

GENDER AND PARENTAL SUPPORT ON ATTITUDE TOWARDS STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN READING COMPREHENSION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OGUN STATE.

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Abstract

This study probes the intricate interplay of gender and parental support in shaping students' attitudes and achievement in reading comprehension, an essential pillar of English language mastery. Employing a robust ex-post facto survey design, it harnessed a multistage sampling technique to draw a representative cohort of 499 students from Abeokuta North and South Local Government Areas.

Data collection leaned on three rigorously validated instruments: The Parental Support Questionnaire ($r = 0.92$), Student Attitude Questionnaire ($r = 0.83$), and English Language Reading Comprehension Achievement Test ($r = 0.75$). Guiding the inquiry were three pivotal research questions, with responses derived from Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression analyses at a 0.05 significance level.

Key revelations illuminate transformative pathways: Age, as a proxy for personal factors, emerged with a significant positive correlation to students' achievement ($r = 0.131, p < 0.05$) and attitudes ($r = 0.259, p < 0.05$). Collectively, these predictors explained 8% of the variance in achievement. The study posits that gender and student attitudes are indispensable levers in optimizing the English language comprehension teaching-learning ecosystem, urging educators to prioritize them for equitable outcomes.

Keywords: Gender, parental support, attitude, English comprehension, achievement.

1. Introduction

Gender as a variable of interest in this study can be socially and culturally structured. It can also be constructed attitude and behavior designated as female and male in a particular society. Different researchers have carried out studies on gender. Olaniyan (1997) asserted that gender alone has no effect on academic achievement but acts in conjunction with other variables, to affect students' achievement. Holmlund and Sund (2005) and Tymms (2005) found that gender does not affect students' achievement. This finding is consistent with the outcome reported by Halawah (2006) that the difference between males and females on academic achievement was not statistically significant. Siegel and Smythe (2005) agree that there is no significant gender difference in reading disabilities. Whedall and Limbrick (2010) maintained that these findings were consistent with the hypothesis of gender similarities by Hype (2005), who suggested that boys and girls are more alike than different on most physiological variables, including reading, based on a review.

Pagal, Mirafuentes, and Ypanto (2017) carried out a study on how gender, reading attitude, and practice can influence reading comprehensibility. The result indicated that there is a gender difference between male and female students' reading comprehension skills. Madoda (2017) investigated gender differences in reading comprehension of grade three. The result showed that there is a significant difference between the boys and girls. The girls performed better than the boys. It also revealed the magnitude of the wide gap in reading comprehension test between the boys and girls. Piia, Kaisa, and Jari (2008) investigated the interplay between mathematical word problem skills and reading comprehension. The result showed that girls are better than boys in technical reading and in reading comprehension. There is no gender difference in Mathematics word problem-solving performance.

Weiner (2010) said that there were two positions regarding educational gender differences in Europe historically. The author also said that international studies agree that female students have a higher reading

achievement than male students. Again, Ghazvini and Milad (2011) reported that despite the fact that girls showed a more adaptive cognitive motivational pattern than the boys, the females do not obtain significantly higher marks in the subject of Mathematics. This means that differences exist in the cognitive motivational functioning of boys and girls in academic achievement. Sahragard, Baharloo, and Ali (2011) asserted that there is no significant difference in scores for males and females about their academic achievement since the magnitude of difference in the average scores for each

gender is small. Thus, males and females do not differ significantly in their academic achievement. Furthermore, Adeleke, Abimbade, and Folawe (2013) revealed that more males are found to be achieving better in the field of Mathematics than females because of their ability to reason mathematically. Mwingi (2014) said that females are better in language while males perform better in the sciences. Goni, Yagana, Ali, and Butarade (2015) observed that there is no statistical difference between gender and academic performance in the College of Education. Likewise, Mamadelo (2018) reported that there was no difference between gender and academic achievement in reading comprehension.

Parental support is a key to parenting. It comes by praising, encouraging, and giving physical affection, which shows acceptance and love to the child. Parental support in the school activities of their wards encourages better academic achievement. Some researchers have worked on parental support, which supports students' achievement. Parental support starts from the time a child is born. Most parents are involved in their children's lives in their early years. Parents provide guidance and support, but as children reach adolescence, the nature of support changes. Some parents believe their children can handle their homework by themselves, while others think that they need to be assisted. Parental support in their children's education has been defined as an awareness of and support in school work, understanding of the interaction between parenting skills and student success in schooling, and commitment to consistent communication with school facilitators about students' progress (NMSA, 2006). Parental support has been viewed through different lenses.

