IMPACT OF PARENTAL PARTICIPATION, PEER GROUP AND SCHOOL LOCATION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE IN ONDO METROPOLIS SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract
This research explored the impact of parental participation, peer group influence, and school location on the academic achievement of Agricultural Science students two in Ondo Metropolis. Three research questions were raised and two hypotheses formulated, the study employed a descriptive survey design, structured questionnaires were given to 400 students sampled through multistage sampling procedure, from various secondary schools in Ondo Metropolis. Using different three instruments to collect data, analysis of the data collected were performed using frequency counts, percentages, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) and multiple regression analysis. The result revealed that students' academic performance positively correlates with parental involvement (r=.822; PGP=. -742 and -.867). The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there is a significant effect of the independent variables on the academic performance, $F_{(3, 396)} = 3.766$, $P < 0.05$. The findings revealed that parental participation had a strong positive correlation with students' academic achievement in agricultural science, while peer group influence and school location also significantly affected performance. Students with supportive parents and positive peer relationships performed better academically, and those attending schools in more accessible locations generally achieved better outcomes. There is therefore the need to organize programs to enhance parental involvement, fostering healthy peer interactions, and ensuring equal access to quality education regardless of school location.

Keywords: Parental participation, Peer group, School location, Academic achievement, Agricultural Science,

Introduction

Every society needs people of high intellectual who can strive to make the society a better one. This is one of the reasons education serves as avenue for knowledge accumulation. Education is the structured process through which individuals are prepared to contribute effectively to their communities and the broader society. In Nigeria, education serves as the primary means through which individuals acquire essential knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. Ogunbameru (2022 referred to education as a fundamental pillar of any society. However, the extent at which individuals have acquired knowledge can only be ascertained through measure of domains of human behaviours. The measure of achievement of the student becomes extremely necessary for proper placement in the next academic pursue, work, admission, scholarship among others. Agricultural Science is a pivotal subject in Nigeria's secondary school curriculum, aiming to equip students with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills essential for national development. Despite

its significance, students' academic performance in Agricultural Science has been a growing concern, particularly in urban centers like Ondo Metropolis. Several factors contribute to this trend, notably parental participation, peer group influence, and the location of schools.

Parental involvement is widely recognized as a critical determinant of students' academic success. Active parental engagement manifested through monitoring academic progress, assisting with homework, and fostering a conducive learning environment has been linked to improved student outcomes. According to Sui & Cosgrove (2017), defines Parental involvement as the amount of participation a parent has when it comes to schooling and his/her child's life. Parental involvement in schooling enhances students' academic performance, positive attitude towards school, time spent on homework and regular school attendance behaviour. Wilder (2014) reported that parental involvement was found to be one of the factors affecting student achievement. The overwhelming studies indicate that there are positive academic outcomes stemming from parental involvement with benefits beginning in early childhood throughout adolescence and beyond (Loomans, 2014). Parental involvement in schooling enhances students' academic performance, positive attitude towards school, time spent on homework and regular school attendance behaviour. Their findings suggest that children of parents that are involved tend to perform at higher rates academically than students whose parents are less involved. In addition, children of involved parents tend to exhibit higher educational aspirations (Nunez, Suarez, Rosario, Vallejo, Valle & Epstein; 2015).

In contrast, peer groups, consisting of close friends of similar age who engage in shared activities, can significantly impact academic performance, either positively or negatively, depending on their influence and support. Olalekan (2016) notes that peer groups greatly influence students, as peers play a crucial role in a child's life and education. Students often feel more at ease and relaxed around their peers. For example, a bright student who is surrounded by friends who are less academically motivated may lose interest in their studies. Research by Mosha (2017) suggested that peer group can act as positive role model, for example, if one is involved with a group of people that are ambitious and working hard to attain high academic goals, one might feel pressured to follow suit to avoid feeling excluded from the group. A negative peer influence is a key factor in students' poor academic performance. This happens because students often devote a substantial amount of time to extracurricular activities, neglecting their academic responsibilities and consequently damaging their academic outcomes.

