



The Effects of Parental Social Support on Students' Academic Performance among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar-ES-Salaam City Council

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Article Info

ISSN (online): 2582-7138

Volume: 05

Issue: 06

November-December 2024

Received: 02-10-2024

Accepted: 05-11-2024

Page No: 880-886

Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the Effects of Parental Social Support on Students' Academic Performance among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City Council. The objectives of the research were; to investigate the effects of parental social support on students' academic performance among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City Council, to investigate how parental social support to students' cognitive development can improve students' academic performance and to assess the extent to which student parental social guidance can improve students' academic performance. The study was guided by the Parental Involvement Theory which focuses on devotion of resources by the parents to the child within a given domain. It used a mixed approach combining both Quantitative and Qualitative approach. Data collection tools used were Questionnaire, Interview, Documentary Review and Observation. The sample included 179 respondents with the following distribution; 97 students, 52 parents, 10 Head teachers and 20 Teachers. Data presentation was by means of Tables, Charts and Figures. Analysis of quantitative data was done by SPSS whereas qualitative data were analysed through content analysis. The findings revealed that parental social support to students in terms of parental guidance, support to cognitive development and parental social support contributed to improved academic performance of students. However, parental social support could be ineffective due to the following constraints; time available for parents to interact with their children was too short; there were economic stressors on parents who could not support their children financially; there were language communication barriers with children; there was an acute lack of knowledge on modern parenting strategies and technological skills as well as growing societal pressures and expectations. Therefore, the study recommended to parents, to children and to the community as follows: Parents should devote more time to helping their children perform better in academics through all three types of guidance: personality development guidance, behavioural development guidance and support to cognitive development. Children should ensure that they take an active role in following the guidance provided by their parents. Particularly, children should be ready to communicate with their parents freely, reveal openly the challenges they face at school and discuss what the parents should do to address the challenges. Community members should see that the role of social support is not only limited to the parents who have school children in school but also is a responsibility of all the community members in various ways, given that it takes a village to raise a child (Clinton, H. R, 1996).

Keywords: Parental Social Support, Students' Academic Performance

1. Introduction

This study is focused on the effect of Parental Social Support on Students' Academic performance among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City Council, Tanzania. Parental Social Support plays a very crucial role towards facilitating students 'academic performance whereby parents are considered to be a pillar and guides towards students' academic performance. In this chapter the study presented background of the study, statement of the problem, specific objectives, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, conceptual framework and definition of key terms.

2. Study specific Objectives

1. To investigate the effectiveness of parental social support behavioural guidance for improving on students' academic performance among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar –es-Salaam City Council
2. To investigate how Parental Social Support to students' cognitive development can improve their academic performance among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar –es-Salaam City Council
3. To assess the extent to which Parental Social Support on children's personality guidance can improve their academic performance among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar –es-Salaam City Council

2.1 Past Literature review

2.1.2 How parental social support can influence students' academic performance.

Several studies have investigated how parental social support influenced students' academic performance, for example, in USA, the study by Nocera, Whitbread & Nocera (2014) ^[35] examined school-wide positive behavioural supports (SWPBS) and how they could be effective alternatives to traditional reactive, punitive approaches on behavioural problem. The research involved reviewing studies to assess how the approaches could be used on a comprehensive school improvement process involving academic as well as behavioural goals. This study further explained the efforts of a low-performing middle school in establishing preventative measures and interventions within such a framework. The findings showed that there was a reduction in teacher discipline referrals and student suspensions, meaning that the implementation of a SWPBS framework resulted in improved academic and behavioural outcomes for all students in general.

In Pakistan, Khalid & Tabassum (2020) ^[22] conducted a study on how science studies demanded more concentration and time than other subjects. This study examined the relationship between parental social behaviour and academic performance among Grade 10 science students studying at Secondary Level in District Rawalpindi. This study deployed a stratified sampling method to gather data from the science students. A sample of 116 male and 184 female students were selected from science students. The analysed data showed that there was a weak positive correlation between social behaviour and academic performance among science students. Moreover, the study revealed that there was no significant difference in social behaviour between male and female science students. The study also depicted that girls had more altruistic (pro-social) behaviour as compared to boys in the science section. Based on this understanding, social promotion like appreciation and rewards were recommended so as to manage aggressive behaviour with a view to promoting better academic performance among all students.

In Ghana, a study was done by Dabone, Graham & Fabea (2015) ^[10] on the impact of parental social guidance and counselling on students' academic performance. The study focused on Dormaa Senior High School in the Dormaa Central Municipality of the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana. Pre-test and post-test control group design was applied. The study adopted experimental design to assess the sample of 40 students who were categorized into two groups namely; experimental group involving 20 students and the control group involving 20 students. Data from respondents were collected through interviews. The study findings indicated

that there was no significant difference between the pre-test scores of experimental and control groups. Nevertheless, there was a significant difference established between post-test scores for experimental and control group in terms of academic performance. The study recommended the appointment of full-time counsellors to address bad behaviour issues among students.