Generally, some conceptualised focused on individual students and their families, while some see it as a pressure group. Parents want their children to succeed in school learning, and this is usually the basis of being involved in their work. Manga (2012) reported a significant relationship between academic achievement and parental support in higher secondary government schools. Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, and Al- Maamari (2016) examined the relationship between parental support and children's development of English language literacy skills. The result revealed that parents are responsible for the importance of their own support to their children's development, and feel that they should be involved in some home and school-based activities. The normal degree of their support in their children's English language studies was inadequate.

Watt (2015) carried out a study on parents' perceptions towards English language teaching to young learners and further examined their involvement in helping their children learn the English language at home. The result establishes that parents have a positive attitude towards the teaching of language to young learners. They assist their children in doing their homework, memorizing their vocabulary, and supplying textbooks, while parents from low educational backgrounds and low income were more enthusiastic in assisting their children.

Ebuta and Ekpo (2013) made an effort to establish a relationship between students' academic achievement in the English language and parental support in their children's education. The result showed that parental support in their children's education affects their academic performance in the English language. The finding established that parents who help their children with homework perform better. Parental support to children's education has consistently had a positive effect on academic achievement and self-concept (Bushra and Rehana, 2010; Ebuta and Ekpo, 2013). All these studies show that parental support is an effective factor that positively influences students' achievement in the English language.

Oluwatelure and Oloruntegbe (2010) discovered that, sometimes unconsciously, parents guide their children through non-verbal communication. They transfer likes and dislikes to children not only by word of mouth but also via bodily movement and facial expression. Little wonder a parent who is a medical doctor wants one or two of their children in the same profession, and parents who have missed an opportunity of being in a particular profession wish to be fulfilled by having one or two of their children in that profession. Hence, parents sometimes encourage their children to take an interest in the subjects associated with the profession. These encouragements, according to Mangal (2012), are demonstrated by helping, guiding the child, and coercing him or her not to feel disheartened at a point of difficulty. Norhana (2025) reported that parental motivation is important for promoting academic achievement.

Furthermore, Stahl (2000) observed that parents and families are the leading models and motivators for secondary education students. The researcher, however, associated the decline in parental support with changes in the attitude of children as they turn into teenagers. Stahl (2000) observed that as the children approach the

teen years, many parents find it difficult to strike a balance “letting go and being there”. USSP (2005) supported other assertions of other researchers on parental support and students’

attitudes that a child who is bothered by quarrelling parents can lag and lose concentration in studies, and this may affect the accurate or careful observation skills of the students. Attitudes and values parents attach to the learning science process may also affect students’ interest and acquisition of scientific skills.

Attitude is an act of thought or feeling about something or someone that influences behaviour. It can be positive or negative. Olanipekun (2013) reported that hindrances to learning English may be a phobia on the part of the students, the teacher’s attitude to teaching English, or students’ bad behavior towards the English language, which they consider a difficult course. Attitude of teachers to work and students’ lack of interest and not being enthusiastic with the English language contribute to poor students’ achievement (Fakeye, 2002). The attitude of students is important in making students successful in the learning process of English reading comprehension (Mamadelo and Adegbile, 2020). Attitude takes an important position in language learning (Csizer and Dornyei, 2005). Karahan (2007) discovered that students’ attitudes towards English are affected by social and economic factors in learning the English language. The author asserted that Turkish students have a negative attitude towards English learning, but in adulthood, they develop a positive attitude due to the economic and global need for English. This motivated them to learn English grammar. Al-Tamimi and Shuib (2009) investigated the relationship between the role of motivation and attitude to learn English among petroleum students and concluded that students have a positive attitude towards English learning. Similarly, Punjab, Pakistan, has a positive attitude towards English Language learning, which has a relationship with overall academic achievement (Samar Rukh, 2014).

Soku and Osafo - Adu (2011) reported that females show a better attitude to the English language than their male counterparts. Some researchers defined attitude as a mental concept that depicts a favourable or unfavourable feeling towards an object. Ngwoke (2022) observed that students’ attitude to learning needs monitoring so as to improve academic achievement. Siti (2008) suggested that students attitude correlate with their proficiency level, the location of their school, and their classes. Merison-strom (2007) said that factors like age, gender, language, background, type of school attended, and peer group influence language acquisition and attitude. English reading comprehension is important and compulsory in the English language. It is used as a medium of instruction at all levels. Tran and Duong (2013) reported that English should be made compulsory because it is useful and

relevant to the students. Though some students still experience anxiety in the learning process. It has been observed that poor performance in English comprehension persists in Ogun State. This has become a major challenge bothering the minds of all stakeholders in the education sector. This study was designed to investigate gender and parental support on students’ achievement in English reading comprehension. There are three research questions, which are:

1. What are the relationships that exist among gender, parental support, and achievement in English reading comprehension in Ogun state?
2. To what extent will the gender and parental support predict students’ achievement in English reading comprehension in Ogun state?
3. What are the relative contributions of independent variables, gender, and parental support, in the prediction of students’ achievement in English reading comprehension in Ogun state?