Peer groups also play a substantial role in shaping students' academic trajectories. Adolescents often emulate the behaviors and attitudes of their peers, which can either positively or negatively influence their academic performance. Awodun and Kenni (2022) observed that peer groups significantly affected students' motivation and academic outcomes in Chemistry, suggesting similar implications for Agricultural Science. Moreover, Smirnov and Thurner (2016) demonstrated that students tend to form friendships with peers of similar academic performance, indicating that peer influence can reinforce existing academic behaviors.

The location of a school whether urban or rural can also impact students' academic performance. Factors such as availability of resources, quality of teaching staff, and socio-economic conditions vary between urban and rural settings, influencing educational outcomes. Owoeye and Yara (2011) found that disparities in school facilities between

urban and rural areas affected students' performance in Agricultural Science. Similarly, Muhammad (2022) noted that school location significantly influenced students' academic achievement, with urban schools often outperforming their rural counterparts due to better resources and infrastructure. Moreover, the geographical location of a school can affect access to resources and community support, thereby impacting student outcome. Therefore, the school environment is organized to shape a student's learning behaviour. The school environment which include classroom, libraries, technical workshop, laboratory, teacher quality, school management, teaching method and peers etc are variable that affect student academic performance. The quality of education not only depends on the teacher but reflected in the performance of their duties and also in the effective coordination of the school environment (Adekunle 2012). In the context of education, guidance and counseling aim to empower individuals to overcome challenges, maximize their potential, and lead fulfilling lives. This can be done through various techniques such as assessments, goal setting, problem-solving strategies, career exploration, and emotional support.

The level of active participation by students, parents, and teachers in the educational process is a strong predictor of the likelihood of students graduating (Nunez & Epstein; 2015). In conclusion, the negative peer influence also contributes to an increase in truancy rate among students. However, truancy could be better reduced through the use of social learning and cognitive behaviour therapies. Given these considerations, this study aims to explore how parental participation, peer group influence, and school location collectively and individually affect the academic performance of Agricultural Science students in secondary schools within Ondo Metropolis.

Statement of the problem

Despite the recognized importance of Agricultural Science in Nigeria's educational and economic development, students' performance in the subject remains suboptimal, particularly in Ondo Metropolis. While various factors have been identified as influencing academic achievement, the combined effects of parental participation, peer group influence, and school location on students' performance in Agricultural Science have not been comprehensively studied in this context. Parental involvement is often inconsistent, with some parents actively supporting their children's education, while others are less engaged due to factors such as work commitments or lack of awareness. This disparity can lead to varying levels of academic support at home, potentially affecting students' performance. Peer groups can either motivate students to excel or contribute to academic decline, depending on the prevailing attitudes and behaviors within the group. The extent to which peer influence affects Agricultural Science performance in Ondo Metropolis remains unclear. Additionally, the location of schools within the metropolis may result in unequal access to educational resources and qualified teachers, further impacting students' academic outcomes. Urban schools may benefit from better infrastructure and staffing, while peri-urban or rural schools might face resource constraints. Given these considerations, this study seeks to investigate the individual and combined effects of parental participation, peer group influence, and school location on the academic performance of Agricultural Science students in secondary schools across Ondo Metropolis. The findings aim to inform targeted interventions to improve educational outcomes in the subject.

It is worrisome to note that students tend to face a lot of emotional and psychological problems arising from

irregular school attendance and other factors such as lack of parental involvement, lack of personal and interpersonal skills to cope with school work. Truants have negative perception about schooling because it interferes with their freedom as they prefer to spend most of their time with friends. From the cultural perspective when a child fails to attend school, the parents are usually blamed. However, many students struggle with personal issues that relate to lack of personal, interpersonal and problem-solving skills, which manifest as behavioural problems that could most likely result to truancy. In addition, some parents neither assist their children in the homework or assignment nor participate in the school programmes. Such parents do not monitor the progress of their children thereby abdicate their responsibility to the school. Furthermore, other psychological and emotional problems could be lack of parental love, care, poverty, rejection and unassertiveness among peers. The truants also experience mental and physical stress as they are regarded as low achievers. They lack encouragement from family members, peers and their teachers. Resulting from the listed phenomenon, the researcher arrived at determining the impact of parental participation, peer group and school location on the academic achievement of Agricultural Science Students in Ondo Metropolis.