In Uganda Nakakande, Namugongo & Akampurira (2023) ^[33] conducted a study on the role of Parental guidance and counselling in enhancing student discipline in Secondary Schools in Kalungu District. The study used a descriptive survey research design, whereas purposive sampling technique was used to select teachers, students and head teachers. The study adopted simple random sampling as well as stratified random sampling to select 24 teachers and 262 students. The study involved questionnaires and interview schedule to collect data from the field. The data collected from the field were analyzed through descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean scores, summary Tables) and by the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program Version 16. The result showed that parental guidance and counselling contributed to improvement in discipline among students and improvement in academic performance of students. The study recommended the use of more parent based social dialogues by schools in resolving conflicts so as to create a strong relationship between the students, parental counsellors, teachers and administrators.

In Rwanda, Masengesho & Sukubwabo (2023) ^[28] carried out a study to investigate students' misbehaviour which was growing in schools. The study focused on unearthing how students' behavioural management strategies could assist the improvement of academic performance in Burera District. A mixed method approach was used to guide the application of correlation research design. A total sample of 368 participants was purposively sampled and randomly selected. The data were collected through questionnaires, interviews and documentary review and were analysed statistically and through thematic and content analysis separately. The study used Pearson's moment correlation coefficient at a level of 73.3%. Data of management strategies and levels at which each strategy could improve academic performance showed that; providing advice to the students stood at 61.6%, while parental involvement stood at 63.7%. The findings generally showed that a rewards technique helped to manage students' behaviour while punishment affected academic performance of students at the level of 68.5 %.

In Tanzania, Stephen (2023) ^[44] conducted a study to investigate the teaching methodology and the behaviour of Ordinary Secondary School students in learning mathematics. The study intended to find out why most students in Ordinary Secondary School disliked mathematics, which led to massive failures especially in mathematics. The correlation research design was adopted. The study used systematic sampling technique of the interval 50th where 100 respondents were selected; thus, 20 respondents were taken from 5 individual groups among Secondary Schools in Mbeya. The data were gathered using questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive methods. The results showed that whereas teaching materials/media were effectively implemented the non-adoption of informal behaviour and non-reflection towards mathematical teaching to learners' natural home environment could lead into negative attitude towards the studies. Based on the finding, the research recommended that teachers who were teaching mathematics

should adopt simulation model and visual media to assist the students. Another recommendation was that teachers should encourage, reflect real life and offer remedial classes so as to improve the performance thus motivate students to study mathematics.

On the other hand, Stein, Steenkamp & Tangi (2019) ^[43] carried out a study on harsh discipline and violence done by teachers to their students and their effects on students' academic performance among students in Secondary Schools. A survey questionnaire was used to conduct a data collection process within the 13 Schools in three districts in Mwanza Region, Tanzania. A total of 597 students were involved. The study revealed various forms of violence done by teachers including physical violence and corporal punishment, psychological violence and humiliation. Moreover, the study identified a strong relationship between violence activities and poor academic performance among students studying in Ordinary Level Secondary Schools. The impact of teachers' violence was related to poor results of students in national examination CSSE or Form IV. In summary, the findings showed that the extent to which parental social support had effects on students' academic performance varied from one area to another. In some African countries including Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda, parental social support helped in improving academic performance of students. Therefore, the studies succeeded in showing how behavioural guidance influenced students' academic performance among Secondary Schools. The analyzed data showed that there was a weak positive correlation between social behaviour and academic performance among students.

2.1.3 How parental social support to cognitive development can improve students' academic performance

Several studies have investigated how cognitive development can improve students' academic performance, for example, in Russia, the study done by Morosanova, Fomina & Bondarenko (2015) ^[31] focused on uncovering the significant role of conscious self-regulation, intelligence and cognitive features in predicting optimal academic performance. The research involved a sample of 406 students aged 14-16 who were studying in the 8th to 11th grades of the Russian formal education system. The study findings showed that there was a general level of self-regulation of the learning activity and certain regulatory features were significant predictors to different types of mathematical performance indicators as follows: academic grades, scores on exams, mathematical fluency and solving logical mathematical problems and equations. Moreover, the study showed how self-regulation could play a major role in predicting the results on: intelligence, cognitive features and academic success in areas such as: humanities, mathematics and natural sciences.

In India, Kaur & Prajapati, (2022) ^[20] carried out a study to determine the factors that influenced academic performance of students including cognitive abilities. The study investigated the relationship between academic performances and the cognitive ability of students in Secondary Schools. Academic performance was the outcome of education from which the student, teacher or institution had achieved their educational goals. This study used 320 participants who were adolescents selected from Secondary Schools of Amritsar District, India. The research used stratified random sampling technique.