2. Methodology

The research employed an *ex-post facto* design because the researcher did not manipulate any variable in the study, since they are inherently not manipulable

The target population was all senior secondary school students in Ogun State. Four hundred and ninety-nine (499) students were selected as participants in this study through a multi-stage sampling process. The selection of the sample took four stages. Purposive sampling was used to select Ogun Central at the first stage out of the three senatorial districts. At the second stage, simple random sampling was used to select two Local Government Areas out of six Local Government Areas, which are Abeokuta North and South. At the third stage, purposive sampling was used to select public co – educational schools, out of which three schools were randomly selected from each Local Government Area. At the last stage, simple random sampling was used to select an intact class from the six selected schools.

Three instruments were constructed to collect data.

These were:

1. Questionnaire on parental support

2. Questionnaire on students' attitudes
3. English language reading comprehension achievement test.

A questionnaire on parental support was developed by the researcher and was validated using Cronbach's alpha reliability, which has a value of 0.92. It has two sections. Section A comprises students' personal data (e.g., gender, age, and class) while Section B consisted of instruction and 22 items with a four-point response scale. Strongly agree (SA) 4, Agree (A) 3, Disagree (D) 2, Strongly Disagree (SD) 1. It was given to experts to vet and evaluate the quality, adequacy, and relevance of the content.

A questionnaire on students' attitudes was developed by the researcher and was validated using Cronbach's alpha reliability, which has a value of 0.83. It also comprises two sections. Section A consists of students' personal data (like gender, age, and class) while Section B consists of instruction and 30 items with a four-point response scale. Strongly agree (SA) 4, Agree (A)3, Disagree (D)2, Strongly Disagree (SD)1. It was given to experts to vet and evaluate the quality, adequacy, and relevance of the content. Both questionnaires were tested on 100 students who were not part of the research. They were pilot group.

The English language reading achievement test consists of two comprehension passages with ten items each, and the total was twenty; it was tested on a hundred students who were not part of the research. The test was marked, scored, and computed, and a Pearson product-moment correlation was used to ascertain the psychometric property of the instrument. The items were validated using K - R 20 before they were given to experts to vet and evaluate their quality, adequacy, and relevance. It has the value of 0.75.

Data was collected from the selected schools. This was done with the assistance of six research assistants who were trained and exposed to the importance of the study. The data collection process took eleven weeks. Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple regression were employed to analyse the data. Correlation was used for research question one, while multiple regression was used for research questions two and three

3. Findings

Research question one: What are the relationships that exist among gender, parental support, and achievement in English reading comprehension in Ogun state?

Table 1: Correlation matrix Table of Gender, Age, Parental Support, Students' Attitude, and Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension.

Variables	Gender	Age	Parental support	Students' Attitude	Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension
Gender	1				
Age	.049	1			
Parental Support	.086	.010	1		
Students' Attitude	.101	.037	.056	1	
Students' Achievement in English Reading Comprehension	.013	.131*	.020	.259*	1

Significant @ $p < 0.05$: $n = 499$

The inter-correlation matrix from Table 1 reveals the relationship coefficient of the predictor variables (gender, age, parental support, and students' attitude and the criterion variable (students' achievement in English reading comprehension) reveals a significant positive relationship between age and students' achievement in English reading comprehension ($r = .131, P < 0.05$). Also, the result shows that students' attitude is significant on students' achievement in English reading comprehension ($r = .259, P < 0.05$). This reveals that students' attitude correlates with their achievement in English reading comprehension. Hence, age and students' attitude have a significant relationship out of four independent variables considered in relation to the dependent variable, students' achievement in English reading comprehension in this study.

Research question Two: To what extent will the gender and parental support predict students' achievement in English reading comprehension in Ogun state?

Table 2: Regression summary and ANOVA of Parental Support, Student Attitude, and Personal Factors (sex and Age) to Student Achievement in English Reading Comprehension

Multiple R = 0.29
R. Square = 0.088

Adjusted R Square = 0.08

Standard Error = 3.93

Analysis of variance

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	(df)	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	740.89	4	185.23	11.98	.000
Residual	7639.78	494	15.47		
Total	8380.68	498			

Significant @P<.05

Table 2 shows that the multiple correlation coefficients (R) of all the combined independent variables with the use of students' Achievement in English reading Comprehension was 0.29. This implies that there is 30% associated among parental support, students' attitude, students' personal factors (gender and age), and student achievement in English reading comprehension, R -squared = .088. The adjusted R^2 which estimates the variance of the criterion variable measure accounted for by the combination of predictor variables, was 0.081. This implies that all the independent variables: parental support, students' attitude, and students' personal factors (gender and age) made 8% contribution to the variance in students' achievement in English reading comprehension. Regression ANOVA produced ($F_{(4, 494)} = 11.98, P < 0.05$). This indicates a significant composite contribution of all the predictor variables, parental support, students' attitude, and students' personal factors (gender and age) investigated in this research, with students' performance in English reading comprehension being statistically significant.

