



Psychosocial elements as correlates of academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents

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Abstract

Academic excellence from students is desirable to parents, but recently the passion to strive for such success seems to be dwindling among female adolescent secondary school students hence the need for this study which examined psychosocial elements as correlates of the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents. A correlational research method was applied. Three research questions were raised and three hypotheses were formulated. The population comprised 253 female students randomly selected from nine senior secondary schools from four Local Government Areas of Education District III. Instruments used for data collection were the Rosenberg self-esteem scale and a self-developed questionnaire by the researcher tagged Academic Disposition and Sexual Proneness Questionnaire (ADSPQ). Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, and Multiple Regression. Findings revealed that adolescent students living with grandparents in Education District III do not necessarily get involved in sexual activities because of their living conditions. One recommendation made was grandparents should be encouraged to engage in sexuality and sex-related conversations with their children as early as possible.

Keywords: academic excellence; Adolescents; female students; grandparents; sexual-proneness

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1. Introduction

One of the most important foundations of every society is Education. It brings about sustainable development in the short and long term (Sart, 2022). A quantifiable population of citizens needs to be educated within the society for general progress to take place because education increases civilization and awareness. In Nigeria, learning could be seen as communal based but primarily, the success of it lies on the individual family which may include the human resources or support base and parents' level of education. Academic disposition in school is not completely dependent on the learning activities that take place within the school. The home also plays a vital role. Psychological and emotional balance emanating from the home provides the foundation for enhanced academic success. Parental care and availability could also provide an emotional balance that could aid academic success (Steadman, 2024).

Society is continuously in a process of change involving the upbringing of children (Lyell et al., 2020). Biological mothers are getting busier in the labor force by the day. Underaged children are becoming single mothers and the economic balance is getting tighter in Nigeria. There seems to be a surge in families where grandparents have taken up the role of primary parenting due to the workload on parents or divorce issues (Sorek, 2020). Yu and Zhang (2021) affirm that there is an increase in women's labor participation and children are made to live with grandparents who act as primary co-parents. They agree that there is intergenerational care for families in society which has been proven by statistics since one reason is that primary parents, because of work demands these days hardly have enough time and energy to take care of their children hence passing off the children to grandparents becomes an excellent choice.

Another reason could be the loss of a primary parent, it could be a result of parental disability or cultural norms as concluded by Ijadunola et al., (2017) who stated that grandparents live with their grandchildren as a result of cultural patterns, loss of their direct children, prolonged lives, movement of primary parents due to better economic needs and religious values. In another study, Pulgaron, et al., (2016) affirmed that there is a growing shift in society that has resulted in a new pattern of secondary students living with grandparents as caretakers. Some of the reason reasons put forward as causes are longer lives, the increase in employment of women and mothers which has created the problem of balancing the raising of children with employed jobs, and there is an increase in the number of single parents than there previously was.

In Nigerian society also, the need for grandparents in raising adolescents may not be ruled out because there could be prolonged life and our society does not commonly admit parents in elderly homes but will rather have them live with primary and grandchildren. Cases of divorce and single parenthood are gradually becoming very rampant and the grandparents find it very easy to cohabit with their children. Olayemi (2014), in his research, concluded that the result of prolonged life and cases of divorce in Western countries has greatly increased the rate at which grandparents live with adolescent grandchildren. He further concluded that grandparents get frequently involved in the grandchildren's educational affairs and socio-economic discussions.

The benefactor or loser between the biological parent and the grandparent is the adolescent. How do they balance their educational success, psychological needs, and very personal desires? Do they get positively or negatively impacted while searching for a balance? Who best qualifies to be most beneficial for the adolescent to live with and obtain the best academic success? A study carried out by Zhang and Wu (2021) posits that there could be three generational cohabitations occurring in a functional family. Children with a lower socioeconomic status where mothers are working or they could be single-parent families, and grandparents may cohabit with their primary children and grandchildren. Living in such

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homes could also be academically beneficial to the adolescent because grandparents are interested in investing in the social capital of children (Klein, 2022).

