

## **Effect of Parental Socio-Economic Status on Parental Care and Social Adjustment in the UBE Programme in Lagos State: Implications for Counselling**

---

Dr (Mrs.) Mopelola Omoegun  
*Educational Foundations Department*  
*Faculty of Education, University of Lagos*

### ***Abstract***

This paper attempts to examine the effect of parental socio-economic background on the parental care provided to pupils in the UBE programme and the counseling implications. The psychological implications of the Universal Basic Education cannot be over emphasized if the universal goal of education for all were to be achieved. The study is a descriptive survey research with the use of randomly selected primary six pupils from three different schools in Lagos State. A questionnaire (Parent/Child Relationship Questionnaire) which was designed by the researcher was administered on 198 randomly selected boys and girls from Lagos Mainland Local Government. Data collected were analysed with the use of ANOVA and t-test at 0.05 level of significance. Result obtained indicated a significant effect of parental socio-economic background on the parental care of pupils and their social adjustment. The counseling implications were discussed which highlighted the psychological effect of lack of adequate parental care on pupils social adjustment and academic achievement. Recommendations were made based on the findings.

***Keywords:*** *Universal Basic Education; Parental Care; Counselling; Socio-Economic Status, Social adjustment.*

### **Introduction**

Basic Education was defined by the conference of Ministers of Education of African member states in Lagos in 1976 as “a type of education, (ranging from formal to informal) which is linked to development.... The minimum provision of knowledge, attitudes, values and experiences which should be made available for every individual and should be common to all”. The Jomtien (1990) World Conference on Education for All therefore expanded the vision of education with regards to basic education to include: increasing access to equity, a focus on learning, broadening the scope and methods of basic education, enhancing the learning environment; and building partnerships and alliance to work toward meeting basic learning needs for all. Hence the need to take into consideration the family background of the children as highlighted by Omoegun (1995) in order that the implementation would be successful.

Although the Universal Basic Education (UBE) appears laudable just as the 6-3-3-4 system of education when introduced in the National Policy on Education (1981) adequate attention should be focused not only on the institutions where children would be trained but also on the parents because of the psychological effect such background would have on the child's subsequent level of academic achievement (Omoegun 2001 and Peretomode 1995). Charity is said to begin at home and if the foundation is destroyed what can the righteous do? This paper is born out of this concern. Hence the study investigated the effect of parental socio-economic background on the parental care provided for children in the UBE programme.

### **Statement of Problem**

While genuine efforts are being made to emphasize programmes that positively affect Nigerian family, Government and several development partners recognize the fact that more creative strategies will be required if we are to attain the Decade Goals. Health and nutritional goals must also be seen not only as they affect the rating and image of a nation, but also how they affect the survival of the Nigerian child. Household food insecurity is leading to increased malnutrition at the family level and statistics reveal that 21.3 percent of children across the nation are under weight, only 3 out of 10 households have access to safe drinking water; and environmental sanitation poses a major challenge to improved and sustained health (UNICEF, 1997).

There is no gain saying the fact that the vast majority of Nigerians are seemingly affected by a high degree of poverty level which has given rise to the pitiable condition of the Nigerian child in terms of health and education. Virtually all economic indicators point to the extreme decline in the quality of life in critical spheres of human existence.

Although the Federal Government has responded to the plight of the people by introducing a number of poverty alleviation programmes in the past, the stark reality is that the quality of life of the majority of Nigerians remains abjectly poor. According to Ayanbolu (1997) in the Progress of Nigerian Children (UNICEF, Publication). The present uncertain economic conditions have made meeting the demands for foods, education, health and shelter a herculean task for many Nigerians.

With the introduction of the UBE another significant attempt is being made to provide basic education for all children right from primary to Junior secondary. The focus of this paper however is on the quality of life and ability of such children to adjust as social beings which must be seen as critical to their development and that of the nation. Hence the presentation of the counseling implications of the effect of parental socio-economic background on the parental care and social adjustment of children in this paper.

### ***The Purpose of Study***

The purpose of the study is to examine the effect of parental socio-economic background on parental after school care and social adjustment of primary school children in the UBE programme and the counseling implications.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study is significant as it will serve as eye opener for government and other stakeholders in education to pay attention to the psychological effects of the socio-economic background of children on their social life. It will also highlight the need for counseling services at the grass root level even for parents and community leaders in general.

The study will provide a basis for assessing the effect of parents socio-economic status on the type of care that they provide for children and the effect of such on children's social adjustment.

