

Social relationship and academic outcomes: Educational and sociological perspectives

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Abstract

This study highlights the connection between social relationships and academic outcomes while framing it within the dual lenses of education and sociology. It emphasizes the interdisciplinary analysis of how interpersonal interactions, peer influences, and social environments shape learning and achievement. It investigates the influence of student-student relationships on academic performance in Social Studies among junior secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria. Findings indicate that positive peer relationships significantly enhance academic success, underscoring the role of social interactions in creating a supportive learning environment. When students establish meaningful connections with their peers, they engage in collaborative discussions, share insights, and provide feedback, which enriches their comprehension and critical thinking skills. Additionally, the study identifies student-teacher and student-parent relationships as significant predictors of academic performance. Supportive teacher-student interactions promote active participation and motivation, while active parental involvement reinforces confidence and creates a cohesive support system between home and school. To improve academic performance, schools should: Implement structured group activities that encourage positive peer interactions and collaborative learning in Social Studies. Facilitate regular teacher-student feedback sessions to strengthen trust and engagement. Promote parental involvement through workshops on supporting children's academic development, ensuring a balanced partnership between home and school.

Keywords: Social relationship, academic performance, social studies, education, students.

Introduction

Social relationships play a pivotal role in shaping academic performance, serving as a bridge between individual capabilities and broader societal influences. From an educational perspective, positive interactions with teachers, peers, and family members foster a supportive learning environment that enhances motivation, engagement, and achievement. Sociologically, the quality of these relationships is influenced by factors such as socio-economic status, cultural norms, and community dynamics, all of which impact a student's access to resources and emotional well-being. Understanding the intersection of education and sociology provides a comprehensive lens for exploring how these relationships either enable or hinder academic success, emphasizing the need for policies and practices that nurture constructive social connections in educational settings.

For over a decade, student performance in Social Studies has been notably poor in public examinations, particularly in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). This decline is especially evident in Cross River State, where a downward trend in Social Studies results has persisted across primary and secondary schools. Such a consistent fall in academic achievement has raised critical concerns, with evidence showing that less than 50% of students who take the BECE in Cross River State successfully pass Social Studies. If this trend remains unaddressed, it is likely to continue, causing worry among educators and parents alike.

The impact of this poor performance extends beyond students alone. Parents, facing financial strain from the need to re-enroll their children in the same examinations due to repeated failures, express frustration. Teachers, too, feel disheartened, as societal perceptions of their effectiveness are closely tied to student outcomes. Despite government and non-governmental organizations' efforts to support students through scholarships, well-equipped libraries, and qualified educators, students' performance in Social Studies has not significantly

improved. Parents have invested in necessary materials, and school administrators have made substantial efforts to provide quality learning environments, yet these measures appear to yield limited results.

This study seeks to explore the factors contributing to poor student performance in Social Studies, particularly in Cross River State. The research aims to investigate the influence of school routine activities and social relationships on the academic success of Upper Basic III students in Social Studies. Specifically, it will examine how student-student, student-teacher, and student-parent relationships impact academic performance in Social Studies. By identifying these relationships, the study aims to provide insights that could help address the persistent issues affecting student outcomes in the subject.

Literature review

Social relationships and academic performance

Social relationships, broadly defined by Cohen (2014), refer to connections between people who engage in recurring, meaningful interactions, including those among family members, friends, neighbors, and coworkers. These relationships exclude incidental or fleeting interactions, like brief exchanges with service providers. In behavioral medicine, researchers often emphasize informal social networks—relationships central to a person's daily life—over formal ties, such as those with professionals like doctors or lawyers. In a school setting, cooperation in social relationships is valued over competition, fostering teamwork, friendship, and respect. Children learn about their social world by observing connections between themselves, their family, culture, school, and community, while developing skills like conflict resolution and self-regulation through play, discussion, and role-playing activities (Uchino, 2016).

