



Parental Attitudes and Future Economic Survival of Children

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Abstract

Parents are the first contact in a child's life and the future prospect of such a child depends on certain phenomena exhibited by the parents in which attitude plays a crucial role. This study aims to examine the impact of parental attitudes on future economic survival of their children. The study is designed as a descriptive survey where 100 households are selected in Ajasa and Ipaja environ of Alimosho Local Government, Lagos State. The households selected are those that have had all children in adulthood and data of the selected households are drawn from previous secondary school records and comments from class teachers of such children which are used to decode their parental attitudes. All variables employed are converted to nominal scale to ensure the use of Probit regression technique. These variables are current economic status of the children, parental attitude towards education, parental attitude toward children discipline, parental participation in children extra curriculum activities, parental response to children' ill- behaviour in schools, children education materials and facilities available in schools. The findings show that all variables are significant at different levels but parent attitude to children education is negative. Therefore, it can be said parental attitudes have significant impact on children future economic survival and they need to be supported by the government.

Keywords: parental attitudes, economic survival, children, Probit regression, households

I INTRODUCTION

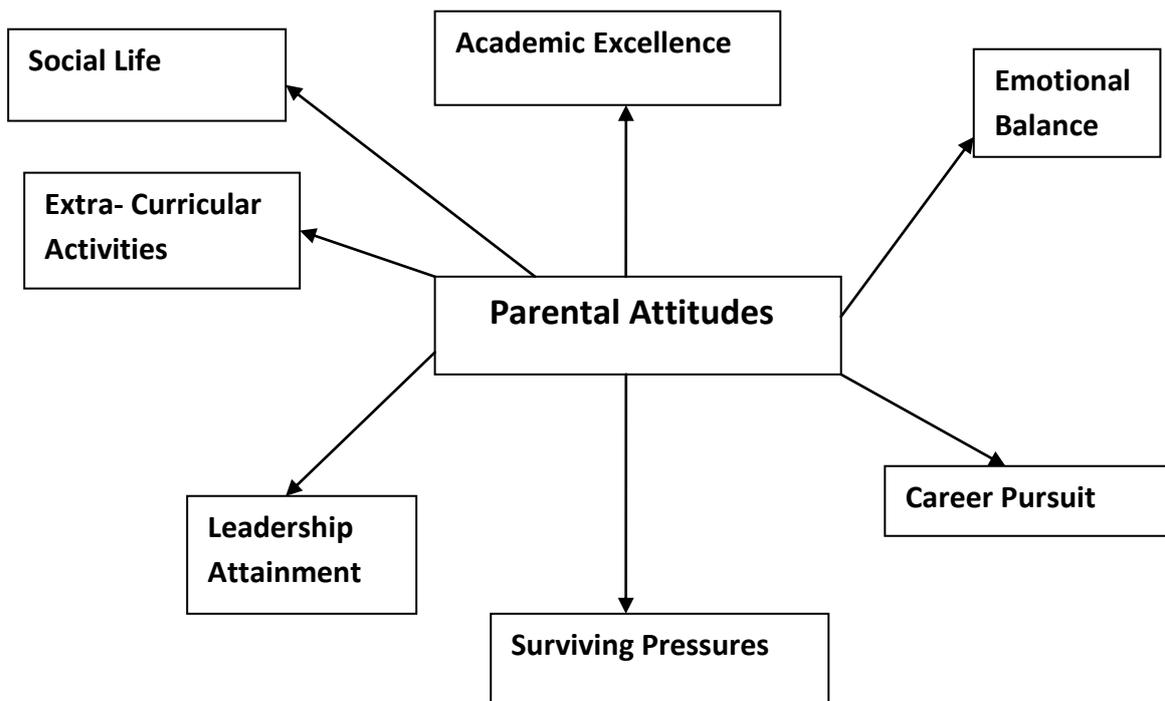
Parenting is a task that is multifaceted and it is different from mothering or fathering. It is a responsibility that goes beyond giving birth to a child. Clearly embedded in parenting is parental attitude. The attitudes that parents exhibit to their children play a crucial factor in their ability to become successful people in lives. Parental attitudes “influence the way parents treat their children and their treatment of the children, in turn, influences their children’s attitudes toward them and the way they behave. Fundamentally therefore, the parent-child relationship is dependent on the parents’ attitudes” (Goswami, 2013:3).

Being the most important individuals in the lives of their children, they have the potentiality of enriching their children positively or negatively. Parental attitudes can be favourable or unfavourable. Parental attitude play a great role in the formative years of children (Pierce, 1990). In the formative years, children are just developing the attitude that will determine their future association and relationship with other lives. During this period, the children learn by imitation and association. The parents become the centre of their first learning before other members of the society come in. Since the children spend large proportion of their time with their parents at this period, the attitude they emulate from their parents are difficult to disassociate from later in lives.

Parents have influenced on children's performance in schools directly or indirectly. Parents determine choice of children's schools and these choices may be influenced by attitude of parents to education and standard of the school in terms of educational infrastructure. Parental attitudes also influence parental response to extra-mural activities, discipline and children- teachers' relationship in schools.

II CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The framework for this study is shown in Figure 1.



The figure above reveals some attributes associated with future growth of children. These attributes can be influenced by parental attitudes. These attributes must be developed as the children are growing into maturity. The tendency for them to survive in the world among peers, age mates, colleagues, associates, friends and others depend

first on how their parents see them and treat them. Parents that are favourable to their children have children who find trust in them. Goswani (2013) says that parental attitude is at the centre of parent- child relationship. Parents that cultivate wholesome attitudes with their children influenced their lives and bring them into worthwhile individuals.

Scaqlioni, Salvion and Galimberti (2008) find out that parental attitude as great impact on feeding habit of their children. Their study reveals that there is correlation between parent and child for reported nutritional behaviour like food intake, eating motivations, and body satisfaction. The study shows that parents can create environments for children that may foster the development of healthy eating behaviours and so on. The study is able to reveal that parental role model may be a better method for improving a child's diet than attempts a dietary control.

Similar study conducted by Cunningham (2001) shows that parental attitudes and behaviours on children's attitudes toward gender and household labour in early adulthood. The study shows that parents that provide wholesome attitudes for their children helped them to achieve success in activities such as household chores allocation, household chores enjoyment, education, religious participation and so on. The study shows that the parents take time to guide these children into wholesome adults through early life by influencing them through positive attitudes.

III METHODOLOGY

This chapter adopts a descriptive survey method that allows the authors to investigate parental attitudes and children economic survival. The authors also adopt Binary Probit Estimator to estimate the nominal scale data collected from the field

questionnaire. The study focuses on Ajasa and Ipaja environ of Alimosho Local Government, Lagos State. The households selected are those that have had all children in adulthoods and these data on the selected households are drawn from previous secondary school records and comments from class teachers of such children which are used to decode their parental attitudes. The author selects the first child of the family irrespective of sex and the reason for this is that the author wants to reduce the problems of dealing with households with large number of children. The second reason is that the author concludes that parents have their contact first on the first child.

All variables employed were converted to nominal scale to ensure the use of Probit regression technique. These variables were current economic status of the children, parental attitude towards education, parental attitude toward children discipline, parental participation in children extra curriculum activities, parental response to their children wrongdoing, children educational materials, and the state of facilities in the schools. A total of 100 respondents were selected from the households in the communities. Teachers that had taught in these schools were used as support in drawing inferences about the selected children.

The Empirical Model

The variables employed were explained in this section. These variables were current economic status of the children, parental attitude towards education, parental attitude toward children discipline, parental participation in children extra curriculum activities, parental response to mal- practices, children educational materials, and the state of facilities in the schools. The Probit regression model is formulated as follows:

$$PR(EC_i = 1) = (\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + e_i) \quad (1)$$

The Probit regression model specified as equation (1) is derived from the work of the following authors: Moore (2013), O' Hallan (2014) and Osabuohien (2014).

EC: This is the dependent variable and the value of the variable is obtained by categorising the children. It is defined to mean the extent to which the children have access to basic/essential needs of life and have success in their careers. This is to identify the extent to which parental attitude have affected their survival.

X_i: All these variables denoted by X are categorical variables and they were parental attitude towards education, parental attitude toward children discipline, parental participation in children extra curriculum activities, parental response to mal-practices, children educational materials, and the state of facilities in the schools. They were obtained from the survey conducted. They were all binary values.

Definition of Variables

Economic well- being of the Children (EC): The present economic status of the children is defined in terms of the occupation practised, workplace, and business endeavour and career attainment. Those children that fall in this category earn 1 and those that do not fall earn 0.

Parental attitude towards children education (PATE): This variable is included in the model in the sense that the probability that a child would go to school depend on the parents. A passive parent sees education as a waste of time even such parent sends his/her ward to school, he/she sees such as wasteful venture. The author appoints 1 point to parents that are active about education and 0 point to passive parents. The author expects the sign to be positive as wholesome attitude to education has significant effect in future economic survival of the children.

Parental attitude towards children discipline (PATCD): The author sees effective discipline as a tool that enhances children's interest in achieving success. Effective discipline plays greater role in the lives of a child. The children that come from households where the parents are autocratic disciplinarian would have problems in openness with their parents and this may affect their survival in the world. This makes the author to assigned 1 point to children whose parents were judge to be fair in applying discipline and 0 point to those who do not. The expected sign is positive because effective discipline adds to children's self esteem in life.

Parental attitude towards children extra- curriculum activities (PPCE): Children with parents that participate in all extra- curriculum activities in their schools develop self- confidence because they believe that their parents see them as deserving kids. Participating in such events like Inter- house sports, School open days, career talk and so on enrich the self- esteem of these children. The parents that participate in these activities earn 1 point and those who are not in that category earn 0. The expected sign is positive.

Parental attitude towards their children ill behaviour in schools (PATCD): Parents can be obstacles to effective enshrinement of order in the schools. Some parents encourage their wards in evil doings especially examination mal- practices. The encouragement of this unwholesome behaviour can make the children to think they are above law and therefore live their lives in disobedient to constituted order. In a situation where this is noticed in the parents, 1 point is earned and if otherwise 0. The expected value is positive.