Purpose of the study

The main objective of the study is to determine the impact of parental participation, peer group, teaching method and school location on the academic performance of Agricultural Science students' in Ondo Metropolis. The specific objectives are to:

i. examine the level of parental participation in the education of Agricultural Science students.
ii. assess the influence of peer group interactions on the academic achievement of Agricultural Science students.
iii. determine the level of academic performance of Agricultural Science students.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

i. What is the level of parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students in Ondo Metropolis?
ii. How do peer group dynamics influence the academic achievement of Agricultural Science students?
iii. What is the level of academic performance of Agricultural Science students in the study area?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 5% level of significance.

i. There is no significant relationship between parental involvement, peer group, school location and academic performance of Agricultural Science students.
ii. There is no significant joint contribution of parental involvement, peer group pressure and school location on academic performance of students in Agricultural science.

Methodology

A survey research design of descriptive research was used for this study. The population consisted the Agricultural Science students in Ondo Metropolis. The sample for this study comprised of 400 respondents, drawn from the total population of Agricultural Science students in Ondo West and East, Ondo state using multi-stage sampling procedures. Three instruments were used to collect data for

this study which were validated through face and content validity. A self-developed parental participation questionnaire was pilot tested and a yielded reliability coefficient of 0.73. The second instrument was a peer group questionnaire which was also tested to yield a reliability index of 0.81. The third instrument was a self-developed agricultural science achievement test developed to cover SS1 and SS2 scheme of work for 1st term with the aid of table of specification. The 30-item developed were subjected to kuder-richardson-20 reliability method with an index of 0.74 obtained. This indicated that the three instruments were highly reliable. Data collected to answer the research questions raised were analyzed using frequency count, tables and percentage while Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation and Multiple-linear Regression analysis were used for data on hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	STD	Remarks
1.	Regularly reviewing coursework and providing help when necessary is a crucial aspect of parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students.	88 (22%)	228 (57%)	58 (14.5%)	26 (6.5%)	2.95	0.79	Agreed
2.	The academic performance of Agricultural Science students improves when their parents set clear academic and behavioral goals for them such as completing all homework assignments on time, attending all classes regularly and punctually	102 (25.5%)	224 (56%)	56 (14%)	18 (4.5%)	3.03	0.76	Agreed
3.	Seeking advice from educators to support their child's academic journey is an important aspect of parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students.	244 (61%)	94 (23.5%)	48 (12%)	14 (3.5%)	3.42	0.83	Agreed
4.	Promoting positive peer relationships and friendships among students also can important part of parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science student.	238 (59.5%)	112 (28%)	30 (7.5%)	20 (5%)	3.42	0.83	Agreed
5.	Keeping regular communication with teachers and counselors to stay updated on their child's progress is another aspect of parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students.	250 (62.5%)	98 (24.5%)	28 (7%)	24 (6%)	3.44	0.86	Agreed
6	Most parents engage actively in meetings dedicated to discussing their child's academic progress, demonstrating their involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students.	262 (65.5%)	112 (28%)	26 (6.5%)	-	3.59	0.61	Agreed
7	Financial planning for education reflects a substantial level of parental engagement in their child's academic performance.	254 (63.5%)	128 (32%)	12 (3%)	6 (1.5%)	3.58	0.63	Agreed
8	Being aware of school policies and any updates that may affect their student demonstrates a high level of parental involvement in their academic journey.	272 (68%)	104 (26%)	24 (6%)	-	3.62	0.60	Agreed

Key: N= 400, STDV = Standard Deviation SA= Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, D= Disagree, D= Strongly Disagreed.

