Effects of Maternal Employment on the Educational Development of Children in Bariga Local Council Development Area of Lagos State

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Abstract

The study determines the effects of maternal employment on the educational development of children in Bariga Local Government Area, Lagos State. Questionnaires were administered to 200 working mothers which were randomly selected and data collected were analysed using paired sampled t – test and descriptive statistic. The results shows that; the mean scores of maternal employment and children educational development are 15.95 and 16.55 respectively with t – value of -11.96. The mean score of maternal employment and children physical development are 15.95 and 16.45 respectively with t – value of -13.00, these are significant at p<.05 level of significance. Based on findings of the study, it is recommended that working mothers should create a schedule regardless of the time and stress they go through at work to check on their children's educational needs, improvement and setbacks among others.

Background to the Study

Family is one of the most basic and fundamental social institutions in which the child comes into existence, raised, and prepares for active participation in the social life of the society. A woman as one of the two pillars of a family plays dual roles of mother and wife; considering her physical and mental characteristics impose some burden of responsibility on her. Such responsibility includes, managing the house affairs and the family, taking care and bringing up the children, and establishing a friendly and stable atmosphere within the family (Fadayi, 2009).

A society like Nigeria is a fast growing country and government is highly involved and interested in the educational development of children. The need to make all children have access to quality education has made the Federal Government to reintroduce the Universal Basic Education which provides free and compulsory education for all children in Nigeria from Basic One to Basic Nine. This need has made the various tiers of governments to come out with series of incentives, which could encourage children enrolment in schools (Fagbemi, 2006). The effort of the Federal Government has not yielded any positive results, because the education in Nigeria has been declining in purpose during the years in terms of achievement in writing and oral examinations (Raymond, 2014).

Maternal employment is seen as women who are mothers and who work outside the home for income in addition to the work they perform at home in raising their children (Encyclopedia of Children's Health, 2010). Women who involve in work outside the home for income and also raising children are becoming rampant in the society. The societal changes in the family system are more visibly seen in the increase in the

number of women who are engaging in paid jobs. The trend of women labour force has changed drastically some decades ago, single women formed the bulk of women in labour force as at that time few married women take up paid employment and were mainly known as stay at home mother's (Hoffman, 1997). In the United States alone, women who are having children under the age of eighteen and also in the labour force which takes them outside the homes have increased from 58.0% in the mid-1990s to 69.9% of women while the participation rate of married mother (67.6%) remained lower than the rate for mothers with other marital status (74.8%) (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2015).In Nigeria, the labour force participation rate is 64.5% percent for women and 70.3% for men(Nigeria Bureau of Statistic, 2014)

Oguntola (2010) notes that with increasing global economic recession majority of women have to take career jobs which are to the detriment of the family. The cost of maintaining and operating a home requires that both spouses to work. It has been found out that two incomes are needed to sustain the average American lifestyles even Nigerians. The demand for essentials such as homes, cars, foods, private school and outing has gone beyond the income ability of the average income per family. The housing expenses on the average take almost 70.00% of the average husbands' income (Burkett, 2010) even in Lagos, the situation is not different.

Women have been recognised as the permanent part of the workforce and the main care giver of the family but with child care institutions the responsibilities of a working mother has been drastically reduced. A child care offers support to working parents and it helps to promote physical, social and mental development (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2004). The need to accommodate the children of working mothers have made many children care centers to provide intensive facilities that can make lives comfortable for the children. Shalala (2000) believes that child care centers have become important in the country because they cater for the needs of working mother's children. They encourage mothers to have children and work at the same time. These daycare and preschools are to provide all what the children need to an extent before the mothers come for them (Shalala, 2000). The study conducted by the department for Education and Employment (2010) found out that quality preschool, child care and mother's level of education have positive impact on children's education. These findings were based on the study carried out on more than 2,000 children. They found that level of mother's education has been a promoting factor in children's education, that is, working women who are highly educated have been seen to be able to produce educational competent children when they are actively involved in their children's educational development. Brooks-Gunn (2010) believes that highly educated working mothers are able to have children who are educationally balanced despite their career. The education of these women has helped to reduce the negative impact of their works on the children. Franscesconi (2010) adds that educated mothers are more productive than uneducated mother's.