Nnorom et al., (2020) opine that we can attribute the result of good education to effective teaching and learning. They concluded that it is not dependent on the teacher alone, but the input of the parents and the environment in which the children are raised also have an impact. The surge we are experiencing with grandparents taking up the role of primary parenting and how it consequently affects the academic performance of the adolescent child is put into question.

Olayemi (2014) described the academic standard of children living with grandparents as nothing to write home about. The reason the researcher ascribed to it is possible weaknesses of over pampering that grandparents may be having. They may also impose less strict discipline as a result of physical weakness they may be experiencing due to their age. The grandchildren in some cases are serving as caregivers or helpers who are often sent on errands, hawking and taking care of household chores. These activities could labor them thereby leaving very little time for them to study or carry out other academic activities. A psychosocial factor that must not be ignored is the value placed on education and the attitude to school. These could predict the academic performance of the students in some ways that performance is tested or measured. Motivation of the adolescent may be the primary key to good academic performance rather than having the primary parent or grandparents living with them. It drives and sustains desired goals. Parents have to be interested in taking an active interest and encouraging their wards to succeed. The level of motivation given to the adolescent may result in hard work in school (Hamilton-Ekeke & Frank-Oputu, 2013).

Another factor that could affect an adolescent living with grandparents is self-esteem. It can be viewed as how positively or negatively an individual regards his/her entire self. It is a complete evaluation of a person's self-worth and how the individual shows it positively or negatively on oneself. It can be described as self-importance; self-respect; and self-love which may be partially seen as pride and self-completeness (Minev et al., 2018). A high level of self-esteem may enhance the adolescents' developmental process and the feeling may contribute to improving self-confidence and self-worth. Adolescents who have balanced communication with their grandparents can easily share problems with them, but when the adolescents' relationship is unstable with the parent or grandparent, communication will not be balanced and that could impact self-esteem. Teenagers with closer relationships with people who care for them especially parents may in the long run have increased self-worth when compared to others whose relationship with parents is poor. When self-esteem is low, it could also lead to the weakening of relationships with others and may develop negative behavior (Babar et al., 2022). People are motivated by various factors in life. Zhao et. al., (2021) opine that self-esteem could be a motivator for better academic engagement.

Mitchell and Nebeker (1973) in expectancy theory put forward that one's positive self-evaluation can result in academic outcomes, such as academic engagement. Several other studies have concluded that self-esteem can result in an individual's level of academic engagement. In another related study, Park and Lee (2016) concluded that some adolescents living with grandparents could have a wide range of emotional problems that may have resulted from circumstances like deaths, divorce, loss of jobs or unemployment, disagreement between primary parents, or conflicts arising from earlier generations. They further posited that children growing up from grandparent-grandchild families could be seen as outcasts among their mates and that could lead to some level of depression when compared to children raised by intact families. There is also a consistent pattern between parenting styles, adolescent self-esteem, and how environmental values are internalized. These values are most often based on parenting styles. When

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parents use warmth, and reasoning and are involved even though they are strict, they bring up well-adjusted adolescents with a significantly high level of self-esteem (Queiroz et al., 2020).

Another factor that distracts the adolescent is their disposition to sexually related issues. Some adolescents who are exposed to early sexual engagement may have reduced interest in academic achievement. (Lanari et al., 2020). It may also be plausible to argue that parents' educational attainment could affect the aspirations of adolescents and this could be related to sexual attitudes and behavior (Chen et al., 2023). This in turn could affect educational interest and grades (Miller & Sneesby, 1988). It may be right to assume that parents and grandparents who are educated may be in a better place to give medical and psychosocial counseling to their children. Studies reveal that very little literature is available on the disposition of grandparents in discussing sex-related issues with their grandchildren and research also shows that grandparents seldom talk about sex-related issues when they have conversations with grandchildren so they don't get embarrassed. Some are also not educated enough with accurate information (Cornelius, et. al., 2021).