### **Research Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant effect of parental socio-economic status on parental care of children.
2. There is no significant effect of parental care on pupils' social adjustment.

### **Methodology**

#### *Research Design*

The descriptive survey design was employed in this study with the use of a questionnaire designed by the researcher (Parental Child Relationship Questionnaire (PCRQ) which was validated through a pilot study.

### **Population and Sample**

All primary six pupils in Lagos Mainland Local Government served as the population for the study. A total of one hundred and ninety-eight (198) male and female pupils from three schools (3) were chosen as samples through stratified random sampling technique.

On the basis of their responses to the first part of the questionnaire on parental socio-economic status, 65 were classified as belonging to high, while 76 were from medium and 57 from low socio-economic status parental background respectively.

### **Procedure**

The researcher obtained permission from the chairman of the Lagos State (SUBEB) State Universal Basic Education Board ( SUBEB) and the chairman of Lagos Mainland Local Government Authority to use the three schools selected for the study.

The research instrument, a 20 item questionnaire with a 4 point Likert type rating scale ranging from Strong Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD) was administered on the participants by the researcher in the three different schools used for the study on different days. The completed questionnaire were collected and analysed.

### **Results**

ANOVA and t-test statistics were used to analyse data collected at 0.05 level of significance. Results obtained are presented on the tables below.

**Table 1: One-way Anova on the Effect of Parental Socio-Economic Status on Parental Care**

LEVEL OF SES	N	X-	SD
High	65	12.76	2.64
Medium	76	12.80	1.32
Low	57	14.84	3.47

Sources of variation	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean square	F-Ratio	Remarks
Between Group	133.6	2	66.8	4.71	Significant
Within Group	2764.9	196	14.18		
Total	<b>2898.5</b>	<b>198</b>			

$P < 0.05$   $df = 2/196$  critical  $f = 2.99$

From the result of data analysis as shown in table 1, the calculated F-ratio of 4.71 is greater than the critical f-value of 2.99 at 0.05 level of significance ( $F=4.71; df = 2/196; p < .05$ ). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. However, from the pair-wise comparison of the group means, it could be observed that pupils from high socio-economic background when compared with those from medium socio-economic status had a high level of parental care ( $t = 2.61; df = 139; p < 0.05$ ) followed by pupils from medium socio-economic status who received the least level of parental care compared with others.

Hypothesis 2 states that there is no significant effect of parental care on pupils social adjustment.

**Table 2: t – test comparison of parental care and social adjustment**

Parental care	N	X	SD	t-cal	t-crit	Remark
Adequate	76	22.08	4.21	4.48	1.96	Significant
Inadequate	122	18.70	6.63			

$P < 0.05$   $df = 196$

From the t – test analysis on table 2 above result obtained is significant, since t-calculated of 4.48 is greater than t – critical of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

### **Discussion**

Hypothesis one states that there is no significant difference in parental care due to parental socio-economic status. The result obtained from the Analysis of Variance indicated the calculated F- value of 4.71 which was greater than the critical F value of 2.99 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis was rejected. There is a significant difference between parental care and parental socio-economic status. This confirms Myers' (1992) claim that child care and child rearing depend on many factors which can influence negatively the healthy development of children. Such factors include:

- (i) Women – headed household where women are often over worked and possibly have less money to be able to provide adequate child care.
- (ii) Many women having to work outside the home which means they have less time to spend with their children.
- (iii) Poverty as a major factor that limits the ability of the family to cater for children's needs.

The second hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect of parental care on social adjustment was rejected. Result obtained with the use of t-test on table 2 indicated a calculated value of 4.48 while the table value of "t" is 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the rejection of the hypothesis since the t calculated is greater than critical t. A significant difference thus exists between parent care and social adjustment. This finding confirms those of Myers (1992) and Vandel and Pierce (1997).

They concluded that providing adequate care for children is important for children's adjustment, as such children tend to have fewer emotional and behavioural problems, better academic grades and better work habits.

### **Counselling Implications**

Counselling is applied psychology, a psychological process of helping individuals to cope with various life situations such as making decisions. Hence the relevance of marriage and family life counseling for newly married couples and parents alike in order to assist in helping them to plan their family size which would enhance their ability to provide adequate care for their children. According to the state of the world children (2001) what happens during the very earliest years of a child's life influences how the rest of childhood and adolescence unfolds.