Children educational materials (CEM): Children need school materials such as textbooks, notebooks, new school uniforms, new school bags and so on. All these

facilitate learning in students. Parents can encourage future economic survival of their children by making adequate provision for these supportive materials. Since this is mainly parental responsibility, the author awards 1 point for provision of such materials; otherwise 0.

State of facilities in schools (SFS): Parents also have the responsibility of determining the type of schools the children would attend. Parents that have good attitude towards their children would look for schools that have good facilities for them. Schools with good facilities earn 1 point, otherwise 0.

IV EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE AND DISCUSSION

Summary of Statistics of Selected Variables

The mean and standard deviation obtained from the analysis for comparison are reported in the sub-section. The findings are reported in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of statistics of variable of parental attitude and future economic survival

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	MEAN	SD
PATE	Active parent =1,0 if otherwise	0.67	0.47
PATCD	Effective discipline =1, 0 if otherwise	0.50	0.50
PPCE	Effective participation = 1, 0 if otherwise	0.62	0.49
PRMP	Against unwholesome behaviour=1, 0 if otherwise	0.41	0.49
CEM	Adequate school materials=1, 0 if otherwise	0.49	0.50
STS	School with good facilities= 1, 0 If otherwise	0.65	0.48

Source: Authors' computation, 2014

The table shows the mean and standard deviation of variables employed in the model. The mean of parental attitude towards education is 0.62 which indicates that many parents exhibit active involvement in their children's schools. The mean of parental attitude toward children discipline is 0.50 which is quite an average and this shows that there is decline in application of effective discipline by the parents. The economic downturn in the country that makes both parents to engage in seeking livelihood for the households can be cited as likely cause. The mean of parental participation in children extra curriculum activities is 0.41 and this quite low. The same reason cited above can be attributed.

This mean of parental response to their children wrongdoing is 0.49 and this value has implication on the recent trend in lawlessness among Nigerian students. Parents are becoming passive in moderating their children's behaviour in the schools. The mean for children educational materials is 0.67 which is very high. Parents are effective in provision the basic school materials for their children. Lastly, the mean for the state of facilities in the schools is 0.65 which is very moderate.

Regression Result

The results obtained from probit regression computed on parental attitudes and future economic survival of their children. The information is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Results from probit regression	
Variable	Dependent variable: the likelihood of parental attitudes and future economic survival of their children
PATE	-0.0785 (0.326)***
PATCD	0.384 (0.339)***
PPCE	0.658 (0.334)*

PRMP	-0.527 (0.325)*
CEM	0.468 (0.330)***
SFS	0.397 (0.299)
Constant	-1.3853 (0.364)
Pseudo R ²	0.000064
Log pseudo likelihood	-54.378
Obs	100

Source: Authors' computation

*1% **5% ***10% significant

Table 2 gives the Probit regression of the model on parental attitudes and future economic survival of the children. From the table, it can be seen that all independent variables employed to measure this relationship were positive and significant except parental attitudes to their children education which is significant but it is negative. A reason for this is that parental attitude does not determine whether the parental response to child schooling. Sending a child to school is more like a societal acceptable requirement of a parent in the contemporary times unlike many years ago. Government and other various institutions also lay emphasise on children education and there are many NGOs today that play significant roles in this regard.

Parental response to their children ill- wongs in is expected to have a positive sign but the sign is negative. This reason that can be attributed to this development is the changing in societal family system. Households are more of nuclear family system today and the presence of adult generation in mobilising discipline and order is gradually waning away. The need to seek for household economic survival makes many parents to be far away from their homes for long in a day. Parents are not giving sufficient times to what happen in their children schools. They rarely go to their

children schools even when they are sent for. There are no proper coordination of child's moral training between the school and the parents.

A reality revealed by the study is that the constant has a negative value of -1.385 and this shows that parental attitudes can weaken the potentiality of a child to have a bright future. Parents that exhibit favourable attitudes have higher potentiality to encourage the future economic survival of their children but the Probit regression has shown that either parental attitude is wholesome or not a child can still survival economically. It can be said that the various immoral act taking place in the country today where young adults are seeking every means to get rich quickly can be attributed to lack of wholesome parental attitudes in their lives.

V CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has basically focused on parental attitude and future economic survival of their children. The computed regression has shown that parental attitudes have influenced on future economic survival of their children. All variables employed to measure this relationship are significant. Therefore, parents need to have wholesome attitudes toward their children's education. This also requires government intervention in the sense that many parents are poorly paid and unemployed. These make them to be vulnerable in their attitudes. Works should be provided for parents as this will help to have resources to meet the needs of their children. All employers should be encouraged by the government to see to the welfare of their staff especially in the private sectors where the minimum national wage is yet to be implemented.

Social welfare departments in all government ministry and NGOs should assist in identifying children that are subjected constant harassment by the parents and to see

the rehabilitation of these children. Parents that abuses children should be sanctioned and made to adjust their attitudes to their children. Lastly, parents- children social activities should be encouraged in the countries as this will enable parents to see the uniqueness in their children and also give children the enabling environment to express their fears to their parents.

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