Mlyakado and Timothy (2014) put forward that students' sex-related activities have led to a greater number of unplanned pregnancies, poor academic performance, and many students dropping out of school. The cases in various countries may vary as a result of civilization and enlightenment, but in many underdeveloped countries, the reverse may be the case because of the socio-economic and many other factors. Adolescents who engage in sexual activities may grow up to graduate from universities in developed countries more than they will in underdeveloped places. This may occur because when a lot of energy and interest is invested in sexual relationships, the desire to pursue academics may be reduced. The initial satisfaction derived from sex may outweigh the long-term benefits of education. Another study revealed that adolescents in society today, tend to engage in sexual activities earlier but delay marriage hence most of them engage in consensual sex with different persons who may not be looking forward to having them as wives at the end of their graduation. One way by which sexual activities begin with adolescents and consequently affect educational attainment is through non-marital parenthood. Few become pregnant, and even fewer become parents. She also argued that sexual initiation early in high school is on the increase and the result could be some form of distraction from concentration on their academic pursuits. Such acts are not in line with ambitions for future academic success (Frisco, 2008).

In the research of Nyembe (1988), there is an agreement with earlier research that supports the findings that grandparents and parents are reserved in discussing issues relating to sex with teenage children. On the other hand, teenagers living in more civilized societies have more open discussions and knowledge about sex more often they engage in it before marriage. This shows that the gap between generations is increasing, similar to that of grandparents. Nyembe's findings did not reveal much difference in the behavior of adolescents, parents, and grandparents in the sexual behavior of the adolescents. They all agree that present-day adolescents learn about sex from their friends.

In our society, who is responsible for raising an adolescent student in secondary school better than the other? Is it the biological parent, the grandparents, or significant others in the family? What basic requirements do they require to attain academic success within the limits set for the period? Who is better placed to instill proper moral values in the adolescent? Society is drastically changing and values are affected. How do we define acceptable values in our society? In Education District III, Lagos State, Nigeria, many adolescents live with grandparents. Their biological parents are either separated or they may be single parents who have become busy in search of livelihood. Academic performance seems not to be at par with adolescents in global standards. The value of education seems to be decreasing daily. An average child disposed to those conditions would rather be a trader, or a craftsperson than pursue academic achievements. What are the underlying factors? Does it create any problems of self-esteem among these

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adolescents? are they disposed to sexual activities that are harmful to them? Are there family and societal values that inhibit these adolescents from picking the wrong habits because of their dispositions? This study examined psychosocial elements as correlates of the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in Education District III, Lagos State

1.1. Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain psychosocial elements as correlates of the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in Education District III Lagos State.

1. Establish the extent of proneness to sexual activities and academic disposition among adolescents living with grandparents in Education District III, Lagos State.
2. Examine the degree to which living with grandparents impacts the self-esteem of students in Education District III, Lagos State.
3. Determine the relationship between sexual proneness and self-esteem on academic disposition among adolescents living with grandparents in Education District III Lagos State.

These questions were formulated for this study:

1. Is there any relationship between proneness to sexual activities and the academic disposition of adolescents?
2. What is the relationship between the self-worth of adolescents living with grandparents in Education District III, Lagos state, and academic disposition?
3. To what extent do sexual proneness and self-esteem of adolescents living with grandparents affect their academic disposition?

The following hypotheses were stated and tested.

1. There is no significant relationship between sexual proneness and academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III Lagos State.
2. Self-esteem has no significant relationship to the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III Lagos State.
Sexual proneness and self-esteem do not significantly predict the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in high schools in Education District III.

2. Methods and materials

The study applied the correlational research method which involves measuring variables and assessing the relationship between them. It can be used to determine prevalence and relationships among variables and make predictions.

2.1. Participants

The population for the study was made up of all female Senior Secondary School One and Two female students (SS I and SS II) from 136 schools in Education District 3, which comprises Lagos Island, Eti-Osa, Ibeju-Lekki and Epe Local Government Areas of Lagos State. A stratified sampling method was adopted and simple random sampling was used to select 253 female students from nine public secondary schools. One from Ibeju-Lekki and two schools each from the other three local government areas.

