Influence of Parenting Styles on Academic Performance of Senior High Schools in Ghana

Rabbi Darko

Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, College of Technology Education, Kumasi
University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

Abstract:-The aim of this study was to assess the relationship between parenting styles on the academic performance of secondary school students in the Effutu Municipality specifically Winneba. The design was a cross-sectional survey conducted among students in the two Senior High Schools. A total of two hundred and sixty (260) students were drawn from two Secondary Schools in Winneba through a multi-stage random sampling procedure. Baumrind (1991) instrument of parenting style was used to measure the perception of students about their parent’s style of parenting. The results of the study suggested that parenting styles have significant influence on the academic performance of students. Also, the study revealed that authoritative and authoritarian style of parenting has significant positive relationship with the academic performance of students as against permissive style of parenting which correlated negatively. The results imply that the academic performance of students could be enhanced when parents adopt either the authoritative or authoritarian style of parenting. It is therefore recommended that parents adopt a blend of the authoritarian and authoritative style of parenting in order to improve academic performance and development of their children.

Key words
1. Authoritative parenting is parents who are both demanding and responsive.
2. Authoritarian parenting are parents who are highly demanding and directive but not responsive.
3. Permissive parenting is parents who are more responsive and lenient.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is the process of developing or training an individual to cope with the challenges of living. According to Ouercine (2002), the introduction of this system of education led to the type of education that is planned and provided for classroom situation by trained teachers. The education system is paramount for every country, and Ghana is no exception. An efficient educational system can help boost the development of every country. However, the Ghanaian educational system over the years has not been spared its fair share of criticism for churning out graduates who do not fit into the job market.

It is the family that builds the personality traits, social competence, and psychological, emotional, physical and educational development of children. The primary foundation that serves as the basis for this development is the type of parenting style these parents adopts. Additionally, Chao, (2001) and Querido et al., (2002) have shown that parents through their parenting styles create a formidable basis towards the development and achievement of every aspect of the child's life. Low academic achievement tends to create many negative consequences for the children. Children with low academic performances may become more vulnerable to problems such as stress, hopelessness, delinquencies, and substance abuse (Assarian, Biqam & Asqaranjad, 2006).

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study is to examine the influence of parenting styles on students’ academic performance and to help teachers and parents form partnership programs so as to ensure the academic success of students in the Senior High Schools.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

1. The study will aid parents in allowing them to realise the influence of the parenting environment and parenting style as a contextual element in shaping academic outcomes.
2. It will also provide guidance to parents and counsellors to produce happy, confident, capable and successful children

III. HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant difference between authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles and academic performance of students.
2. There is no significant difference between academic performance of participants with authoritative parents and participants with authoritarian parents.

IV. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Baumrind’s three typology on parenting styles was used to provide a theoretical framework for investigating parenting style as a predictor of academic performance among students. They are authoritarian, authoritative and permission parenting styles. Authoritative parents encourage verbal give and take, share with the child the reasoning behind their policy, and solicit his objections when he refuses to conform. The authoritarian parents shape, control, and evaluate the
behaviour and attitudes of the child in accordance with a set standard of conduct, usually an absolute standard, theologically motivated and formulated by a higher authority. The permissive parents make few demands for household responsibility and orderly behaviour. Parents present themselves to the child as a resource for him to use as he wishes, not as an ideal for him to emulate. Parents attempt to use reason and manipulation, but not overt power to accomplish their ends (Baumrind, 1991)

V. RELATED RESEARCH

A study conducted in Ghana can be linked to the present study. Nyarko, (2008), sampled three senior high schools in the central region of Ghana. The schools are; University Practice Secondary School, Ghana National College and Assin Manso Secondary School all located in the central region of Ghana. Out of a sample of 239 adolescents, 45.2% were males and 54.8% were females. The participants belonged to different family structures. 72.3% of the students lived in nuclear families, whilst 27.7% lived within other family arrangements (single mother households, single father households, stepmother households, and stepfather households). The results of the study indicated a positive and significant relationship between mothers and fathers’ authoritativeness and the academic success of the students.