Research Question Three: What are the relative contributions of independent variables, gender, and parental support in the prediction of students' achievement in English reading comprehension in Ogun state?

Table 3: Relative contributions of regression summary and ANOVA of Parental Support, Student Attitude, and Personal Achievement in English Reading Comprehension

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	13.099	1.483		8.831	.000
Gender	1.169	.357	.141	3.278	.001
Age	-.073	.314	-.010	-.231	.817
Parental support	-.011	.012	-.037	-.848	.397
Students' attitude	.080	.013	.267	6.177	.000

Table 3 shows the relative contributions of independent variables on criterion variable (students' achievement in English reading comprehension). The contribution of the independent variables in the prediction of students' achievement in English reading comprehension is different. These are: Gender ($\beta = 0.141, t = 3.278, p < 0.05$), Students' attitude ($\beta = .267, t = 6.177, p < 0.05$). However, the following variables contributed insignificantly in the prediction of students' achievement in English reading

comprehension: age ($\beta = -.010, t = 0.231, p > 0.05$), Parental support ($\beta = -.037, t = 0.848, p > 0.05$). The value of the Standardized regression weight associated with gender and students' attitude shows that gender and students' attitude are potent predictors of students' achievement in English reading comprehension. This implies that two out of four independent variables considered in this study are the major predictors of students' achievement in English reading comprehension.

4. Discussion

The result shows that there is a significant correlation between gender and students' achievement in English Reading comprehension. The result implies that gender plays a significant role in the achievement of the students, and the teachers should always consider gender when selecting them into a group. For group work in reading comprehension, female students demonstrated a positive attitude toward reading during field work. Bamise (2021) reported that girls read for a long time and their reading is for pleasure. The result is not in line with Wheldall and Limbrick (2010), who asserted that more boys experience reading problems. Apart from this result, other research has shown that male students experience a reading disability more than female students. Amadi (2019) examined the reading interest of students and discovered that gender has nothing to do with students' interest in reading.

The relationship between age and students' achievement in English reading comprehension was not significant in the study, which means that a weak correlation exists. It was not a significant unique predictor in the regression model. Anybody can learn at any age. However, some researchers reported that there is a relationship between

age and student achievement. Abubakar and Oguguo (2011) reported that there is a positive, substantial relationship between age bracket and academic performance in Science and Mathematics.

The relationship between parental support and students' achievement in English reading comprehension was not significant ($p=0.397$) in this study. The finding negates some research discoveries. Aderibigbe (2012) reported that parental support is an important key in increasing school and parental interrelationship, and an increase in educational performance. Mwingi (2014) also reported that parental support contributes greatly to children's academic achievement. Wheldall and Limbrick (2010) also said that parents who assist their children to do homework and check their school work develop a good home – school linkage, which is highly important for children's attainment in educational work. Maina (2026) reported that fathers contributed financially to the education of their boy child, while the academic achievement they made was a result of their mothers' active participation in their education.

The result from this study reveals a significant correlation between students' attitudes and their performance in English reading comprehension. This study reveals that students' attitudes improve their achievement in English reading comprehension. The result is in line with Kara, Unisen & Izci (2015), reported that attitude learning, apart from belief and opinions have a substantial effect on students' actions and subsequently on their achievement. Emir and Abdulhak (2022) observed that parents who are involved in reading activities have created a positive influence on students' reading comprehension, reading motivation, and attitudes towards reading. Maagad (2025) suggested that parents should give necessary support and get more involved in their child's reading development, and participate in school activities.

5. Conclusion

This paper examined gender and parental support on students' attitudes toward their achievement in reading comprehension in English language among senior secondary school students in Ogun state. It has been observed that gender and students' attitudes are important in making students successful in the learning process of English reading comprehension. This means the attitude students exhibit towards the learning process brings either success or failure. The researcher submitted that students should exhibit a positive attitude during the English language comprehension teaching-learning process. Though the result on parental support is not significant, this may be as a result of the sample size. Parents should support their wards by providing all the necessary assistance to make them perform better during English language reading comprehension lessons.

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