Social relationships, as analyzed in social science, form the building blocks of social structure, encompassing both positive (affiliative) and negative (agonistic) interactions (Wey, 2019). Theories on social interaction, such as those of Max Weber, explore how individual agency shapes broader social structures. Modern approaches in social relations consider individualist, structuralist, and institutionalist perspectives, as seen in fields like labor relations and political processes (Rook, 2018). Umberson (2017) describes social relationships as the sum of interactions over time, which can be positive or negative. Repeated interactions shape a relationship's quality, where dyads (two-person interactions) can be generally positive or negative and adjust behaviors based on feedback, reflecting the dynamic nature of social bonds.

Research into classroom routines, co-curricular activities, and interpersonal relationships has shed light on significant factors affecting academic performance in Social Studies among secondary students. Mosses (2010) investigated how structured classroom activities impact student outcomes in Gusua, Zamfara State, Nigeria, analyzing data from 400 students with ANOVA. The findings emphasized that classroom routines and co-curricular engagements positively influence academic success in Social Studies. Similarly, Ozeo (2016) in Jos, Nigeria, confirmed that co-curricular activities boost performance, analyzing responses from 350 senior secondary students. Through an ex-post facto design, Ozeo highlighted that structured out-of-class activities reinforce the learning process.

Exploring further, Tan (2017) studied 450 students in Lagos State, revealing that engagement in classroom activities leads to better Social Studies performance. Using Likert-scale questionnaires, the analysis indicated that student involvement in curricular activities reinforces the learning environment's role in academic achievement. Nathaniel (2015) in Imo State confirmed that recreational activities like sports positively influence Social Studies outcomes, suggesting that active engagement outside academics benefits cognitive

development. Studies on classroom attendance, such as Kalu's (2011) research in Oyo State, also highlighted its role in boosting academic success. Similarly, Leod (2017) in Lagos State and Brophy (2016) in Sokoto State linked student attitudes toward attendance with improved performance, stressing the impact of regular participation on learning outcomes.

The role of social interactions and peer influence is another vital area. Kingsley (2017) in Enugu State demonstrated a significant positive effect of peer associations on Social Studies performance. Using a descriptive survey with 300 students, Kingsley noted that positive peer relationships correlate with higher academic achievement. Charles (2018) in Oyo State confirmed these findings, showing that student-student interactions impact Social Studies outcomes. Brabely (2016) added nuance, noting that while peer support is generally beneficial, poorly chosen peer groups can negatively influence academic motivation. International research supports these findings. Gandara and Davis (2011) in California and Abu-Bakar (2010) in Malaysia reported similar effects, underscoring the universal role of peer relationships in academic performance. Angrist & Lang (2014) and Ding and Lehrer (2016) found that high-quality peer interactions enhance outcomes, especially for students in middle performance brackets.

Teacher-student relationships also contribute significantly to student success. King (2016) in Kano State and Udosen (2011) in Akwa Ibom State highlighted that supportive teacher interactions foster better academic performance in Social Studies. In Rivers State, Felix (2014) linked teacher qualities like supportiveness to improved academic outcomes, emphasizing that strong teacher-student bonds enhance student engagement and achievement. Morgan (2018) in Enugu State and Mahe (2016) in Zamfara State further corroborated that positive teacher-student relationships yield higher performance in Social Studies. Parental involvement adds another layer of influence on students' performance. Oundo, Poipoi, and Were (2014) studied parental attitudes in Kenya, showing that positive family support correlates with better academic outcomes. This trend is reflected in Nigerian studies by Ibrahim (2016) in Ogun State, where strong student-parent relationships significantly impacted Social Studies performance. Abdulkareem, Fasasi, and Akinnubi (2016) in Ilorin, Nigeria, also emphasized that collaborative family engagement improves educational success, particularly when supported by school management.

