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Predictive influence of gender, parental socioeconomic status and teacher's qualification on English language performance of pupils with intellectual disability

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of gender, parental socioeconomic status and teacher's qualification on English language performance of pupils with intellectual disability in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. It was a survey research; as such the population used was students with mild intellectual disability, using purposive sampling technique, 50 students with mild intellectual disability were drawn for the study. For data analysis, multiple regression analysis statistical tools at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the data analysis showed that parents' socioeconomic status and teacher qualification had relationship on the English performance of pupils with intellectual disability; there was a joint and relative effect of the independent variables on English language performance. Based on the findings, recommendations made include government ensuring that necessary school materials for children with intellectual disability are made available and the teacher employed should be qualified.

Keywords: Gender, parental socioeconomic status, teacher's qualification, pupils with intellectual disability

Introduction

Education forms the very essence of most of our actions, this is because what an individual does is what is known and has been learnt, either through instructions, observation and assimilation. The mind is always processing old information or trying to analyse similarities as well as the tiny nuances within the context which makes the construct stand out or seem different even when an individual is not trying to learn something new. The implication is that the mind holds the potential to learn more. Narrowing the importance of education to children with intellectual disability; it is important for the children to go through the process of being educated to the highest possible level which they can attain because everybody has a right to education. Language is our primary source of communication, a method through which ideas are shared and thoughts with others. Some people even say that language is what separates man from animals and makes man human. There are thousands of languages in this world. Countries have their own national languages in addition to a variety of local languages spoken and understood by their people in different regions. Some languages are spoken by millions of people, others by only a few thousands. English is one of the languages used as a source of communication and is one of the core subjects deemed necessary for pupils to learn.

The importance of English language for enhancing educational attainment through improved communication ability can never be over emphasized. Students who have so many difficulties with their communication skills in English language may not function effectively, not only in English language but in their academics. Research has been carried out by different scholars on several factors that affect or are correlated to the academic performance of pupils with intellectual disability in English language. Many of them focus on parents' education, occupation, or home background (like family income, language of the home, activities of the family and work methods). While other studies looked at it from the teacher's variables (such as teacher's age, experience, education, gender etc) school variables (such as achievement motivation, of wards, parental attitudes towards education, the aspiration of parents etc.) and the demographic characteristics of the learner such as gender, age, birth position amongst others.

Batshaw and Shapiro (2002) [4] Rosenberg and Abbeduto (1998) [37] Zigler and Hodapp, (1986) [46] stated that the rate of intellectual disability caused by biomedical events is

equivalent across the socio-economic spectrum, children from low income families have disproportionately higher rate of intellectual disability that can be attributed to environmental factors likely because children from low income backgrounds often experience environmental risks that increase the likelihood of poor development outcome. The responsibility of training a child always lies in the hand of the parents. This is congruent with the common assertion sociologist that education can be an instrument of cultural change which is being taught from home.

Nwobia (2007) noted that gender is a complex social construct based upon biological sex but it is not the same as sex. It can also be argued that gender alone drives and that sex as an incidental feature". Wardaugh (1998) asserted that phonological differences exist between the speeches of men and women in some languages. This view aligns with Smith (1979) [42], who outlines various linguistic instances for examining sex and they include: pronunciations, vocabulary, grammatical form, use of code amongst others. Teachers' qualification has also been identified to be one of the important factors that can either help or affect the academic performance of a child with intellectual disabilities. The whole problems of teaching and learning revolved round teachers' importance in educational system cannot be overemphasized.

Teacher qualifications are related to student learning and have become targets of education reform. Quality teachers are often seen simply as good teachers and are those who exhibit desirable traits and uphold the standards and norms of the profession. Quality teachers are also considered to be those who bring about student learning. These teachers are called effective (Berliner, 2005) or successful (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005). Ehrenberg and Brewer (1995) and Ferguson (1991) submitted that students learn more from teachers with strong academic skills. Hammond (2000) in the study evaluating the evidence as to whether the teacher certification matters indicate that Middle and high school students learn better from teachers who hold Bachelor's or Master's degrees in the subjects they teach and from experienced teachers than they do from less experienced ones. Akinsolu (2010) noted that availability of qualified teachers determined the performance of students in schools.

Statement of the Problem

The academic performance of pupils with intellectual disability have not been encouraging especially in English language which has a long lasting impact on their learning because English is used as a means of communication when teaching the pupils, the ability to decode information during teaching and learning activities will help them to better get the instructions this has therefore necessitate the need to identify the factors that could be responsible for the poor performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability such as gender, parental socio-economic status and teachers qualification.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study is to determine the relationship between the independent variables (gender, parental socio-economic status and teachers' qualification) and the dependent variable (performance) in English language of pupils with intellectual disability. The specific purpose of the study is to determine:

- The significant relationship between independent variable (gender, parents' socio-economic status teachers' qualification) and the dependent variable (performance) of pupils with intellectual disability in Ibadan, Oyo state.
- The relative contribution of independent variable on the dependent variable of pupils with intellectual disability in Ibadan, Oyo state.
- The joint effect of independent variable on the dependent variable of pupils with intellectual disability in Ibadan, Oyo state.