Sims and Bill (2010) conducted a study on "moving mother's from welfare to work" note that there is a decline in child-development activities on children whose mothers are working. Children of working mothers tend to grow slowly and spend more time with television which has negative effect on children's physical development. Weiss, King and

Perkins (2006) carried out a study on "Low income working mother's involvement in their children's education". 390 low income mothers were selected in three regions across the United States and they included White (36%) and Latino (24%). Data were collected in the number of hours they worked or attended to their children's school. The study revealed working mothers have less involvement in their children's school work. This suggests that the nature of mother's work do have effect on children's development.

Similarly, Doughty (2010) found out that children whose mother's return to work after their babies were born have the chance of damaging the children's prospect in later life which is due to some factors like not eating healthy food, not actively involved in their children's education among others. Law (2010) also found out that working mothers have negative impact on their children's physical development. The study found out that mother's active involvement in their children's development is inadequate which has a negative effect on the children's physical development.

Center for Policy Alternatives, (2000) reported that contemporary families are faced with varieties of demands from family and work. The long hours that parents spend at work, and the increasing number of low-income single-parent families transitioning from welfare to work, may explain why many working women report worry over how to make ends meet while still spending time with their families. A mother is particularly important not because she has special skills, neither educated nor working but because she cares more about the children than any other person and her instructions reflects a very strong influence on attitudes, abilities and behaviour of children (Abdul, Allahino and Roshan, 2012). Most of those children who are successful and well-adjusted come from homes where educated working mother attitudes are favorable and a wholesome relationship existed between children and parents that is the mothers are actively involved in their educational development (Priyanka and Devina, 2010).

Mother give her children love, affection and care from birth; therefore she needs to examine herself before taking on a pay job so as to allow her actively get involved in her children's educational development and also to continue to show the necessary affection and care. Abdul, Allahino and Roshan (2012) opined that a mother must consider the main purpose of her working and compare her earnings and the basic needs of her children and home. This must be into consideration before a working mother can actively get involved in their children's educational development.

Ayse (2014) studied the effects of maternal job quality on children's reading achievement and reviewed literature on the effects of maternal employment on child outcomes and provided different argumentation and technique as to why and how maternal employment might affect child outcomes. Her findings are consistent with the literature that argues that maternal employment tends to be beneficial for child outcomes. In this plight, this study investigates the effects of maternal employment on the educational development of children in Bariga Local Council Development Area of Lagos state

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, mothers in paid employment often have to make difficult choices of providing additional income which sometimes affect the quality of their children's educational development and their family living condition in general**.** Studies submitted that children of women who work are slow in learning at their early years of growth since they are left unsupervised and they do not have

the privilege to have motherly care. It is on this note this paper examined the effect of maternal employment on the educational development of children.

Research Questions

The study provided answers to the following research questions:

1. Is there any difference between maternal employment and children educational development?
2. Is there any difference between maternal employment and children physical development?
3. Is there any difference between mother's frequent visits to their children's school and children educational development?
4. To what extent do working mothers involve actively in their children school activities?

Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey design.

The population of the study is made up of mothers of Basic one pupils in selected designated schools in Bariga Local Council Development Area of Lagos State. A sample of two hundred mothers of basic one pupils' were selected through stratified random sampling technique since the numbers of basic one working mothers were not evenly distributed.

The instrument adopted the Likert rating scale of four (4) points; SA- Strongly Agree; A- Agree; D- disagree; SD- Strongly Agree and the data collected were analysed using Paired sampled t – test and descriptive statistics

Results

Research Question One

1. Is there any difference between maternal employment and children educational development?

Table 1: Paired sampled statistics on the effect maternal employment on children educational development

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Df	Sig.
Pair 1	Maternal Employment	15.9450	200	3.65221	.25825	-11.963	199	.000
	Educational Development	16.5500	200	3.45066	.24400			

From Table 1: The mean scores of the maternal employment and educational development are 15.9450 and 16.5500 respectively with t – value of -11.963 which significant at (.000<.05). This implies that there is a significant difference between maternal employment and children educational development.