2.2. Data collection instruments

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The tools used to obtain data for this study were the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) from Rosenberg (2015) and a researcher-developed questionnaire tagged Academic Disposition and Sexual Proneness Questionnaire (ADSPQ). RSES is a ten-item Likert-type scale with a four-point answer. The scale measures positive and negative feelings of self-worth. It had a high-reliability test-retest correlation of 0.8. Three faculties from Guidance and Counselling and Measurement and Evaluation were involved in determining the face and content validity of the tool. After the removal and modification of statements in the instruments, the stability of RSES and ADSPQ were adjudged using test-retest reliability. A trial test was carried out in a school that was not included in the main study. A sample of 20 students was administered the tools twice at two-week intervals. A reliability coefficient of 0.892 was obtained. Meaning that the statements in the tool are reliable and suitable for the study. All SS 1 and SS 2 students were gathered and students who are living with grandparents were randomly selected. The researcher briefed the students on the importance of correctly answering questions on the scale before administration.

2.3. Analysis

Data gathered were analyzed with inferential and descriptive statistics. Mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics. The inferential statistics used were Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 degree of significance.

2.4. Ethical consideration

For each participant in the study, the researchers honored their privacy, autonomy, and sense of dignity. All phases of the research procedure involved taking steps to guarantee that participants received sensitive and respectful treatment. Participants' grievances and concerns were swiftly and appropriately resolved.

3. Results

Research Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between sexual proneness and academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III, Lagos State.

Table 1

Relationship between sexual proneness and academic disposition

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	r-cal	r-tab	Sig.
Sexual Proneness	253	29.97	9.44	251	0.12	0.195	0.057
Academic Disposition	253	52.86	13.77				

Analysis from Table 1 shows a correlation coefficient of 0.12 as the relationship between sexual proneness and academic disposition. This means there exists a positive relationship between the two variables. However, the relationship is not significant since the calculated value ($r = 0.12$; $p > 0.05$) was less than the tabulated value of 0.22 given 251 degrees of freedom. As a result, the null hypothesis was upheld. It was concluded that there is no significant relationship between sexual proneness and academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III, Lagos State.

Research Hypothesis 2: Self-esteem does not significantly relate to the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III, Lagos State.

Table 2
Relationship between self-esteem and academic disposition

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	df	r-cal	r-tab	Sig.
Self-Esteem	253	24.21	4.6	251	0.217	0.195	0.001
Academic Disposition	253	52.86	13.77				

Figures from Table 2 show a correlation coefficient of 0.217 as the relationship between self-esteem and academic disposition. A positive relationship was observed between the two variables. Besides, the r-calculated value ($r = 0.217$; $p < 0.05$) was less than the tabulated value of 0.22 given 251 degrees of freedom. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. It was concluded that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III, Lagos State.

Research Hypothesis 3: Sexual proneness and self-esteem do not significantly predict the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III, Lagos State.

Table 3
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.236	0.056	0.048

a. Predictors: (Constant), Sexual Proneness, Self-Esteem

The model summary shows 0.236 as the quality of prediction of academic disposition. Also, the proportion of variance in the academic disposition that can be explained by the independent variables (that is, sexual proneness and self-esteem) was 0.056.

Table 4
Analysis of variance

ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2663.501	2	1331.75	7.384	0.001
	Residual	45086.66	250	180.35		
	Total	47750.16	252			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Sexual Proneness, Self-Esteem

b. Dependent Variable: Academic Disposition

The analysis displayed in Table 4 shows that an F-calculated value (7.384; $p < 0.05$) was significant since the F-calculated is greater than the critical value of 3.22, given degrees of freedom 2 and 250 at 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, independent variables of sexual proneness and self-esteem statistically predict academic disposition.

Table 5
Coefficient table

Model	Coefficients ^a			
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.

	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	33.88	5.01		6.76	0.00
Self-Esteem	0.61	0.19	0.21	3.31	0.00
Sexual Proneness	0.14	0.09	0.09	1.52	0.13

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Disposition

Figures from Table 5 show that achievement disposition positively relates to both self-esteem ($\beta = 0.61$; $p < 0.05$) and sexual proneness ($\beta = 0.14$; $p > 0.05$). The computed values show that only self-esteem has a significant positive relative relationship with academic disposition.

