Parental Involvement and Peer Influence as Correlates of Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension in Senior Secondary Schools in Oyo State, Nigeria

Omonike R. Bateye, Ph.D, S. O. Olatunji, Ph.D and Prof. D.O Fakeye
Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, University of Ibadan

Abstract
The study investigated parents' involvement and peer influence as correlates of students' achievement in English reading comprehension in senior secondary schools in Ibadan South West Local Government. This study adopted the descriptive survey design of the correlational type. Simple random sampling technique was used to select five (5) public secondary schools from thirty-six public secondary schools in Ibadan South West Local Government Area of Oyo State. Fifty students were selected from each school, making a total of two hundred and fifty (250) SS II students. Three research instruments were used for data collection: Questionnaire on Parents Involvement (r=.86), Questionnaire on Peer Influence (r=.84) and Achievement Test in English Reading Comprehension (r=.78). Data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. The results were interpreted at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study showed that there was a positive low relationship between parents' involvement and students achievement in English reading comprehension ($r = 0.185$; $p<0.05$) and a positive low relationship between peer influence and students achievement in English reading comprehension ($r = 0.167$ $p<0.05$). It was also revealed that parents' involvement $r = 1.398$; $p>0.05$ and peer influence $r = 0.557$; $p>0.05$ were found not to have any significant relationship with students' achievement. The composite contribution of the independent variables $F_{(2,247)} = 4.53$ to achievement in reading English comprehension were significant. It was further revealed that none of the independent variables had predictions on students' achievement. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that parents should encourage positive peer relationships among their children. Government should encourage literacy among parents. Teachers should also strictly monitor students' progress based on reading exercises and assignments.

Keywords: English reading comprehension, parents' involvement, peer influence, achievement

Introduction

In order to learn English appropriately, reading is an important skill that should be taken into consideration. It is the fastest and simplest way that enables students to strengthen their knowledge base. Besides, it helps students to raise their educational level and reinforces positively the learning of the other language skills (Butler, Urrutia, Buenger and Hunt, 2010). Reading is a dynamic meaning construction process that necessitates active and effective communication between author and reader. Reading is the process of making meaning out of written symbols. This process includes more than interpreting alphabetic symbols on a page (Dima, 2018).

According to Anthony (2015), reading is a cognitive process that involves decoding symbols to arrive at meaning. Reading is an active process of constructing meanings of words. Getrude (2015) views reading as a way of understanding the printed words or symbols. Brown (2016) asserts that reading is the act of knowing the mind of the author. Bright (2018) notes that reading is the identification of symbols and association of appropriate meaning with them. Reading is a process whereby one looks at and comprehends what has been written (Yashpal and Sunil, 2005).

Comprehension is seen as an integration of skills of vocabulary knowledge and its development marked by purposeful and interactive strategies (NPR 2003). Comprehension is the interaction among word identification, prior knowledge and comprehension skills. (Prado and Plourde, 2005). Reading comprehension is the ability to process a text, understand its meaning, and integrate it with what the reader already knows (Keer, 2004). Fundamental skills required in efficient reading comprehension are knowing meaning of words, ability to understand meaning of a word from discourse context, ability to follow organisation of passage and to identify antecedents and references in it, ability to draw inferences from a passage about its contents, ability to identify the main thought of a passage, ability to answer questions answered in a passage, ability to recognise the literary devices or propositional structures used in a passage and determine its tone, to understand the situational mood (agents, objects, temporal and spatial reference points, casual and intentional inflections, etc.) conveyed for assertions, questioning, commanding, refraining etc. and finally ability to determine writer's purpose, intent and point of view, and draw inferences about the writer (Keer, 2004).

According to Grabe (2014), ability to comprehend is influenced by readers' skills and their ability to process information. If word recognition is difficult, students use too much of their processing capacity to read individual words, which interferes with their ability to comprehend what is read. There are many reading strategies to improve reading comprehension and inferences, including improving one's vocabulary, critical text analysis (intertextuality, actual events vs. narration of events, etc.) and practicing deep reading. Having excellent reading comprehension skills is crucial. It increases the enjoyment and effectiveness of reading and helps not only academically, but professionally, and in a person's personal life. Being able to understand the meaning behind the text helps students develop intellectually, socially, and professionally (Grabe 2014).

Reading comprehension is an integral part of English language examination questions. It can be deduced from the way English Language examinations are structured that students' poor achievement in reading comprehension is one of the reasons for poor achievement in English Language. Candidates are required to take three papers in WAEC English Language examinations, total marks for the three papers is 100. Paper 1 which includes essay writing, comprehension and summary writing carries 100 marks. Comprehension has to do with understanding and extracting meaning from spoken communication or materials read. Thus, poor ability to internalise texts leads to poor achievement in English language.