The results showed a strong relationship between academic

performance and cognitive abilities among students in Secondary Schools. It was recommended that teachers should focus on the students whose academic performance was low and use different teaching materials like audio visual, chart, real objects to improve their cognitive abilities and thereby improving their academic performances. It was concluded that there was a stronger association with child cognitive development at 5 years of age for social economic status compared to more proximal measures of psychosocial and environmental determinants. In summary, the findings showed that there was positive relationship between students' cognitive intelligence and academic performance of several students. To sum up, the studies have succeeded in showing how the support to cognitive development can improve students' academic performance. The results showed a strong relationship between academic performance and cognitive abilities among students in Secondary Schools.

2.1.4 How parental social guidance can improve students' academic performance.

Personality guidance refers to assistance given to an individual in order to enable one to use his/ her unique characteristics and behaviour to solve life challenges. Several researchers have investigated how personality guidance can improve students' academic performance.

In Germany, a study conducted by Bardach & Murayama, (2023) ^[3] argued that personality psychology could contribute to the aims of educational research. But several misconceptions may hold back this understanding. The study addressed three "misconceptions" about personality psychology that were surprisingly pervasive outside the field. The study included four ways in which the personality psychology could assist in education as follows; personality psychology can be used to boost the individual's ability, to help informing the educational policy about the interventions, to support the academic development for all learners in their personalized learning interventions and to help in determining the targeted outcomes in education.

Moreira, Pedras & Pombo conducted a study aimed at investigating the predictive role of personality dimensions, learning approach and well-being in the academic performance of students. The study involved a total of 602 students who participated in this cross-sectional study. The participants were asked to fill in the questionnaires in order to assess the personality, learning approach and well-being. Two indexes were calculated to examine affective and non-affective well-being. The study findings showed that personality, temperament and character dimensions; deep learning approach and affective well-being had significant effects on academic performance.

In Nigeria Keni (2020) ^[21] conducted a study that investigated the influence of teacher personality on the academic performance of chemistry students in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study used survey design which was associated with descriptive type of research. The sample size was two hundred (200) respondents who were sampled through random sampling technique. The study used a self-structured questionnaire, the reliability was tested by split-half method. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical analysis was conducted to measure reliability from which the coefficient of 0.99 was obtained. The data were and presented in the form of frequency counts and percentage, meanwhile the hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics of correlation statistical analysis. The study results indicated

that there was a significant positive correlation between teachers' attitude, methods and experience on the academic performance among chemistry students.

In Kenya Salgong, Ngumi&Chege (2016) ^[39] conducted a study to examine the role of parental guidance and counselling in enhancing students' discipline in Secondary Schools in Koibatek District. The research applied a descriptive survey research design from which the targeted population was 2,624 students. From this population, a sample of 23 schools, 23 principals, 23 school counsellors and 227 teachers were selected. The study population was stratified and participants were randomly selected from the strata. The data collection process involved instruments such as questionnaires and interview schedule. The study reliability was tested and a coefficient of 0.81 was obtained. The data collected from the field were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean scores, summary tables with the support of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program Version 16. The results indicated that guidance and counselling helped to improve students' discipline and academic performance.

Lubawa, Ngrwa&Shavega (2021) ^[26] conducted a study in Tanzania to examine the influence of psychosocial guidance and counselling services in Secondary School students' academic performance in Tanga City. This study applied a mixed method approach, with a correlation and a case study design used. The study involved a sample size of 423 respondents which included: 330 students, 26 head teachers, 33 guidance counsellors, 33 academic teachers and one City Educational Officer. Questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides were used. Data analysis was through thematic and descriptive statistics, while the hypothesis was tested through Chi-square. The study results indicated that psychosocial guidance and counselling services helped students to attain good academic performance. Likewise, the guidance and counselling services were used to overcome issues which could otherwise affect the academic performance. The study recommended that a strong guidance and counselling service policy should be instituted to oversee the effective implementation of the psychosocial guidance and counselling services in secondary schools. The study also recommended the employment of well-trained personnel to offer guidance and counselling psychology.

To sum up, the empirical literature has succeeded to show a significant positive correlation between parental social support, teachers' guidance and students' academic performance.

Therefore, one can safely say that proper parental guidance can improve the academic performance of the students among Ward Secondary School students in Dar-es-Salaam City Council.

3. Study Methodology

This study employed mixed research approach where both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied. Quantitative research approach involves numbers in explaining information that covers statistical frequencies and percentage (Miles, 1994) ^[29]. The use of quantitative approach in this study arose from the need of the study to collect information which could be quantified. Furthermore, qualitative approach was used involving description of the issues from natural setting as it captured feelings, emotions, thoughts and insights. The qualitative approach was employed because of its ability to solicit in depth knowledge

from respondents (natural setting). Therefore, the researcher collected qualitative data using interview, observation and documentary review while quantitative data was collected from the questionnaire.

