family size and income) out of ten were significant. Adult education intervention strategies were recommended to change the status quo. Using churches and PTA meetings to create awareness amongst parents is one of the strategies.

Key Words: Parents Involvement, Homework, Profile, Adult Education

Introduction

Homework is defined as out-of-class tasks assigned to students as an extension or elaboration of class work (National Parents Teachers Association (NPTA) & National Education Association (NEA), 2008). This is similar to Cooper's (1989) view of homework as tasks carried out during non-school hours. Three types of homework have been identified: practice, preparation, and extension. Practice assignments involve giving pupils tasks to help reinforce the new lesson, or internalize a newly acquired skill of solving problem(s). Preparation assignments are tasks meant to prepare pupils for new lesson or activities the next day, while extension assignments are projects or term papers that parallel class work and students must apply previous learning to complete the tasks which take longer time than others (NPTA & NEA, 2008; Pytel, 2007).

The essence of homework is to reduce some of the amount of work to be done by channeling some of the work to after school activities (Ohuche and Akeju, 1988). This is particularly true where the time allotted for the subject may not be enough to treat the topic. It offers children the opportunity to carry out independent and group activities. It also gives them the chance to add depth and breadth to a topic by exploring at length subjects that are of interest to them (Elliot, Kratochwill, Cook and Travers, 2000). While pupils' behaviour is constantly reinforced, parents are also kept in touch with what is going on in the school (Bither & Stalford, 2008). Thus, its place in the school curriculum is a constant reminder of what teachers should do to improve teaching learning activities in schools.

Homework has been a regular feature of classroom teaching in Nigerian schools for decades. Until lately, its importance in improving pupils learning was not fully appreciated. The tempo of homework as an instructional adjunct was therefore slow and gradual. It was the educational reforms begun in the eighties that accelerated the volume of homework activities in educational institutions. For instance, the introduction of continuous assessment (CA) as an aspect of evaluating a child's progress, for promotion and certification purposes, added fillip to its revolution in the school curriculum (Ohuche and Akejuo, 1988). The adoption of continuous assessment is to ensure that assignments whether take home or in class, assist in the assessment of pupils in all the three domains of learning behaviour.

In addition, certain aspects of educational reforms have affected labour-management relations adversely. The disputes mostly over pay issues between teachers at all levels and government have disrupted academic sessions severally, mainly in public schools (Imhabekhai, 2000; Ejide, 2005, Newswatch, 2008). Hence, teachers are encouraged to assign pupils homework in order to compensate for lost time, as well as cover the scheme of work prepared for the term/semester.

The implication of these developments is that school children now return home with more assignments to complete and submit the next day. The question then is: how do parents view this development? Do they assist or create the enabling environment for their wards to accomplish the assigned tasks? The focus of this study is on the examination of the extent of parental involvement in children's homework in public and private primary (Elementary) schools in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Benefits of Homework and the Need for Parental Assistance

Does homework improve children's learning? The available research in this area is mixed. A meta-analytic review of research suggests that homework is of much negligible educational value (Lindgren, 1976; Pytel, 2007). Others provide contrary findings (Gallup, 1974; Canter and Hausner, 1987; Clark and Clark, 1989; Elliot, Kratochwill, Cook and Travers, 2000). However, the research suggests that homework is better for some students, particularly the older ones than the younger ones (Cooper, 1989; Pytel, 2007). Cooper (1989) for instance, indicates that the effect of homework on Elementary pupils is negligible, moderately important for Junior high school students and very important for High school students. What this implies is that students who are in higher grades (High school and above) are more

matured and can perform more complex cognitive operations than their counterparts in the lower grades (Kindergarten/Elementary schools). However, Cooper (1989) still recommends homework for Elementary school pupils. His conviction is that it will help them to develop good study habits, fosters positive attitudes toward school and communicates the idea that learning takes place at home and at school.