Another study by Chin-Ling Hsieh (1998) also has some relation to the present study. The first purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive) and children’s temperament (emotionality, activity, and sociability). 230 Taiwanese (108 boys and 122 girls) fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade children from ten elementary schools in Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China participated in the study. Children’s homeroom teachers and parents were also recruited to participate in the study. Multiple regressions were conducted to test each research question. Results show parenting styles and children’s temperament were related to children’s academic achievement. Sociable children had higher academic performance and children who experienced authoritarian parenting showed lower academic achievement. These results clearly showed that children experiencing different kinds of parenting styles tend to have different patterns of temperament. Furthermore, the parenting styles and children’s temperament showed different patterns of prediction for children’s behavioural adjustment and academic achievement.

A study conducted by Roberts, and Fraleigh (1997) indicated that authoritative parenting positively related to grades; conversely, both authoritarian and permissive parenting negatively related to grades. However, authoritarian parenting is inclined to have a stronger relationship with grades rather than the other two parenting styles. This is because authoritarian parenting tends to be characterized by power.

Cohen and Rice (1997) surveyed a sample of 386 matched parent-child pairs in order to examine the relevance of parenting style to adolescent educational achievement. Results indicated that students with low grades rated their parents as less authoritative, more permissive (indulgent) and more authoritarian than did students with high grades. Based on the study results, researchers concluded that perceived authoritative parenting by students was associated with higher academic.

Another study by Dornbush et al. (1987) also has some link with the present study. They tested a reformation of Baumrind’s typology of authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative parenting styles in the context of adolescent school performance. Using a large and diverse sample of San Francisco Bay Area high school students (N = 7,836), they found that both authoritarian and permissive parenting styles were negatively associated with grades, and authoritative parenting was positively associated with grades achievement.

Steinberget al., (1992) examined the impact of authoritative parenting on the school achievement of an ethnically and socioeconomically heterogeneous sample of 6400 American 14-18-year-olds. Standardised scales and other self-report instruments were used to assess the relationship between parenting style and academic outcomes. The results indicated that authoritative parenting had a significant impact on adolescent school performance during the high school years.

Paulson (1994) investigated the relationship between parenting characteristics and achievement among a sample of 247 adolescents. Standardised scales were used to operationalize parenting style in order to examine its association to academic achievement which was measured by adolescent self-reported grades. Results indicated that higher levels of parental control accompanied by both maternal and paternal responsiveness (characteristic of authoritative parenting) were related to higher academic achievement. Paulson concluded that authoritative parents have children who perform better in schools.

VI. METHOD

Sample size

Senior High School (SHS) students in SHS1 to SHS3 within the Effutu Municipality constituted the target population of the study. For the purpose of this study, students in SHS 1 to SHS 3, who have successfully completed a term or more in any of the programs offered in the two (2) schools randomly selected from the four senior high schools in the municipality and agreed to participate in the study became the accessible population. Students who came under this category from AME Zion Girls’ and Uncle Rich Senior High Schools were eight hundred and twelve (812).

The researcher resorted to the utilisation of a multi-stage random probability sampling technique to sample from the target population.

The multi-stage sampling was carried out in two stages. First, non-probability sampling technique specifically convenient.
sampling was used in selecting the two schools from the four senior high schools in the municipality. The total number of students in SHS1 to SHS3 from both schools was eight hundred and twelve (812). Students from Uncle Rich SHS numbered up to four hundred and sixteen (416), with students from AME Zion Girls SHS being three hundred and ninety-six (396) of the total target population. The researcher used the Sample Size Determination Table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Considering the total number of students from the accessible population of 812 which is more than 800 but less than 850 suggests a sample size of 260 is most appropriate from the table (see Appendix B).