A broader review of co-curricular activities illustrates their nuanced impact on performance. Studies such as Kariyana, Maphosa, and Mupuranga (2012) in South Africa, and Kimengi, Kiptala, and Okero (2014) in Kenya, revealed that while sports and clubs benefit students academically, the effect varies with the type of activity and the students' engagement level. For example, excessive scheduling, as observed by Suleman, Singh, and Zeeshan (2014) in Pakistan, can hinder academic progress if it overwhelms students. Ayodele (2017) examined the importance of classroom attendance on university students' performance in Nigeria, showing that consistent attendance correlates with higher academic achievement. Similarly, Lowder et al. (2015) in the United States found that attendance policies are particularly effective for early-stage university students, as they positively affect both attendance and academic performance.

The role of homework and parental support also features prominently. Studies by Chew, Steong, and Ishak (2009) indicate that structured homework practices and supportive family environments foster academic success. For instance, Murillo and Martinea-Garrido (2014) emphasized that consistent teacher follow-up on homework enhances its efficacy as a learning tool. In rural settings, Barrera (2017) noted that tools like homework planners improve organizational skills and positively influence students' performance in mathematics and English. In sum, research across diverse educational contexts underscores that academic

success in Social Studies is shaped by a combination of structured classroom routines, positive peer and teacher relationships, supportive family engagement, and balanced co-curricular involvement. Implementing policies that support these factors, such as encouraging consistent attendance, fostering productive teacher-student dynamics, and promoting structured co-curricular activities, could significantly enhance student outcomes in Social Studies and beyond.

Theoretical framework

Wubbel's theory of interpersonal behaviour (2006)

Wubbel's (2006) interpersonal behavior theory posits that all human interactions can be described along two key dimensions: agency and communion. The agency dimension reflects the degree of control, independence, or power one exhibits in interactions, while communion captures the friendliness or affiliation one shows toward others. These dimensions serve as meta-concepts encompassing other theories of human relationships, particularly useful in hierarchical settings like student-teacher, student-student, and student-parent relationships. The theory emphasizes that the meaning or "valence" ascribed to behaviors—how one interprets another's actions—plays a crucial role in these dynamics. Thus, behaviors such as friendliness, leadership, strictness, or dissatisfaction in teachers, peers, and parents significantly affect students' perceptions and engagement. Positive relationships foster trust, liking, and motivation, while negative relationships can lead to disengagement and low academic motivation.

The theory's implications underscore the importance of social relationships within educational environments. Positive teacher-student, peer-peer, and parent-student relationships are critical to students' cognitive and emotional development, enhancing academic performance, especially in subjects like Social Studies. When students experience supportive and trusting relationships, they are more likely to engage and perform well academically. Conversely, perceived negativity in relationships can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction, uncertainty, and disengagement, often resulting in lower academic achievement. Hence, teachers and parents are encouraged to maintain positive, supportive relationships with students to create an environment conducive to learning and motivation.

Methodology

This study used an ex-post facto design, as defined by Idaka and Anagbogu (2012), which involves a systematic empirical inquiry without control over independent variables because they have already occurred or are inherently unchangeable. This design only allows for describing and interpreting existing conditions rather than manipulating variables. It was suitable for the study because it enabled the researcher to draw a large sample of Junior Secondary School III (Upper Basic III) students and examine factors like school routine activities, co-curricular participation, and various relationships (student-student, student-teacher, student-parent) in relation to academic performance in Social Studies. This approach provided insights into the extent to which these factors predict academic outcomes in the context of Cross River State. The design supports the idea that findings from the sample could be generalized to the larger population, helping describe broader patterns. Consequently, this approach was valuable in establishing and describing prevalent conditions within the population.

Area of the study

Cross River State, Nigeria, one of the country's 36 states, consists of 18 local government areas and is bordered by Cameroon, Ebonyi, Abia, Benue, Akwa Ibom states, and the Atlantic Ocean. With a 2006 population of approximately 2.9 million and spanning over

23,000 square kilometers, it lies within Nigeria's rainforest belt. Known for its green vegetation, including tropical trees and oil palms, the state supports a robust agricultural sector, producing cash crops like cocoa, rubber, and rice, alongside other staples. Rich in natural resources, it boasts limestone, gravel, and ample fishing opportunities due to proximity to the Cross River and Atlantic Ocean.