Generally, Cooper (1989) assures that homework when used effectively has positive effects on students learning outcomes. He highlights some of the immediate and long-term academic achievements to include.

- 1 Better retention of factual knowledge
- 2 Increased understanding
- 3 Better critical thinking, concept formation and information processing.
- 4 Willingness to learn during leisure time
- 5 Improved attitude toward school
- 6 Better study habits/skills
- 7 Curriculum enrichment, etc.

A later study by Cooper, Lindsay, Nye & Greathouse (1998), confirms that the effect of homework especially on elementary pupils may not be readily apparent. Its manifestation occurs later when the children move to secondary school. In the opinion of the authors, the effect is mediated, through time, by its facilitation of the development of proper study skills, which in turn influences the pupils' grades. For it to really manifest, the authors advocate that parents should provide a stabilizing role in shaping their children's attitudes to homework positively. Cooper, Lindsay, Nye & Greathouse (1998) further state that the lack of positive effects of homework for some pupils may be traced to the negative attitudes held by parents.

The call for parental involvement in guiding and or assisting children with homework is not wholly accepted in the literature (Lindgren, 1976; Elliot, Kratochwill, Cook and Travers, 2000). Critics that have not fully endorsed the idea express the fear that parental intrusion would not only weaken children's initiative and independence. It may lead to aiding and helping them to cheat. There is also the pressure on children to complete the assignment and perform well (Cooper, 1989).

However, the overwhelming view is that parental assistance is necessary (PEATC, 2001; National PTA & NEA, 2008; Bither & Stalford, 1995). Schiefflin and Gallimore (1993) believe that success in schools across

America is a reflection of a high level of parental involvement in children's school activities. And that one way parents can participate in their children's education is to support the school work they do at home. Homework when used effectively offers parents a real opportunity to be involved on many different levels with their children's school work as coaches, tutors and resource persons (Elliot, Kratochwill, Cook & Travers, 2000).

For instance, parental attention offered in a difficult situation can have a positive effect on children's learning and motivation. Imagine a child experiencing difficulty in doing assignment without help from parents (or older siblings). He or she will experience frustration.

The NPTA & NEA (2008), Bither and Stalford (1995) have listed some possible areas parents can give assistance to children in completing homework tasks:

- 1 Share any concern they may have with teachers/principal on school homework policy.
- 2 Encourage children to take notes concerning homework assignments in case questions arise later at home.
- 3 Provide a suitable study area and necessary educational materials to complete homework.
- 4 Limit after-school activities to allow time for homework and family activities.
- 5 Monitor television viewing.
- 6 Plan a homework schedule with your child.
- 7 Check completed assignments to ensure your child understands what is to be done.
- 8 Ask to look at homework once it has been marked and returned.
- 9 Show interest and set a good example.
- 10 Give praises when a child is making progress.
11. Guide the child, do not work the assignment for him/her.

In a synthesis of research provided by Elliot, Kratochwill, Cook & Travers (2000), it is advocated that adult educators should gear their efforts in reshaping the attitudes of parents toward their children's homework. It is observed that improved parental attitudes about homework are likely to result from clear communications about the goals of homework and how parents can effectively help their children complete homework. This indeed is a task for adult educators.

Purpose of the Study

The present study is designed to assess the extent of assistance given by parents in completing their wards' homework assignments. The objectives of the study are three fold.

- First, it is to examine the profiles of parents whose children or wards are in primary, schools, public and private inclusive;
- secondly, to highlight the extent of assistance parents are giving to their children and
- thirdly, to indicate whether the profiles (socio-economic status) of parents influence the extent of their involvement in children's homework.

The Significance of this study is based on the conviction that interest and participation of parents in children's homework is the strongest motivational factor and good attitude is associated with success in school.

Research Questions

- (i) What is the profile of parents whose children or ward are in primary school?
- (ii) To what extent are parents involved in the completion of their children's assignment?
- (iii) Does the profile of parents significantly affect their involvement in children's homework?
- (iv) What is the likely implication of the study for adult education?