Data collection instrument

The research instrument was ordered into two sections (A and B). Section A comprised question that sought the demographic characteristics of the students whereas Section B focused primarily on a review and contextualization of the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) by Buri (1991). This was to measure the three main parenting styles exhibited by parents; authoritative, authoritarian and permissive styles of parenting as perceived by students. Originally, it is a 30-item questionnaire with ten (10) items each for each parenting style on a 5-point Likert scale. In this study, the questionnaires were based on the version adapted by Dawson (1996) for adolescents. Each parenting style consists of five items (see questionnaires in Appendix A).

Validity and Reliability

The instrument waspre-tested in both Apam High SHS and Potsin SHS. The schools were used because they bear similar characteristics with those sampled for the study. Reliability of the results was analysed using Cronbach’s Alpha technique to assess the reliability of the scales. The results indicated a coefficient alpha level of 0.82. Garson (2006) however, posited that an alpha of at least 0.70 or higher is needed to make a scale reliable for measurement.

VII. RESULTS /FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Correlation Matrix of Factored Variables (Parental Styles)

Table 1 gives the relationship between three parental styles variables (parental styles)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parenting Styles</th>
<th>Academic Performance</th>
<th>Permissive</th>
<th>Authoritarian</th>
<th>Authoritative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permissive</td>
<td>-.147*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>.110*</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>.118*</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results give statistical credence to the fact that parenting styles have significant influence on children academic performance.

From Table 1, Permissive parenting style correlated negatively (r=-.147, p<.05) with three academic performance of the participants which presupposes that there is a negative relationship between the permissive parenting style and academic performance. The finding is consistent with the works of Cohen and Rice (1997), Dornbush et al. (1987) and Roberts, and Fraleigh (1997) which maintained that students with low grades rated their parents as less authoritative but more permissive. However, academic performance correlated positively with Authoritarian (r=.110, p<.05) and Authoritative (r=.118, p<.05) styles of parenting. This indicates that Authoritarian and Authoritative parenting styles have positive influence on the performance of students. These findings are consistent with Paulson (1994) and Steinberger et al. (1992) who believe parenting styles have asignificant influence on the academic performances of students.

Hypothesis Testing

The results of hypothesis tests conducted have been presented in Table 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis Statements</th>
<th>df and level of Sig</th>
<th>Chi-square and P-Values</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is no significant difference between authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles and academic performance of students.</td>
<td>12 (5%)</td>
<td>49.258 (0.001)</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no significant difference between the academic performance of participants with authoritative parents and participants with authoritarian parents.</td>
<td>9 (5%)</td>
<td>4.420 (0.464)</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 1 indicated there is no significant difference between authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles and academic performance of students. From the analysis, it could be seen that with a chi-square value of (χ2=49.258, p<.05) we reject the null hypothesis by concluding that there is a significant difference between the authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles and the academic performance of students. This indicates that all the levels of parenting styles have significant influence on academic performance of students. This result agrees with the findings of Nyarko (2008) and Dornbush et al (1987).
In addition, Hypothesis 2 posited that there is no significant difference between the academic performance of participants with authoritative parents and participants with authoritarian parents. With a chi-square value of ($\chi^2=4.420$, p>.05) indicates that the decision rule is to ‘Accept’ the null hypothesis and rather reject the alternate which maintains that there is a significant difference between the academic performance of participants with authoritarian parents. The finding corresponds with the findings of Dornbush et al. (1987) but contrary to the findings of Chin–Ling Hsieh (1998).

VIII. CONCLUSION(S)

The study concluded that authoritative parenting style and authoritarian parenting styles have positive influences on the academic performance of students but not students who experience the permissive style of parenting. Again, parenting styles have a significant influence on the academic performance of students and there are differences between the academic performance of students with authoritative parents and those with authoritarian parenting styles.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS/FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As found in the study, it is vital that parents adopt a blend of the authoritarian and authoritative styles of parenting and consistently enforce the attributes associated with it.