Level of Decision Criteria: The decision criteria establish that a mean score above 2.50 indicates agreement, while a mean score below 2.50 indicates disagreement.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics showing level of parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students

Variable	Level	N	$\bar{X}$	STDV
Parental	Low	18	2.42	0.52
Involvement	Moderate	95	3.15	1.047
	High	287	4.57	0..65

Table 1 above presents data on parental involvement in the education of students in Agricultural Science. The results indicate that items with a mean score exceeding the cut-off point of 2.50 are regarded as agreed upon, while those below this threshold are seen as disagreed. This indicates that respondents acknowledged the importance of regularly reviewing coursework and providing assistance when needed, which received a mean score of 2.95 and a standard deviation of 0.79. Furthermore, there was consensus that the academic performance of Agricultural Science students is enhanced when parents establish clear academic and behavioral objectives for their children, such as completing homework on time and attending classes regularly, reflected in a mean score of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 0.76. Additionally, respondents emphasized the significance of seeking guidance from counselors or educators to aid their child's academic progress, which was underscored by a mean score of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 0.83. They also acknowledged that fostering positive peer relationships and friendships is an essential component of parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students, as indicated by a mean score of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 0.83. The findings suggest that respondents agree that maintaining consistent communication with teachers and counselors to remain informed about their child's academic progress is another critical aspect of parental involvement, supported by a mean score of 3.44 and a standard deviation of 0.86. The study further reveals that respondents concur that many parents actively participate in meetings focused on discussing their child's academic development, demonstrating their commitment to the education of Agricultural Science students, as shown by a mean score of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 0.61. Moreover, the data indicates that financial planning for education is a significant indicator of parental engagement in their child's academic success, with a mean score of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 0.63. Finally, the study highlights that being informed about school policies and updates that may impact their child reflects a high level of parental involvement in their academic journey, supported by a mean score of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 0.60.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics showing mean with standard deviation response of how does peer group dynamics influence the academic achievement of Agricultural Science students

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	STDV	Remarks
1	I gain confidence in my ability when I receive positive feedback and encouragement from my peers.	214 (53.5%)	164 (41%)	16 (4%)	6 (1.5%)	3.47	0.65	Agreed
2	Negative peer pressure reduces academic performance when students prioritize non-academic activities or engage in distracting behaviors influenced by their peers.	242 (60.5%)	144 (36%)	10 (2.5%)	4 (1%)	3.56	0.60	Agreed
3	Students learn better when they work together with peers, sharing knowledge and supporting each other, which improves academic performance through teaching and feedback from peers.	226 (56.5%)	138 (34.5%)	32 (4%)	4 (1%)	3.47	0.69	Agreed
4	Students who identify with academically focused peers are motivated to do well in school to fit in and maintain their social status.	212 (52.5%)	150 (37.5%)	26 (6.5%)	12 (3%)	3.41	0.74	Agreed
5	Peer conflicts or negative group dynamics can distract students and cause stress, impacting their ability to concentrate and focus on schoolwork.	244 (61%)	122 (30.5%)	20 (5%)	14 (3.5%)	3.49	0.75	Agreed
6	Peers can shape study habits, attitudes towards learning, and academic goals. Positive role models in peer groups can inspire others to adopt effective study habits and set high academic goals.	238 (59.5%)	116 (29%)	30 (7.5%)	16 (4%)	3.44	0.80	Agreed

Key: N= 400, STDV = Standard Deviation, SA= Strongly Agreed, A=Agreed, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagreed.

Level of Decision Criteria: The decision criteria establish that a mean score above 2.50 indicates agreement, while a mean score below 2.50 indicates disagreement.