Hypothesis

Profile of parents does not significantly affect their involvement in guiding children complete their homework.

Method

This study was carried out in Cross River State, Nigeria. Cross River State with a population of less than three million people (2006, Census), is principally a civil service state. Less than 10 percent of the people are civil servants. This implies that majority of the adult population are engaged in agrarian activities such as farming, fishing, hunting and other food crop production. A negligible percent is engaged in cash crop production. The state is divided into eighteen (18) administrative divisions, called Local Government areas. Each of these local governments has a headquarter where

the administrative paraphernalia and social amenities are mainly concentrated. Interestingly, the local government headquarters are the main urban centers. The remaining villages represent the countryside or rural areas. Thus the local government areas are similar in character, with the exception of Calabar (Calabar South/ Municipality), the state capital that is more cosmopolitan.

The target population was the parents whose children are still in primary school. They are 994 primary schools in Cross River State (SUBEB, 2008). Due to the sheer size of the number, the targeted population was drawn from three (3) out of the eighteen (18) local government areas in Cross River State. They included Akamkpa, Ikom and Obudu. Four primary schools with the largest concentration of pupils from each of the three selected local government areas, two from the main urban centre and two from the countryside, were purposively sampled for study. The two schools in the urban centers were made up of public and private schools. Altogether nine public and three privately owned schools were sampled. Parents in the sampled schools were identified through the school Admission Registers. The Register contains information on the name of the pupil, age, parents' name and address. Of the twelve sampled schools, two thousand eight hundred and ninety eight (2,898) were identified. Out of this number, six hundred and twenty two (622) parents were randomly sampled for study. The distribution is as shown in table 1.

A three – part questionnaire tagged: “Parental Involvement in Homework Questionnaire (PIHQ)”, was drawn up for the study. Section A sought information on the profile (background) of parents – age, gender, marital status, type of family educational attainment, occupation, religious affiliation, family size family income and type of living house. Section B contained five items that dealt with the name of their children's primary school(s) and number of children/wards attending, ownership of school(s), frequency of homework given to children, and their (parents) perception of homework as a necessary activity for children after school hours.

Section C dealt with ten items which served as an index of parental involvement in children's homework. The index include parent's interest, leaving the child to do the homework all alone, clarifying and setting an example as a guide for the child to follow; checking over assignment(s) completed; looking at marked assignments and comments by teacher; limiting television viewing and reducing other distractions setting regular

time and providing convenient room and materials for children to do homework tasks; etc. Respondents were to rate each of these items in a three-point rating scale from “to a large extent”, “to some extent”, and or to “no extent”.

A pilot study was initially carried out in two primary schools (one public and the other private) with fifty parents. The errors/omissions observed, and as well as responses and suggestions from the pilot subjects. An item analysis of the responses of the subjects yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.89, using Cronbach’s Alpha. This was considered satisfactory.

The researchers with the help of three trained assistants visited the sampled parents in their respective homes and administered the questionnaires. Some were accessed in their places of work. Others were tracked down in the school compound as they went to drop their children in the early hours of the morning. The questionnaire items were read to the illiterate parents and the responses recorded accordingly while the literate parents responded to the items independently.

It was however not possible to access all the parents sampled for study. Thus, five hundred and twenty-three (523) questionnaires were filled and returned. Since the questionnaire was pre-coded, data processing was done using the SPSS.

Results

Research Question 1: *What is the profile of parents whose wards are in the primary school?*

The findings are presented in table 2.