Research Questions

The following questions have been derived and established for this study which are;

1. What is the significant relationship between the independent variable (gender, parents' socioeconomic status, teachers' qualification) and the dependent variable (performance) of pupils with intellectual disability in English language?
2. What is the relative contribution of the independent variable (gender, parents' socioeconomic status, teachers' qualification) on the dependent variable (performance) in English Language?
3. What is the joint contribution of the independent (gender, parents' socioeconomic status, teachers' qualification) variable on the dependent variable (academic performance)?

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted survey research design of correlational type.

Population

The population for the study were parents and teachers of pupils with mild intellectual disability and pupils with mild intellectual disability in Ibadan Oyo, state.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for this study consisted of 30 pupils with intellectual disability from selected special schools of pupils with mild intellectual disability, 10 teachers from the same selected schools and 30 parents of pupils with intellectual disability to give a total of 70. Random sampling technique was used for the selection of schools while purposive sampling technique for the selection of sample for the study.

Instruments

Three instruments were used for data collection they are

- Parents' Socio-economic status scale
- Teachers' Qualification Scale
- Achievement Test

Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability of the instrument achievement test was determined by a test re-test of the achievement test to give a reliability correlation value of 0.93.

Procedure for Data

The instrument was administered on the respondent selected for the study by the research assistant and were retrieved within 24hours.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected for this study were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA), was used to find the combined and relative effect of the independent variables (gender, parental socio-economic status and teachers qualification) on the dependent variable (academic performance).

Results

Research Question 1: What is the significant relationship between independent variable (Parent socio-economic status, Gender and Teacher qualification) and pupil's performance in English Language of pupils with intellectual disability?

Table 1: Relationship between Independent and Dependent Variables

	X ₁ parents socioeconomic status	X ₂ teachers qualification	X ₃ pupils gender	X ₄ pupils academic performance
X ₁ parents socioeconomic status	1			
X ₂ teachers' qualification	.416*	1		
X ₃ pupils gender	-.093	.773**	1	
X ₄ pupils academic performance	-.010	-.070	-.156	1

X₁= Parent's socio-economic status, X₂ = Teacher qualification, X₃= pupils' gender, X₄= Student Academic performance.

Table 1 shows the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was calculated to determine the relationship between and among the variable in the study. The result revealed that all the independent variable was significantly related to academic performance of students with intellectual disability except students' gender. Which implies that parents socio-economic status ($r = 0.416, p < 0.05$) and teacher's qualification was also

positively and significantly correlated with pupils academic performance ($r = 0.773, p < 0.05$) while pupils gender have no relationship with pupils performance in English language. The result revealed an improvement/increase in parent's socio-economic status and teacher's qualification will also lead to improvement of academic performance of pupils with intellectual disability.

Research Question 2: What is the significant joint contribution of parent socio-economic factors, pupils' gender and teacher qualification to performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability?

Table 2: Composite contribution of parents' socio-economic status, teacher qualification and pupil's gender to academic performance of student with intellectual disability

Model	Sources	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	104.465	4	26.116	.599	.030
	Residual	1002.785	23	43.599		
	Total	1107.250	27			
Model Summary						
Model		1				
R		.407 ^a				
R Square		.164				
Adjusted R Square		.432				
Std. Error of the Estimate		1.65523				

Table 2 revealed that the three independent variables namely: teacher parent socio-economic factor, teacher qualification, student's academic performance taken together jointly correlate positively ($R = .407$) with academic performance in English language of learners with intellectual disability, This implies that the three variables have positive multiple relationships with academic performance of student with intellectual disability Hence they have the potential of explaining change in student's academic performance. The three variables could explain 16.4% of total variance in academic performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability ($R^2 = .164$).

This leaves the remaining 83.6% to other factors that were not considered in the study. The level of significance of the composite contribution of all independent variables was presented in the ANOVA Table, the table shows that R value of .407 is significant ($F = .599, P < 0.05$). This implies the three variables jointly contributed to the performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability.

Research Question 3: What is the significant relative contribution of parents' socio-economic factors, teacher qualification and pupil's gender to performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability?