4. Discussions

This study examined psychosocial elements as correlates of the academic disposition of female adolescent students living with grandparents in Education District III, Lagos State. The result of Hypothesis One revealed that no significant relationship exists between sexual proneness and academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III, Lagos State. This implies that adolescent students living with their grandparents in Lagos state do not necessarily get involved in sexual activities because of their living conditions. This finding is corroborated by Muhwezi et al., (2015), who put forward that despite adolescent sexual activities, many parents still do not engage them in sexually related discussions. They completely avoid such discussion even when they are aware that the adolescents are sexually active thereby agreeing that living with grandparents does not necessarily encourage sexual proneness. Wineka (2007) in her research concluded that grandparents do not communicate with adolescents on sexual matters, though they are expected to do so.

The impact of gender in culture, lack of knowledge, peer influence, and school affect sexual and reproductive health communication in communities and in turn, shape various experiences Achen et al., (2022) opined. In contrast, Dare et al., (2020) research revealed that parental influence on adolescents who receive high levels of parenting and monitoring had less involvement in sex during pre-adolescence and lower sexual activities as they grow older. Carver et al. (2014) concluded that adolescents who lived with grandparents among others had more protective sex than those living without adult family members. However, Lanari et al., (2020) agree that some adolescents who are exposed to early sexual engagement may have reduced interest in academic achievement. Mlyakado and Timothy's (2014) findings are in contrast because they concluded that students' sex-related activities have led to a greater number of unplanned pregnancies, poor academic performance, and many students dropping out of school. The cases in various countries may vary as a result of civilization and enlightenment, but in many underdeveloped countries, the reverse may be the case because of the socio-economic and many other factors. Adolescents who engage in sexual activities may grow up to graduate from universities in developed countries more than they will in underdeveloped places they concluded.

The study also examined that self-esteem does not significantly relate to the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III, Lagos State. The result indicates that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Lagos State. This is in agreement with the findings of Nugussie et. Al., (2019) that some children living with grandparents may have emotional distress which may lead to inappropriate behavior. Park, and Lee, (2016) also agree that problems of self-esteem exist among children who live with grandparents thereby reducing their life satisfaction. Their

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findings are however in contrast with Attar-Schwartz's (2019) and Stephan's (2024) research which indicated that interactions between grandparents and children resulted in high levels of satisfaction.

Another Hypothesis further examined stated that sexual proneness and self-esteem do not significantly predict the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools in Education District III Lagos State. The findings however revealed that sexual proneness and self-esteem significantly predict the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools which infers that sexual proneness and self-esteem jointly predict the academic disposition of learners. In agreement, Nnorom et al., (2020)'s findings reveal that parental involvement in the education of children helps in advancing the academic success of the child. Körük (2017) also agrees that self-esteem has an average level of positive effect on student achievement. Lanari et al. (2020)'s findings concluded that overall, sexual proneness may play a role in the academic performance of adolescent students while Mlyakado, and Timothy, (2014)'s findings also agree that when student partakes in sexual activities it puts them into social relational problems that adversely affect their general academic lives. Occurrences among individuals and societies may differ because what is prevalent for one may not be for the other.

5. Conclusion

From the findings of this research, it was concluded that adolescent students living with their grandparents in Education District III, Lagos state do not necessarily get involved in sexual activities because of their living conditions. A significant relationship does not exist between self-esteem and the academic disposition of adolescents living with grandparents in secondary schools and sexual proneness and self-esteem jointly predict the academic disposition of adolescent learners in Education District III, Lagos State.

From the findings, the following are recommended:

1. Grandparents should be encouraged to engage in sexuality and sex-related conversations with their children as early as possible. This can be raised during parent forum meetings.
2. The understanding of self-esteem (self-worth) can be inculcated into a child from the early stages of life. It should be encouraged by parents notwithstanding their financial and educational status.
3. Such teaching should be included in the curriculum of primary school teachers.
4. Full-time Counsellors should be employed in Primary and Secondary schools in Education District III, Lagos State to encourage counseling against early sexual proneness among primary and secondary students in schools.

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