From the profile in table 2, sample parents are largely males (73.99%), with 64% of them in the age range 26-44 years. The married constitute 60.8% of the sample and 69.41% of them are from monogamous homes. The unschooled has a proportion of 24.47% in the sample and a further 23.32% of them having only the first school or basic education certificate. Only about 17% of the sample has university degrees. Furthermore, the sample is predominantly made up of the self-employed (29.45%) and farmers (26.77%). Over 86% of the sampled parents are Christians (87), with the majority being Catholics (44.55%). Only 7.27% are Moslems. Most of the sampled parents (44.74%) have 5-6 children. Exactly 40.54% of the parents earn an annual income of between N71,000 – 150,000; and 42.07% of them

live in homes where they share rooms with other tenants.

Research question 2: *To what extent are parents involved in the completion of their children's homework?*

From the table 3, parental involvement in children's homework is very low except for their limiting of television viewing and other distraction to facilitate children's homework task completion. This interpretation is true because except for item (4), other items have a mean lower than the expected value of 2.00 for a 3 point rating scale.

Hypothesis: *Parents' profile does not significantly influence their involvement in guiding children complete their homework.*

From table 4, parents' age, educational status, number family size and family annual income are the parental profiles that influence their involvement in children's homework. This is because the calculated t-values for these parental variables are in each case greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 521 degrees of freedom. Thus for these variables, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative upheld. The null hypothesis is upheld for parental gender, marital background, family background, occupational status, religious affiliation and living house.

Discussion

Findings from this study indicate that most of the sampled parents are largely males, relatively young, married and mainly monogamous. Majority of them are also Christians. However, many of the parents have either not gone to school or possess only the basic (primary) school certificate. Moreover, majority of the respondents are either self-employed (petty traders, drivers, artisans, tailoring, etc) and or are farmers. Also majority of them earn an estimated income of between N71,000 and N150,000 annually. Translated into dollar term, this comes to between \$591 and \$1,250 (\$1=N120). In respect to the profiles on number of children and the type of living house, data also suggest that a good percentage of sampled parents have between 5 and 6 children, with many sharing rooms with other tenants.

Data as to the extent of parental involvement in children's homework does not look encouraging among the ten possible areas in which parents may give assistance or guidance, only one item was most consistently mentioned by respondents since it met the item mean of 2.00. Thus, "limiting the amount of time children watch television and a reduction in other distractions is where parents seem to be involved in helping with children's assignments.

Apart from this, parents are rarely active in other areas such as; showing interest in the homework given by teachers; looking over completed assignment to ensure it is correctly done; reading teachers comments on marked assignments; discussing with class teacher on school homework policy; setting regular time, providing reading room and other resources; giving praises when assignments are correctly done; limiting household chores and other after-class activities; and having no time but employ part-time teacher to guide children in doing homework. All of these factors could not meet the item mean of 2.00

The proposition of this study is that parent's profile does not significantly influence their involvement in assisting children complete their homework tasks. The study results provide support for this proposition in six out of the ten parental variables. While four which were not confirmed (see table 4), were found to be statistically significant and could therefore influence parental involvement.

Among the profiles which predicted our expectations is gender. It was presumed that male parents who are bread-winners may spend much of their time in the work place or engaged in other social outings. They would therefore not have time to attend to children's school problems. Thus leaving the burden for their wives to shoulder, that is, if they are married and the wives educated. Perhaps, the very fact that most of our sampled parents are males, the gender factor could not therefore predict parental involvement in homework significantly

Marital background was also found to be poorly reflected in parental involvement in children's homework. It has been argued that married parents are more stable and should be in a better position to give children the attention they need concerning school work and other requirements (Elliot, Kratochwill, Cook & Travers, 2000). Single parentage, especially the divorced or widowed, may experience more financial stress to take care of children left behind by their spouses. The findings in this study were not sufficient to validate these claims. The qualitative differences between the married and single in the area investigated may not be that remarkable. Besides factors such as education, income and occupation may intervene to render marital status insignificant.