However, it is disheartening to note that the poor performance of students in English language at public examinations in recent times has been explained to be a major cause of decline in the general academic

performance and standard of education in Nigeria. In 2015, the West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC) recorded 38.68 percent (529,425) of the total 1,593,442 candidates had similar results. Also WASSCE conducted in 2016, 31.28 percent (529,425) of the total 1,692,435 candidates had similar results. In 2017, 59.22 percent (923,486) of the total 1,559,162 candidates who sat for the examination obtained credits and above in five or more subjects including English language and mathematics and April/May WASSCE conducted in 2018, 49.98 percent (923,486) of the total 1,572,396 candidates who sat for the examination made credits and above in five or more subjects including English language and mathematics.

Efforts to address this problem have made researchers to investigate variables such as school environment, school location, family background and home study environment as predictors of students' achievement in reading comprehension but with less emphasis on parents' involvement and peer influence as predictors of students' achievement in English reading comprehension. The attitude of students towards learning can be influence through parental involvement and peer influence which can also be used as solution to remedy poor achievement of students in English language.

Parents' involvement is the amount of participation a parent has when it comes to schooling and her child's life. Some schools foster healthy parental involvement through events and volunteer opportunities, but sometimes it's up to the parents to involve themselves in their children's education (Janosik 2005). Parents can ensure only that their children receive benefits from parental involvements by staying up to date on what is happening in the classroom, helping her child with school opportunities and knowing correct safety procedure for the school. Involvement of parents in young children's educational endeavours promotes parental engagement and has a major impact on children's academic success and social development (Pomerantz and Monti, 2015).

Those students who get involvement and attention from their parents can be more successful in their educational career and more productive to the society. It is a common perceived assumption that academic achievement of students cannot be possible by only providing them with good school and learning environment, until parents play their positive role towards their studies. When parents are involved in their children's education, their children's attitude towards their school and education becomes more positive. Parents can provide a more stable and continuously positive influence that could enhance and complement what the school fosters on their children. In this regard, parental involvement is undeniably critical (Mji and Makgato, 2006).

Studies have shown that students perform better academically and have more positive school attitude if they have parents who are aware, knowledgeable and involved (Anthony and Walshaw, 2009). Parents who are involved, tend to guild their children and encourage them to focus on studies and even spend more time developing the students' vocabulary to increase their success rate in an English examination. Cai (2003) reported that parental involvement is a statistically significant predictor of students' achievement in English language. It promotes positive behaviours and emotional development. It has been demonstrated that students whose parents were highly educated and exposed to English Language before in their lives tend to show more success in English than their peers whose parents were illiterates (Olalekan, 2016). Parents' involvement with reading activities at home has a significant positive influence not only on reading achievement, language comprehension and expressive language skills, but also on children's interest in reading and attitude towards reading (Mwangi, 2018).

Aside from parental involvement, peer groups are significant in the social, psychological and educational development of students. A class consisting of groups of children can be described as peer group. It is important to note that peers and the parents or home a child comes from, matters most in the life of a child. The influence of peer group pressure as well as the amount of parental support received by a child or individual learners has tremendous positive or negative impact to play in the academic well-being (Friedel, Cortina, Turner and Midgley, 2010).

Peer influence is a pressure exerted by peer group in encouraging a person to change or achieve his/her values or desires. Peer influence occurs when people provide knowledge, experience, emotional, social or practical help to each other. Generally, people cannot live alone in society. They need social belongingness, attachment and the feelings of affiliation for others. This need for affiliation may be based on genetics or experience. It constitutes a relatively stable trait or behaviour. Peer influence and parent involvement can have been observed by scholars to have significant effect on the student's attitude toward learning, the teacher's motivation and background knowledge require by students to excellent in English language (Al-Sheyab, Gharaibeh and Kheirallah, 2018).

Peer influence can be either positive or negative. Friedel, Cortina, Turner and Midgley, (2010) concluded that there is a significant influence of peer group on academic performance of students. A student is more likely to develop a positive attitude towards learning if he or she is associated with student who show positive learning attitude too. Zimring (1998) observed that peer influence is the primary contextual factor contributing to student's tendency to make risky decisions such as missing classes or reading for extra hours to get good understanding of what is being taught.