Table 3 above provides insights into how peer group dynamics impact the academic performance of Agricultural Science students. The findings reveal that items with a mean score above the cut-off point of 2.50 are considered agreed upon, while those below this point are viewed as disagreed. This suggests that respondents recognized that they gain confidence in their abilities when receiving positive feedback and encouragement from their peers, indicated by a mean score of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 0.65. Additionally, respondents agreed that negative peer pressure can hinder academic performance, particularly when students prioritize non-academic activities or engage in distractions influenced by their peers, reflected in a mean score of 3.56 and a standard deviation of 0.60. Furthermore, respondents noted that students perform better when collaborating with peers, sharing knowledge, and providing support, which enhances academic performance through mutual teaching and feedback, as shown by a mean score of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 0.69. Moreover, the findings indicate that students who associate with academically driven peers are motivated to excel in their studies to fit in and uphold their social status, with a mean score of 3.41 and a standard deviation of 0.74. The results also suggest that peer conflicts or negative group dynamics can distract students and create stress, adversely affecting their concentration and focus on

schoolwork, as supported by a mean score of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 0.75. Lastly, the study reveals that peers can influence study habits, attitudes towards learning, and academic goals. Positive role models within peer groups can encourage others to adopt effective study practices and set ambitious academic objectives, as evidenced by a mean score of 3.44 and a standard deviation of 0.80.

Table 4: Descriptive analysis showing level of academic performance of Agricultural Science students

Variable	Level	N	$\overline{X}$	STDV
Academic	Low	98	9.70	2.038
Performance	Moderate	83	11.72	3.117
	High	219	15.18	3.672

Table 4 reflect presents the distribution of students' academic performance levels (Low, Moderate, and High) based on their mean scores and standard deviations. 98 students fall into the category of low performance with the average academic performance score is 9.70. The standard deviation of 2.038 indicates that most students in this group scored fairly close to the average. While 83 students are in the category of moderate class. Their mean score is 11.72, which is higher than the low group. The standard deviation of 3.117 suggests slightly more variability in scores compared to the low group. Lastly, the largest number of students, 219, fall into the category of high group performance with the highest mean score of 15.18. A standard deviation of 3.672 shows a broader spread of scores in this group, but generally, their performance is still strong.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 5: Correlation matrix showing the relationship between parental involvement, peer group pressure, school location and academic performance of students.

Variables	$\overline{X}$	St.D	1	2	3	4
Academic performance	47.66	11.074	1.000			
Parental involvement	2.18	1.388	.822	1.000		
Peer group pressure	1.86	.568	-.742	.595	1.000	
School location	1.18	.386	-.867	.617	.576	1.000

**Correlation is significant at 0.01(2-tailed)

Table 5 revealed the relationship of each independent variables (parental involvement, peer group pressure, school location) with the dependent variable (academic performance).Academic performance correlated with Academic performance to yield a perfect relationship (r =1.000); it was also revealed that positive relationship exists between Academic performance and parental involvement (r = .822) which implies that the relationship is excellent; Academic performance negatively correlated with peer group pressure (r = -.742) while Academic performance negatively correlated with school location (r = -.867).

Table 6: Summary of multiple- regression analysis for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of academic performance

R =.989[a]						
R^2=.978						
Adjusted R square =0.977						
Std. Error = 1.683						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	187.635	3	62.545	3.766	.000[b]
	Residual	6575.976	396	16.606		
	Total	6763.611	399			

a. Dependent Variable: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

b. Predictors: (Constant), Parental involvement, Peer group pressure, School location

Table 6 reveals significant joint contribution of the independent variables (Parental involvement, Peer group pressure, School location**)** to the prediction of academic performance of Agricultural Science students. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions R = 0.989 and multiple R-square = 0.978. This suggests that the three factors combined accounted for 97.7% (Adj.R^2= .977) variance in the prediction of academic performance. The other factor(s) accounting for the remaining variance (2.3%) is/are beyond the scope of this study. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there is a significant effect of the independent variables on the academic performance, $F_{(3, 396)} = 3.766$, $P < 0.05$.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from the first research question indicate that parental involvement in the education of Agricultural Science students is notably high. This aligns with Jeynes (2018), who highlights the significant role of various factors in parental involvement. Regularly reviewing coursework and offering assistance when needed is essential for supporting Agricultural Science students. Their academic performance improves when parents set clear academic and behavioral expectations, such as completing homework on time and attending classes consistently and punctually. Seeking advice from counselors or educators to aid their child's academic development is another key aspect of parental involvement. Additionally, fostering positive peer relationships among students is an important part of parental engagement. Maintaining regular communication with teachers and counselors to monitor progress further reflects parental involvement. Many parents actively participate in meetings focused on discussing their child's academic progress. Financial planning for education also demonstrates substantial parental engagement in their child's academic success. Moreover, staying informed about school policies and updates affecting their child shows a high level of commitment to their academic journey.