It is not surprising that family background (type of family) was not found to be influential. But many observers believe that monogamous families are in a far better position to show love, care and attention to their children because

of their small size than do polygamous homes (Grissmer, Hedges, Larry & Laine, 1994). The explanation is that children from polygamous homes may be too many and the care and attention they need including completing homework may be lacking. Again, available financial resources might impact positively on monogamous families than on the polygamous ones (Odinko, 2002; Falaye and Ayoola, 2006). However, data suggests that there are more monogamous homes than polygamous (69.41 as against 30.59%). This again, suggests that, in the area under investigation, family background may depend on other factors e.g. income to make it potentially active

Occupational status, true to our expectations did not influence parental involvement. It has been orchestrated that children whose parents are educated and have good and highly paid jobs may receive better assistance than do children from parents whose occupations are not highly prized (Nwa-chil, 1991; Falaye & Ayoola, 2006). This claim is not wholly supported in the present study. Perhaps, the revelation that majority of the parents are either self-employed or are farmers, both accounting for 56.22 percent of the sample. This implies that this variable alone cannot explain the extent of parental involvement in children's homework. The low income may have diminished the role of occupational status in attracting parental attention.

Religious affiliation and the type of living house taken together were also found to be poorly reflected in parental involvement in homework, significantly. Religious affiliation has not really been studied by educational researchers as to its extent in influencing educational outcomes. Although Catholics predominate, as the study research shows, it should be emphasized that all Christian churches do not differ significantly from one another because they all preach the same faith. Both the Catholics and other churches were the instrument through which formal education came to Nigeria, including Cross River State. They shared the same philosophy, content and methodology in their approach to educational issues.

In the case of living house, it was thought that parents who live in bungalows or flats, other than traditional huts and sharing with other tenants, were likely to provide a convenient accommodation for their children to do their homework and learn effectively (Ottaway, 1962; Crowl, Kaminsky & Podell, 1997). This proposition was however not supported in the study. Perhaps, the fact that very few parents lived in such accommodation in the area under consideration may have accounted for the non-significance of the finding.

Age of the parents was found to influence parental involvement in homework. Fortunately most of the parents are young, between 35 to 44 years old. This means that the younger the parents the more they are likely to assist their children in completing homework tasks. On the other hand young parents looking for good jobs may not find time to assist children.

Not surprisingly, educational attainment of parents was also found to be significant. The importance of this observation is that the more educated the parents, the more the likelihood that they will show interest in their children's education generally (Ottaway, 1962; Gabarino and Benn, 1992) More specifically, Okpala and Onocha (1985), Jencks and Philip (1998) admit that literate parents do show more interest and get more involved in their children's homework. Since many parents are either illiterate and or have only basic school certificate, the attention given to children's homework as the study indicates has been minimal.

The size of the family (no. of children) was found significant in the study. This is in accord with Falaye and Ayoola's (2006) contention that the more the members of the family, the less the attention that may be given to children's education, and the fewer the better. Family resources may not be enough to go round the children if it is large (Odinko 2002). The data revealed that most of the parents have on the average five to six children. Some have between 2-3 children in the primary school. This has impacted significantly and restricted parental involvement in homework.

The last major finding is that the income level of parents is associated with parental involvement in homework. That is, the more the income of parents, the more they will pay attention to children's education (Bowles & Levin, 1988; Yoloeye, 1994). With a relatively high income, parents can provide educational materials and create enabling environment for children to do their homework (Renyi, 1993; Ceci, 1996; Pytel 2007). Some can even hire part-time teachers to guide and assist their children at home, particularly those working parents that do not have time. Unfortunately the findings revealed that majority of sampled parents do not earn above N150, 000 (\$1,250.00) annually.

Implications for Adult Education

The implication of the findings for adult education is quite glaring. Parental involvement in homework activities is discouraging. Hence, there is need to institute a number of adult education programs aimed at improving the profile standing of parents. Such programs must first create the awareness

among parents of the importance of homework to children's learning generally. Secondly, specific educational programs tailored to the needs of parents might impart knowledge, skills and attitude that will lead to appreciation and involvement in homework activities. And thirdly, adult education programs must help parents overcome the problem of poverty through providing vocationally oriented skills.