The researcher employed descriptive survey research design. According to Orodho&Kombo descriptive survey research is designed to describe the state of affairs as it actually is. Another reason behind using descriptive survey research design was that some of the collected information was about people's attitudes, opinions, habits and other possible behaviours and activities. The most useful thing about this design was that it assisted the researcher to get in-depth information pertaining to parents' social involvement and support to their children.

The researcher collected data in Dar es Salaam City Council where the Ward Secondary Schools were selected.

Omari (2011) ^[37] defined population as the totality of any group of units which have one or more characteristics in common which are of interest to the research study. For this study, the targeted population included heads of school, teachers, students and parents in selected Ward Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City Council, Tanzania. This study employed Kerlinger's formula to determine the sample size from the targeted population. The formula suggests that the sample of 10% - 30% from the targeted population should be suitable for the study. This formula was used to select sample size of schools from which heads of school were picked. The formula was also used to select students, teachers and parents from Ward Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City Council.

4. Study Findings

This study investigated the effects of parental social support on students' academic performance among in 10 Ward Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City Council, Tanzania. This study employed a mixed approach involving a qualitative approach and quantitative approach. The sample size was a total of 177 respondents, distributed as follows; 10 head teachers, 18 teachers, 52 parents and 97 students. The research instruments used were Questionnaires, Semi-structured interview, Observation and Documentary review. Data analysis of quantitative data was analysed through SPSS version 16 while analysis of qualitative data was through content analysis.

The study of the effects of parental social support on academic performance of students among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City Council, has revealed that there were effects of parental social support on academic performance of the students; Through Likert scale where both head teachers and teachers responded, about 83.79 % of the respondents (Head Teacher s) opted for strongly agree and agree, suggesting they highly appreciated the role of parental social support on academic performance of students. In other words, the results indicated, that only 20% of the respondents (head teachers and teachers) did not see social support as having a vital role on academic performance of students. As far as teachers were concerned, the study revealed that 70.82 % of them opted for strongly agree and agree, showing that majority of teachers valued the role of parental social support in improving the academic performance of students.

The focus of the study showed how parental social support could help to improve academic performance of Ward Secondary School students among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar-es-Salaam. Through the Likert scale, both head

teachers (88.69%) and teachers (72.2%) of the respondents, opted for strongly agree and agree, suggesting that teachers highly appreciated the role of parental social support on academic performance of students.

In the study on how personality guidance helped improve academic performance of students among Ward Secondary Schools in Dar es Salaam City Council through the Likert scale, where both head teachers and teachers responded, about 75.72 % of the respondents Head Teachers and about 68.89% of the teachers opted for strongly agree and agree, suggesting that the majority of them appreciated the role of parental social support on academic performance of students. The study, through qualitative data obtained from parents and children through semi-structure interview, also revealed that a majority of parents and children had positive view on social support and its role on academic performance. The few who had not shown positive attitude towards parental social support in relation to academic performance, had done so only because of the challenges associated with implementing parental social support such as financial constraint and time.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded that parental social support in terms of personality guidance, parental social support to children's cognitive development were crucial for students' academic performance and overall development of school children. Furthermore, the study revealed that there was great awareness and understanding on the part of teachers, students and parents of the importance of three areas of guidance: personality guidance, support to cognitive development and parental social support. Whereas some parents were facing challenges in implementing parental social support activities despite their understanding of its importance, basically due to lack time and money, the findings of the study strongly concluded that parental social support had a significant positive impact on the academic performance of Ward Secondary School students in Dar-es- Salaam City Council. The results indicated that students receiving emotional support, academic encouragement and material incentives from their parents tended to perform better academically compared to those who did not receive such support.

5.1 Recommendations

The study recommended the following;

5.1.2 Recommendations to parents

Parents should devote more time to helping their children in order for them to perform better academically through all three types of guidance: personality guidance, behavioural guidance and support to cognitive development. Parents should provide social support to their children in all aspects, including resources provision, positive reinforcement, academic encouragement, parental role modelling, emotional support as well as involvement in academic affairs of their children while at school and at home.

5.1.3. Recommendations to children

Children need to ensure that they take active role in paying attention to the guidance provided by their parents. Particularly they should be ready to communicate with their parents freely, revealing openly the challenges they face at school and solicit what the parents should do to address those challenges.

5.1.4 Recommendations to community

Community members need to see the role of parental social support as being not only limited to the parents who have school children; but as the responsibility of the whole community including; mentorship programmes through local organizations where volunteers help students with their studies, after- school programmes that provide additional learning opportunities, counselling services that can be provided in collaboration with schools, parental support groups and provision of essential resources such as books and computers especially to children from poor families.

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