There is also the need for political counseling. Politicians especially senators should be counseled before and even when in office to effect policies that would enhance equity and high sense of discipline Bidmos (2007) asserted that it is unethical in the present day Nigeria (where poverty has become a monster causing millions of Nigerians to live below 1 dollar per day – according to the World bank report) to see a Nigerian spend – thrift flinging his ill-gotten wealth in public. Even if the money is acquired through decent means, it should be spent with decorum in order to inculcate the right sense of value in our children.

Teenagers and children need to be exposed to counselling as preventive measure to imbibe the value of hard work and dignity of labour in order to reduce the poverty level in our society. The UBE programme aims at effecting a smooth transition of the child from the home to the school among others and to provide adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work and to inculcate social norms, counselling is therefore required for the handlers/care givers even at the early childhood education level as well as teachers at other levels of education to enhance adequate implementation of the ideals that the new system of education (UBE) seek to effect. Career resource centres should be established and such centres should be manned by professional counsellors.

The Universal Basic Education is an attempt to meet unique learning needs of all within a global context. In order to appreciate the philosophy, curriculum structure and methods of the (UBE), it is necessary to identify some global trends in the society and in education in particular. Hence the need for counselling to provide relevant and adequate information to all stake holders in the education of our children in order to emphasize the gains in globalization.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the counseling implications presented above the following recommendations are made:-

1. Government should intensify its effort in introducing the use of computer in schools not only as a subject but rather as instructional aids to enhance effective teaching and learning in the UBE programme.
2. The socio-economic background of pupils especially in public schools should be taken into consideration while mounting up various programmes in our educational system. Hence the need for government to attend to the peculiar needs of children from poor socio-economic background by putting in place some welfare packages that will enhance the quality of life of its citizenry. Some basic amenities should be provided for all such as water and food in order to have a successful implementation of the UBE.
3. Counselling centres should be established within and outside the school settings. Government should encourage individuals and NGOs to establish private counseling centers that would provide services for all – politicians, parents, government officials, community leaders as well as workers in different sectors of the economy.
4. Counselling programmes such as workshops, seminars, periodic training and talks should be organized on a regular basis with adequate publicity to ensure all stake holders in the education of our children benefit from such.
5. The mass media (print and electronics) should be used in reaching out to children and parents to popularize the goals of the UBE programme.
6. Non-Governmental organizations should reach out more to the children from low/poor socio-economic background by providing scholarships as well as improved social environment for such children. They should extend their help to individual homes since the child is the product of a home and his immediate environment.
7. Career Resource Centres should be established in each local government areas in the

federation. Such centers should be under the supervision of a professional counselor or career officers.

### **Conclusion**

Counselling is for all. It is a psychological help required by everybody in coping with various demands of life. Hence this paper has attempted to look into the effects of parental socio-economic status/background on the parental care and social adjustment of children in the UBE programme. The counseling implications are stated with the recommendations that will enhance the successful implementation of the UBE in Nigeria. It is expected that such a laudable programme would not fail as the earlier education reforms in Nigeria if adequate attention is given to the issues raised in this paper more so with the emphasis on globalization of knowledge.

### **References**

- Bidmos, M.A. (2007): Value System in Nigeria and the Paradox of Teacher Education. Unpublished Paper presented at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference of the Faculty of Education, University of Lagos, held at Julius Berger auditorium between 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June.
- FME (Federal Ministry of Education) (2000): Implementation Guidelines for the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja.
- FME (Federal Ministry of Education) (2000): The UBE Process so far. Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1977) (Revised 1981, 2004): National Policy on Education Lagos: Federal Government Press.
- Myers, R.G. (1992): Towards a fair Start for Children UNESCO Publication.
- Omoegun, O.M. (1995): Child Psychology: Its Importance to Education Programmes in Nigeria. *Journal of Sociology of Education* 3 (2).91-108.
- Omoegun, O.M. (2001): Counselling Aid for Street Children in Lagos State Towards Developing a programme of care and sexual Awareness. *The Counsellor. Journal of the Counselling Association of Nigeria.* 16 (1) 221-226
- Peretomode, V.F. (1995): *Sociology of Education.* Lagos Obaroh & Ogbinaka Publishers.
- UNICEF (1997): The progress of Nigerian Children. A publication by the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) in collaboration with UNICEF
- UNICEF (2001) *The State of the World's Children.*
- Vandel, D.L and Pierce, K (1997). A study of After school care and children's development. [L/tp;n www.wcer.wise.edu/project descriptions/study of after school care.html](http://www.wcer.wise.edu/project%20descriptions/study%20of%20after%20school%20care.html).