Research Question Two

2. Is there any difference between maternal employment and children physical development?

Table 2: Paired samples statistics on the effect of maternal employment on their children physical development

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	Df	Sig.
Pair 1	Maternal Employment	15.9450	200	3.65221	.25825	-13.007	199	.000
	Physical Development	16.4500	200	3.45066	.24400			

From Table 2: The mean scores of the maternal employment and physical development are 15.9450 and 16.4500 respectively with t – value of -13.007

which is significant at (.000<.05). This implies that there is a significant difference between maternal employment and children physical development.

Research Question Three

3. Is there any difference between mother's frequent visits to their children's school and children educational development?

Table 3: Paired samples statistics on mother's frequent visits to their children's school and children educational development

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig.
Pair 1	Mother Visits	13.8600	200	4.72143	.33386	-19.280	199	.000
	Educational Development	16.5500	200	3.45066	.24400			

From Table 3: The mean scores of mothers' visits and their children's educational development are 13.8600 and 16.4500 respectively with a t – value of -19.280 which is significant at (.000<.05). This implies that there is a significant difference between mother's frequent visit to their children's school and children educational development.

Research Question Four

4. To what extent do working mothers involve actively in their children school activities?

Table 4: Descriptive statistics on working mothers involve actively in their children school activities

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Mother Visits	200	5.00	20.00	13.8600	.33386	4.72143
Valid N (listwise)	200					

From table 4: Bench mark mean is 12.5000 and estimated mean is 13.8600. The estimated mean is greater than the bench mark which implies that the extent at which working mothers actively involved in their children school activities is high.

Discussion

Findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference between maternal employment and children's educational attainment which implies that mothers quality time with their children in getting actively involved in their children's educational activities like doing homework together, sporting activities and hands on activities among others, despite work, they would know their children's academic needs and find ways to fulfill them. The study agrees with Bosch, Deelen, and Euwals (2010) which posited that the quality of parent-child activities is higher, because mothers who work are happier and reflect this in their parenting. Especially for the likes of mothers investigated in this study, women may be happier when they are able to combine family life with a paid (part-time/full time) job. The findings also agree with Johnson (2012) which asserts that a high rate of labor market participation among mothers of school-aged children is positively related to the cognitive development, if mothers work for a substantial number of hours (at least in a large part-time job).

Also, result of the findings revealed that there is a significant difference between maternal employment and children physical development. The

study is supported by Law (2010) which posited that working mothers have negative impact on their children's physical development. Their study found out that lack of inadequate time with their children which working has taken, has made children born to working mothers to eat unhealthy food and lack physical activity. The mothers do not have adequate capacity to provide their children with healthy foods and opportunity for physical activities since they are highly constrained by time and jobs.

Findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference between mother's frequent visits to their children's school and children educational development which means that mothers' frequent visit to their children school will promote their children's educational development. The children would see their mother as source of motivation to perform better in their academic activities. This finding agrees with the study of Nargis (2012) that asserts mother's visit to children's school has effect on children's educational achievement. The study further explained that parents who visit their children in school know how their wards are faring in their school activities and also how they can be of help to support them where need be.

The study revealed that the extent at which working mothers actively get involved in their children's school activities is high. The mothers opined that their frequent visit to the children's school is a major source of encouragement to perform better academically. The children know that any errors committed during the school hours will be reported to the mother. This agrees with Ayse (2014) which posited that parental involvement in children school activities has positive relationship with their educational achievement.

Conclusion

The study has found out that there is a significant difference between maternal employment and children educational development. There is a significant difference between maternal employment and their physical development. Also, the study further revealed that there is a significant difference between mothers' visit to children school and children educational development and the extent at which working mothers actively get involved in their children's school activities is high. The study posited that the quality of parent-child activities may be higher, because mothers who work are happier and reflect this in their parenting especially for the like of mothers investigated in this study.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that;

Working mothers should create a schedule regardless of the time and stress they go through at work to check on their children's educational needs, improvement and setbacks.

Working mothers should be given some considerations in places of work to have time to attend to their children school activities.

Firms or organizations should be mandated to set up child-day care in their offices to cater for the needs of working mothers with their children.

Government should establish a policy that will allow mothers who are rearing children to leave office early during their children daycare period.

Governments should encourage mothers of school-aged children to re-enter the labour market whenever they so desire or reduce their work hours, since maternal employment is positively associated with child outcome.

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