Also, the language of communication in a peer group can either improve or decrease a student's vocabulary which in turn affects their ability to comprehend while reading. It has been observed that students who speak pidgin tend to make more grammatical blunders in English examinations and test. Basically, people need social contacts that suit them. Sometimes they need parent's help, love, care and guidance and some time they need friend's intimacy, affection and love. Generally speaking, adolescents find their friendships to be enjoyable: together they relax, joke, watch television, and participate in sports activities. (George, Abisola and Happiness, 2017)

Peer pressure and influence might result in children: choosing the same clothes, hairstyle or jewellery as their friends, listening to the same music or watching the same TV shows as their friends, changing the way they talk, or the words they use, doing risky things or breaking

rules, working harder at school, or not working as hard, dating or taking part in sexual activities and smoking or using alcohol or other drugs (Al-Sheyab, Gharaibeh and Kheirallah, 2018). Peer relationships are common in schools and homes, students in the midst of their group transformed into the true picture of their behaviour, they feel more comfortable among fellow students but feel morose at home or at the presence of teacher. The most important influence on student behaviour to learning is not always the teacher but the fellow students. Peer pressure refers to the influence exerted by a peer group in encouraging a person to change his/her attitudes, values in order to conform to group norms. Peer groups are an important socialization agent. Peer group is defined as a small group of similarly age, fairly close friends, sharing the same activities (Ajibade, 2016).

Peer pressure is defined as when people your own age encourage or urge you to do something or to keep from doing something else, no matter if you personally want to do it or not. The subtler form of peer pressure is known as peer influence, and it involves changing one's behaviour to meet the perceived expectations of others. In general, most teens conform to peer pressure about fairly insignificant things like music, clothing, or hairstyles. When it comes to more important issues like moral values, parents still remain more influential than the peer group (Daniel and Felix, 2014). Therefore, this study investigated parents' involvement and peer influence as correlates of students' achievement in English reading comprehension in senior secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Statement of the Problem

English reading comprehension as one of the fundamental aspects of English language helps in a great extent to test students' cognitive ability to internalise texts not only in English language but across all school subjects. Despite the importance attached to reading comprehension especially in public examination, students' performance in this aspect of English is still very low. Thereby, bringing about students' poor performance in English language in public examination. Efforts to address this problem have been made researchers over the years to investigate variables such as school environment, school location or setting, family background, home study environment as predictors of reading comprehension achievement but with less emphasis on parents' involvement and peer influence as predictors of students' achievement in English reading comprehension. Therefore, this study investigated parents' involvement and peer influence as correlates of students' achievement in English reading comprehension in senior secondary schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1) What relationship exists between the independent variables (parents' involvement, peer influence) and students' achievement in English reading comprehension?
2) What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (parents' involvement, peer influence) to students' achievement in English reading comprehension?
3) What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (parents' involvement, peer influence) to students' achievement in English reading comprehension?

Significance of the Study

This study revealed the relationship that existed among parents' involvement, peer influence and students' achievement in English reading comprehension thereby, helping to reduce students' failure rate in English reading comprehension and English language generally. Findings of this study would make students to know factors that can hinder their performance in English reading comprehension. Through the findings of this study, educational stakeholders would be guided on identifying and working on factors that could enhance students' achievement in English reading comprehension. Also, the study would add to the pool of research on solution to poor performance of students in English reading comprehension and English language.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey design of the correlational type. Simple random sampling technique was used to select five (5) public secondary schools from thirty-six public secondary schools in Ibadan South West Local Government Area of Oyo State. Fifty students were selected from each school, making a total of two hundred and fifty (250) SS II students. In all, 250 SS II students participated in the study. Three research instruments were used for data collection: Questionnaire on Parents Involvement (r=.86), Questionnaire on Peer Influence (r=.84) and Achievement Test in English Reading Comprehension (r=.78). Data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. The results were interpreted at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research question 1: What relationship exists among the independent variables (parents' involvement and peer influence) and students' achievement in English reading comprehension?

Table 1: Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationship between Independent Variables and Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension

Variables	Achievement	Parental Influence	Peer Influence
Achievement	1		
Parent Involvement	0.185** 0.003	1	0.785** 0.000
Peer Influence	0.167** 0.08	0.785** 0.000	1
Mean	53.7	52.9	52.1
STD.D	19.38	13.42	12.65

* denotes significant at p<0.05

Table 1 shows that there is a positive, low relationship between parents' involvement (r = 0.185; p<0.05) and students' achievement in English Reading Comprehension among secondary school students. This means that parent involvement is related to students' achievement in English reading comprehension. Also, there is a positive, low relationship between peer influence (r = 0.167 p<0.05) and students' achievement in English reading comprehension. This means that peer influence is related to students' achievement in English reading comprehension.