Mobilization of Churches to Create Awareness:

The findings revealed that majority of the sampled parents (87%) are Christians - Catholics and Protestants inclusive. Only 5.73 percent do not go to church. Experience has shown that during Sundays and other days of worship, churches do have special time to announce issues of general educational and social significance for members for their information and perhaps, compliance. Also they organize Sunday schools and adult classes to educate members on social and moral issues. This is one forum through which church members can be sensitized on the utility of homework to children. Through youth, women and men organizations in the church, awareness and sensitization can further be created among parents on the need to guide their children complete schools assignments.

Parent-Teachers' Association (PTA) Meetings

This is an important avenue that both parents and teachers can collaborate on schools homework policies and implementation. During PTA meetings, parents can be sensitized on the school homework policy and are encouraged to guide children complete their homework assignment. The problem however, is with attendance. In this case, children can be used to inform their parents almost on a daily basis to attend PTA meetings that may be held in the coming week. Ministry of Education has a role to play in instituting PTAs in both public and private schools, where there is none.

Functional and Post Basic Adult Education Programs

From the findings of this study, 24.47 percent of sampled parents have never gone to school, while 23.33 percent have only the first or basic school leaving certificate. The quality of education received by the later (and including secondary school graduates) has been the subject of open debate in Nigeria (Obeamata, 1995; Nweke, 1998; Ingwu & Ekefre, 2006). What is being implied here is that majority of the sampled parents are not schooled enough to assist children with their homework. Hence, government needs to establish functional and post basic adult education programs and comprehensive enough for parents covering broad areas namely;

- (i) Literacy skills (reading, writing and numeracy)
- (ii) Work-oriented skills to improve on their vocational/occupational function
- (iii) General and civic education skills
- (iv) Nutrition and family life education.

Duke (2004) remarked that functional adult basic education is an equity tool that benefits both women and men, making adult learners to be more supportive of their own children's education. It is found to empower, which in itself is seen as a form of reduced poverty among parents.

Conclusion

Homework is an aspect of study skills that school children should be encouraged to adopt in order to learn effectively. At the primary school level, children may not possess sufficient cognitive ability to carry out class tasks independently at home. That is why parents are encouraged to guide children complete their homework tasks. This does not mean parents should complete the tasks for children. Rather, their role is that of clarifying and explaining further the topic that the teacher taught in school which the child may not have understood, or is confused.

The findings of this study has revealed that in Cross River State of Nigeria, parents have not been adequately oriented to give children the educational attention that is needed to complete school assignments at home. Of the ten possible areas of assistance, only one item met the requirement. This is compounded by their low educational status, large family size and meager annual income. Adult education is thus needed to change parental perception of homework. Changing their attitudes through adequate education and empowering them might possibly improve the situation.

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Table 1: Distribution of Parents by School and Sample.

	No of Pupils	Parents	20% Sample
OBUDU			
St Patrick's Primary, School	760	310	62
Rock Foundation (Private), Obudu.	431	218	48
St. Colman's, Utugwaug	480	180	40
Central School, Ohong	590	197	44
IKOM			
Primary School Asu-Egbe, Ikom	2210	619	130
Presbyterian Pry. Sch. (Private) Ikom	620	275	62
Primary School, Edor	650	204	46
Government Primary School, Ofutop	557	190	42
AKAMKPA			
St. John's School, Akamkpa	640	217	48
Adiaha Obong Pry Sch. (private), Akamkpa	402	148	26
St. Theresa's School, Mbarakom	426	147	26
Government School, Oban	519	213	48
Total		2,898	622

Table 2: Parental Profile

Variable	Category	N	Percentage
Gender:	Male	387	73.99
	Female	166	26.00
Age:	Below 26 yrs	20	3.82
	26-34	173	33.08
	35-44	163	31.16
	45-54	131	25.04
Marital Status:	55 yrs+	36	6.88
	Single	163	31.16