Table 3: Relative contributions of parent's socio-economic status, teacher's qualification and pupil's gender to performance of students with intellectual disability

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.746	1.253		2.192	.039
	Gender	.006	.020	.279	.323	.020
	Education qualification	.012	.012	.291	.928	.033
	Parent Socio-economic	-.033	.019	-.408	-1.723	.008

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

Table 3 shows the relative contribution of independent variables to academic performance of learners with intellectual disability. Among all the independent variables, parent socio-economic factors made the highest contribution to pupils performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability ($\beta = -.408, p < 0.05$) which is significant. Follow by teacher's qualification with coefficient ($\beta = .291, p < 0.05$) which is also significant and then student's gender ($\beta = .279, p > 0.05$). Therefore, there is significant contribution of parent's socio-economic factors, teacher's qualification and student's gender to the performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability.

Discussion of Findings

The result from the study is discussed as follows;

Table 1 show the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable in the study (parent's socio-economic status, teacher's qualification, pupil's gender) and performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability. The result revealed that there was significant relationship between parent's socio-economic factors and student and academic performance, teacher's qualification and student's academic performance whereas student's gender was not significantly related to students' academic performance.

These results corroborate some empirical finding in literature, (Brooks-Gunn & Markman, 2005; Hart & Risley, 1995) [6] reported that low socio-economic factors of parent restrict early learning experiences and limitations in exposure to Standard American English, which relates to early and future academic success (Sampson, Sharkey, & Raudenbush, 2008) [] observed that low-income children start school with less linguistic and basic academic knowledge, they tend to remain behind academically and are disproportionately referred for special education services. These factors contribute to the phenomenon frequently referred to as the "achievement gap" (Brooks-Gunn & Markman, 2005) [6].

More so, the qualification of a teacher is very vital in teaching children with intellectual disability, because the teacher would be able to pass enough knowledge to the children in the simplest, concrete and more real way to them that is the reason why Akinsolu (2010) asserted that availability of qualified teachers determined the performance of students in schools. Also, because the teacher is qualified, She/He has enough knowledge on how to handle the children. It is very important that teachers of children with intellectual disability are qualified to inculcate the right habit, attitude, and behaviour in them therefore making them not only learn but also for them to have morals (Braun, 2005).

Table 2 and 3 shows the composite and relative contribution of parent's socio-economic status, teacher's qualification, and pupil's gender to academic performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability. The result revealed that there was significant joint and relative contribution of all the independent variable to student's academic performance of which parent's socio-economic factors contributed most to student performance. These results are also in line with findings in literature. Nuthana (2007) carried out a gender analysis of academic achievement of school pupils of Karnataka, the results of study showed that there was no significant difference in

academic achievement of boys and girls. Bruni *et al.* (2006) explored the relationships among academic achievement, demographic and psychological factors, the findings of the study indicated significant difference in academic achievement of male and female students. Female students were found to have higher academic achievement than males.

Parent socio-economic factors have also been found to be an important determinant of student academic performance. Bhatnagar and Sharma (1992) carried out research to investigate the relationship between education of parents and academic achievement of pupils. Also, Sharma and Tahira (2011) investigated the influence of parental education, parental occupation and family size on science achievement of the secondary school pupils in western Uttar Pradesh in India. The results indicated that family variables including parental education had significant relationship with the achievement of their children. Hence, it could be concluded that the gender and geographical area in which the student live and are exposed may influence academic success of the pupils at all levels of education. Gender, location and Parental education have direct influence on the academic achievement of the pupils.

Finally, the qualification of intellectual disability students' teacher was widely emphasis are a chief contributor to student's performance. Gombert (2002) [2] argued that these results indicate that children with Down syndrome use phonological knowledge while reading and there is a significant relationship between the qualification of the teacher and the performance of these children in their development of reading skills. In the same vein, Stronge (2007) assert a positive relationship between teachers' verbal ability and composite pupil's achievement, as verbal ability has been considered an indicator of teacher quality. Therefore parent's socio-economic factors, teacher's qualification, and student's gender are function of academic performance of students with intellectual disability.

Conclusion

The findings of the study show the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable in the study that is, parent's socio-economic factor, teacher's qualification, pupils gender and academic performance of pupils with intellectual disability. The result revealed that there was significant relationship between parent's socio-economic factors and pupils and academic performance, teacher's qualification and pupils' academic performance whereas pupils gender was not significantly related to students' academic performance. It is important to know that the independent variable is very much effective on the academic performance in English language of pupils with intellectual disability.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, Parents should be encouraged to provide the necessary materials needed for their child with intellectual disability's education especially in English language irrespective of their socioeconomic status because providing these necessary materials, would help build the confidence and the level of communication of the child in the society. More so they should be advised to relate with other parents of children having similar condition with their child, be ready and willing to help the child make a success in his/her academics even when he/she

is not doing p to the expected standard.

The educational body should ensure that the teachers that teach these children are qualified and understand the ethics and rules that bind them and making sure that they educate and impart the right knowledge to the children. They should be encouraged to study and acquire more knowledge and information. The government should ensure that necessary school materials for children with intellectual disability are made available and the teacher employed should be qualified.

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