The state's ethnic diversity includes Efik, Ejagham, and Bekwara groups, with a growing economy driven by the government's efforts to support business, such as the Tinapa Business Resort and the Calabar Export Processing Zone. Cross River is also a major tourist destination, hosting attractions like Obudu Cattle Ranch (which includes a cable car and an annual mountain race), Agbokim and Kwa waterfalls, and the Calabar Carnival. Education is well-represented with institutions like the University of Calabar and the Cross River State University of Technology, along with public libraries and a structured secondary education system divided into three zones. The researcher selected Cross River State for its accessibility and suitability for data collection.

Population for the study

The study's population consists of all 15,080 Upper Basic Education students in public secondary schools across Cross River State's three Education Zones: Calabar, Ikom, and Ogoja. Of these, 7,142 are male and 7,938 are female students, according to data from the Cross River State Universal Basic Education Board (2022). Using stratified random sampling, the researcher divided the state into its three education zones, then randomly selected 40% of the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) within each zone for inclusion in the study—resulting in seven LEAs for Calabar, six for Ikom, and five for Ogoja (see Tables 1 and 2).

TABLE 1: Population distribution UPPER BASIC III students in Cross River State

SN	Local Education Authorities	No. of schools	Male	Female	Total
Calabar Education Zone					
1.	Akamkpa	19	337	373	710
2.	Akpabuyo	6	139	138	277
3.	Bakassi	3	53	56	109
4.	Biase	18	374	362	736
5.	Calabar municipality	16	848	1,371	2,219
6.	Calabar South	7	490	692	1,182
7.	Odukpani	15	275	242	517
Ikom Education Zone					
8.	Abi	12	310	361	671
9.	Boki	30	511	481	992
10.	Etung	12	192	133	325
11.	Ikom	19	766	767	1,533
12.	Obubra	19	507	521	1,028
13.	Yakurr	17	545	641	1,186
Ogoja Education Zone					
14.	Bekwarra	6	212	209	421
15.	Obanliku	13	249	281	530
16.	Obudu	26	524	496	1020
17.	Ogoja	14	360	351	711
18.	Yala	20	450	463	913
	Total	272	7,142	7,938	15,080

Source: Cross River State Universal Basic Education board, Calabar, 2021

The selection process for the study involved writing the names of the Local Government Areas (LGAs) on pieces of paper, which were folded into balls and placed in three containers according to Education Zone. This resulted in the selection of three LGAs from the Calabar Education Zone, two from Ikom, and two from Ogoja, totaling seven LGAs for the study. In each of the selected LGAs, 30% of the secondary schools were chosen, resulting in 30 schools

being selected from the various LGAs. From these schools, 40% of JSS3 students were randomly chosen, leading to the selection of 1,037 SS2 students for the study. The final sample comprised students from seven LGAs: 67 from Akpabuyo, 90 from Biase, 306 from Calabar Municipality, 77 from Abi, 297 from Ikom, 101 from Obanliku, and 99 from Ogoja.

TABLE 2: Sample distribution of students for the study

SN	Local Education Authorities	No. of schools	30% of schools selected	Schools	Students' population	40% of students selected
1.	Akpabuyo	6	2	Akpabuyo	15	60
				Akpa 2	17	7
2.	Biase	18	5	Biase 1	52	21
				Biase2	102	41
				Biase3	24	10
				Biase4	25	10
				Biase5	21	8
3.	Calabar Municipality	16	5	Calabar Mun. 1	121	48
				Calabar Mun. 2	100	40
				Calabar Mun. 3	209	84
				Calabar Mun. 4	145	58
				Calabar Mun. 5	191	76
4.	Abi	12	4	Abi 1	52	21
				Abi 2	101	40
				Abi 3	18	79
				Abi 4	22	
5.	Ikom	19	6	Ikom 1	165	66
				Ikom 2	342	137
				Ikom 3	103	41
				Ikom 4	48	19
				Ikom 5	52	21
				Ikom 6	33	13
6.	Obanliku	13	4	Obanliku 1	60	24
				Obanliku2	106	42
				Obanlik 3	66	26
				Obanliku4	22	9
7.	Ogoja	14	4	Ogoja 1	99	40
				Ogoja 2	108	43
				Ogoja 3	11	4
				Ogoja 4	30	12
	Total	98	30		2,595	1,037

Source: Field work, 2021.