Research Question 2: What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (parents' involvement and peer influence) to students' achievement in English reading comprehension?

Table 2: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis on Composite Contribution of Independent Variables to Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension

Sources of Variance	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Significant
Regression Residual Total	3315.234 90299.166 93614.400	2 247 249	1657.617 365.584	4.534	.012*
R = 0.188 R Square = 0.035 Adjusted R Square = 0.028 Std. Error of the Estimate = 19.120					

Table 2 indicates that the joint contribution of the independent variables (parent involvement and peer influence) to the prediction of students' achievement in English reading comprehension is significant ($F_{(2,247)}$ = 4.53; Adj R^2 = 0.028; p<0.05). This implies that parents' involvement and peer influence variables were taken together, they jointly contribute to students' achievement in English reading comprehension. Table 4.2 reveals a multiple regression coefficient (R = 0.035), which means that parent involvement and peer influence have a joint positive relationship with students' achievement in English reading comprehension. This implies that parent involvement and peer influence are positively and significantly related to students' achievement in English reading comprehension. Table 4.2 further reveals a multiple regression adjusted (R^2 = 0.028). This implies that 2.8% difference in students' achievement in English reading comprehension is as the result of the joint contribution of parent involvement and peer influence while the remaining 97.2.0% may be due to other factors and residuals not under investigation in this model.

Research Question 3: What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (parents' involvement and peer influence) to students' achievement in English reading comprehension?

Table 3: Summary of Multiple Regression Showing Relative Contribution of Independent Variables on Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension

Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficient**	**Rank**	**T**	**Sig.**
	Beta	**Std. Error**	**Beta (β)**			
(Constant)	38.433	5.318			7.228	0.000
Parent Involvement	0.204	0.146	0.141	2nd	1.398	0.163
Peer Influence	0.086	0.154	0.056	1st	0.557	0.578

Table 3 shows that the relative contribution of parents' involvement (β = 0.141; t = 1.398; p>0.05) to students' achievement in English Reading Comprehension is not significant. This indicates that parent involvement does not predict students' achievement in English Reading Comprehension. The relative contribution of peer influence (β = 0.056; t = 0.557; p>0.05) to students' achievement in English reading comprehension is not significant. This indicates that peer influence does not predict students' achievement in English reading comprehension.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 revealed that there was a significant low but positive relationship between parents' involvement on students' achievement in English reading comprehension. This finding corroborates the findings of Fauzia, Muhammad and Aabida (2016) who found that parental involvement has a significant impact on secondary student's achievement level also, parental involvement plays a vital role in their children academic achievements. This finding is against the finding of Bankole and Ogunsakin (2015) who found out that peer group has significant influence on academic performance of students. Also, there is significant relationship between peer group and academic performance of students.

Table 2 showed that the joint contribution of the two-independent variable on the dependent variable (student's achievement in English Reading Comprehension). This is consistent with the findings of Akomolafe and Veronica (2016), who found that both peer influence and parental support are predictors of academic performance of senior secondary school students. This is against the finding of Ajibade (2016) who found that parent involvement and peer influence were not significant in the prediction of students' achievement in English reading comprehension.

Table 3 revealed that relative contribution of each of the independent variables (Parents Involvement and Peer Influence) is not significant. This is consistent with the finding of Akhtar and Zarina (2011) who found that parent pressure affect positively and peer pressure negatively affects students' academic achievement. This negates the finding of Ajibade (2016) who found out that the peer group influences learning.

Conclusion

Parents' involvement and peer influence were found to be significantly related to students' achievement in reading English comprehension. There was no significant relationship found between parents' involvement and peer influence on students' achievement in reading English comprehension. It can be concluded from the study that students' achievement in English reading comprehension could be enhanced by peer influence.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that parents should encourage positive peer relationship among their wards. With this they are actively involved in their wards education and also encourage positive peer influence. Parents must regularly and constantly communicate with the teacher to know the level of achievement of their wards. This will in turn help parents to understand their wards better. Government should encourage literacy among parents. This could be done by installing more public libraries, increasing their awareness through seminars, T.V programmes, and so on telling them the importance of their involvement in their wards education.

Parents should encourage their wards to read more at home. This can be done by constantly giving reading exercises to their children even right from their young age. Parents should encourage their children to cultivate the habit of using the library and\or encourage their friends to do the same.

School on the other hand is advised to have equipped library facilities in each public secondary schools and load tem with current textbooks that can assist students to learn.

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