Variable	Category	N	Percentage
	Married	318	60.80
	Separated	24	4.59
	Married	6	1.15
	Widow	12	2.29
Family Background:	Monogamous	363	69.41
	Polygamous	160	30.59
Family Size	1-2 children	38	7.27
	3-4	201	38.43
	5-6	234	44.74
	7+	50	9.56
Educational status:	Did not go to school	128	24.47
	First school leaving certificate	122	23.33
	GCE/WASC/ Teachers' Grade II	69	13.19
	NCE/OND	99	18.93
	Nursing certificate	12	2.29
	First Degree	83	15.87
	Masters/PhD	10	1.91
Occupational status	Businessman/woman	25	4.78
	Civil Servant	82	15.68
	Farmer	140	26.77
	Housewife	38	7.26
	Politician	26	4.97
	Self employed	154	29.45
	Unemployed	58	11.09
Religious affiliation	Catholic	233	44.55
	Pentecostal	22	42.45
	Moslem	38	7.27
	Do not go to church	30	5.73
Family Annual Income	Less than N70,000	76	14.53
	N71,000-150,000	212	40.54
	N151,000-250,000	118	22.56
	N251,000-350,000	50	9.56
	N351,000 450,000	47	8.99
	N451,000+	20	3.82
Living House	Traditional (Hut)	53	10.13
	Share rooms with other tenants	220	42.07
	Live in a zinc house with rooms	195	37.28
	Live in a flat/Bungalow	55	10.52

*Note: N = 523

Table 3: Descriptive analysis of parental involvement in the completion of children's homework (min=1, max=3, item mean=2)

Items	N	X	S
1. Show interest in the homework given by the teacher	523	1.61	0.87
2. Explain and provide examples to guide the child	523	1.15	0.85
3. Look over completed assignments	523	1.36	0.85
4. Limit television viewing and other distractions e.g. noise	523	2.16	0.97
5. Set regular time, provide reading room and other resources to do the home work	523	1.94	0.88
6. Read teacher's comments on marked assignment(s)	523	1.28	0.84
7. Talk with class teacher about school homework policy	523	1.08	0.77
8. Give praises when the assignment is correctly done	523	1.40	0.86
9. Limit household chores such as hawking ruing errands, etc	523	1.52	0.96
10. Have no time but employ a part-time teacher to assist	523	1.12	0.72

Table 4: Independent t-test analysis of significance between parental involvements in children's homework at different levels of parent's profile

Variable	Levels	N	X	S	df	t
Gender	Male	387	15.75	1.70	52	0.183
	Female	136	15.75	1.68		
Age	Youth (45)	358	14.74	1.54	521	6.646*
	Old (45+)	165	15.81	1.82		
Marital Background:	Married	318	15.69	1.58	521	1.102
	Not married	205	15.82	1.67		
Family Background	Monogamous	363	15.54	1.66	521	0.552
	Polygamous	160	15.46	1.54		
Educational Status:	Degree	93	15.79	1.68	521	5.187*
	Non-degree	430	14.82	1.54		
Occupational Status:	Farmers/self-employed	294	15.45	1.61	521	1.95
	Other occupations	229	15.60	1.65		
Religious affiliation:	Christian	455	15.52	1.56	521	0.38
	Non Christian	68	15.44	1.48		
Family Size:	Few (<4)	239	15.88	1.66	521	2.701*
	Many >4)	284	15.51	1.57		
Family Annual income:	Small (<N250,000)	406	15.45	1.50	521	2.988*
	Large (>250,000)	117	15.94	1.62		
Living House:	Sub-standard (Hut/shared rooms)	273	15.68	1.71	521	0.278
	Standard (own zinc House/Bungalow)	250	15.72	1.73		

*P<.05 significant to 0.5 level (t-critical value = 1.96 df = 521).