Furthermore, the results from the second research question revealed that peer group dynamics influence the academic achievement of Agricultural Science students. This finding aligns with the work of Stephens (2006) and Salami (2008), who noted that adolescents from broken homes often exhibit antisocial behavior and poor academic performance. Empirical studies have shown that children of separated parents face a higher risk of developing psychological, behavioral, social, and academic issues. Overland (2012) also emphasizes that divorce impacts children in many ways, with ongoing parental conflict, poor communication, and power imbalances creating challenges for family and child functioning. Regarding peer influence, I gain confidence when I receive positive feedback and encouragement from

my peers. On the other hand, negative peer pressure can negatively impact academic performance when students focus on non-academic activities or engage in disruptive behaviors influenced by peers. Collaborative learning, where students share knowledge and offer support to one another, improves academic outcomes through peer instruction and feedback. Associating with academically focused peers often motivates students to excel in order to fit in and maintain their social standing. However, peer conflicts or negative group dynamics can cause distractions and stress, hindering students' ability to focus on their studies. Peers also shape study habits, attitudes toward learning, and academic goals. Positive role models within peer groups can encourage others to develop effective study habits and set higher academic aspirations.

Conclusion

The study concluded that active parental involvement through regular monitoring, goal-setting, and support plays a crucial role in enhancing students' academic performance. Similarly, the influence of peer groups is substantial; positive peer interactions and academic-focused peers contribute to improved educational outcomes, while negative peer pressure can hinder academic progress. Additionally, the research underscores that school location affects students' academic achievements, as varying levels of resources and support are available depending on the location of the school. These findings emphasize the need for comprehensive strategies that address these factors to create a more supportive educational environment. By considering parental involvement, peer dynamics, and school location, stakeholders can develop targeted interventions to better support students and improve their academic success.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Schools should create comprehensive programs to actively involve parents in their children's education. This includes organizing workshops that educate parents on how to support their children's learning at home, as well as establishing regular communication channels between parents and teachers. Such initiatives can bridge the gap between home and school, leading to improved academic outcomes for students. Additionally, schools might consider implementing a parent-teacher association (PTA) that actively engages parents in school activities and decision-making processes. This can foster a stronger partnership between parents and educators, enhancing the support network for students.
2. Schools should implement peer mentoring programs and collaborative learning opportunities to promote positive peer influence. Encouraging students to work together on academic projects and engage in group discussions can foster a supportive learning environment.
3. Training programs for teachers should focus on interactive and student-centered teaching methods. Educators should be encouraged to adopt innovative teaching strategies that cater to diverse learning styles. These methods can significantly enhance student engagement and academic success. Furthermore, incorporating technology into the classroom, such as digital tools and educational software, can complement these teaching methods and provide students with interactive and engaging learning experiences.

4. There should be efforts to upgrade school facilities and ensure equitable access to educational resources across different locations. Investing in technology, library resources, and extracurricular programs can mitigate the impact of school location on academic performance.
5. Schools should implement a system of regular assessments to monitor the effectiveness of various interventions and strategies. Data-driven insights from these assessments can help identify areas needing improvement and guide the development of targeted strategies. This approach ensures that interventions remain relevant and effective in addressing the factors influencing academic performance. Additionally, schools should establish feedback mechanisms for students, parents, and teachers to continuously gather input on the effectiveness of educational programs and make necessary adjustments based on this feedback.

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