Also, parents need to be equipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills through guidance and counselling so that they can provide better guidance or parenting for their children to positively develop particularly towards academic excellence.

Schools should create the enabling environment that will ensure that students succeed in their chosen fields of study. Accordingly, the school must create the environment that would provide the students with warmth and nurturance, set academic expectations of maturity and control to help encourage them to perform better.

On the national level, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection must come up with policies that would ensure parents are more involved in the education of their children.

It is thus believed that there are other potential factors other than parenting styles alone that influence the academic performances of students hence academic performances of students cannot be fully understood without considering other deep-rooted factors such as culture/ethnic background which to a large extent defines the family structure the child finds himself. Understanding these tripod phenomena of parenting style, academic performance and cultural background of students will help stakeholders to better understand variables that contribute or influence the academic performance of students.

REFERENCES


www.rsisinternational.org
APPENDIX A

Parental Authority Questionnaire for Students

(SECTION A)

Demographic Information

Gender
Male [ ]
Female [ ]

Age
< 10 yrs. [ ]
11 – 14 yrs. [ ]
15 – 19 yrs. [ ]
20 – 24 yrs. [ ]
> 25 yrs. [ ]

Form
Form One [ ]
Form Two [ ]
Form Three [ ]

Programme of Study
Business [ ]
Science [ ]
Gen. Arts [ ]
Visual Arts [ ]
Home Econs. [ ]

(SECTION B)

Adapted form of Parental Questionnaire Authority

Instructions: For each of the following statements, circle the number of the 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) that best describes how that statement applies to you and your mother. Try to read and think about each statement as it applies to you and your mother during your years of growing up at home. There are no right or wrong answers, so don’t spend a lot of time on any one item. We are looking for your overall impression regarding each statement. Be sure not to omit any items.

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Permissive Parenting Style

1. While I was growing up, my mother felt that in a well-run home the children should have their way with the family as often as the parents do.  

1 2 3 4 5
2. Even if her children didn’t agree with her, my mother felt that it was for our own good if we were forced to conform to what she thought was right.

3. Whenever my mother told me to do something as I was growing up, she expected me to do it immediately without asking any questions.

4. As I was growing up, once the family policy had been established, my mother discussed the reasoning behind the policy with the children in the family.

5. My mother has always encouraged verbal give-and-take whenever I have felt that family rules and restrictions were unreasonable.

**Authoritarian Parenting Style**

6. My mother has always felt that what her children need is to be free to make up their own minds and to do what they want to do, even if this does not agree with what their parents might want.

7. As I was growing up, my mother did not allow me to question any decision she had made.

8. As I was growing up, my mother directed the activities and decisions of the children in the family through reasoning and discipline.

9. My mother has always felt that more force should be used by parents in order to get their children to behave the way they are supposed to.

**Authoritative Parenting Style**

10. As I was growing up, my mother did not feel that I needed to obey rules and regulations of behaviour simply because someone in authority had established them.
11. As I was growing up, I knew what my mother expected of me in my family, but I also felt free to discuss those expectations with my mother when I felt that they were unreasonable.

12. My mother felt that wise parents should teach their children early just who is the boss in the family.

13. As I was growing up, my mother seldom gave me expectations and guidelines for my behaviour.

14. Most of the time as I was growing up my mother did what the children in the family wanted when making family decisions.

15. As the children in my family were growing up, my mother consistently gave us direction and guidance in rational and objective ways.

Scoring: The adapted PAQ is scored easily by summing the individual items to comprise the subscale scores. Scores on each subscale range from 10 to 50.

## APPENDIX B

Table for determining sample size from a given population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>2200</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>2400</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>2600</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>2800</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>4500</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>7000</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>30000</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>40000</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>50000</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>75000</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>100000</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. — N is population size, S= Sample size