Result

Student to student relationship and students' academic performance in Social Studies

Here, the study hypothesized that student to student relationship does not significantly predicts students' academic performance in Social Studies. The dependent variable in this study was students' academic performance while the independent variable was students to students' relationship. Data were collected from the two set of variables using performance test and questionnaire respectively. collected data were subjected to analysis using simple linear regression statistical analysis at .05 level of significance. Table 3 present the result of the data analysis.

TABLE 3: Simple linear regression statistical analysis Student to student relationship as a Predictor of Academic Performance in Social Studies

Predictor of Academic Performance in Social Studies						
Descriptive Statistics						
		Mean		Std. Deviation		N
Student to student relationship		18.17		3.395		1037
Performance test		25.26		3.469		1037
Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.121 ^a	.015	.014	3.372		
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p-value
1	Regression	173.907	1	173.907	15.294*	.000 ^b
	Residual	11768.882	1035	11.371		
	Total	11942.789	1036			
Coefficients ^a						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
1	(Constant)	21.154	.770		27.470	.000
	Student to student relationship	-.118	.030	-.121	-3.911	.000

*Significant at $p < .05$

In table 3, the mean and standard deviation for the variable "Student to student relationship" were 18.17 (SD = 3.395) based on a sample size of 1037. Similarly, the mean and standard deviation for the "Performance test" variable were 25.26 (SD = 3.469) also based on a sample size of 1037. The correlation coefficient (R) for the regression model was .121, indicating a weak positive relationship between the predictor variable and the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination (R²) was .015, meaning that approximately 1.5% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the predictor variable. The adjusted R², which takes into account the number of predictors and sample size, was .014.

The ANOVA results for the regression model predicting the dependent variable "Performance test" are presented in Table 3. The regression model accounted for a significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, as indicated by a significant F-value of 15.294 ($p < .001$). The regression model's sum of squares was 173.907, with 1 degree of freedom (df), resulting in a mean square of 173.907. The residual sum of squares was 11768.882, with 1035 degrees of freedom. The total sum of squares was 11942.789, with 1036 degrees of freedom. These findings suggest that the "Student to student relationship" predictor significantly contributes to the prediction of the "Student academic performance" variable. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that student to student relationship does not significantly predicts students' academic performance in Social Studies was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was retained.

The Coefficients table, displayed in Table 3, provides the unstandardized and standardized coefficients for the regression model predicting the dependent variable "Student to student relationship." The constant term (intercept) was 21.154 (SE = .770), indicating the expected value of the dependent variable when all predictors are zero. The coefficient for the "Performance test" predictor was -.118 (SE = .030), with a standardized coefficient (Beta) of -.121. This implies that for every one-unit decrease in the "Student to student relationship" score, there is a predicted decrease of .118 units in the "Performance test". The t-value of -3.911 suggests that the coefficient is statistically significant ($p < .001$), indicating a negative relationship between "Performance test" scores and "Student to student relationship."

Student to teacher relationship and students' academic performance in Social Studies

Again, the study hypothesized student to teacher relationship does not significantly predicts students' academic performance in Social Studies. In this hypothesis, the researcher sought to predict students' academic performance in social studies from students-teachers relationship. In other words, it was meant to ascertain whether good student-teacher relations can lead to improve academic performance on the part of the students. To test this hypothesis, empirical data were collected to measure student teacher relationship using questionnaire while students' academic performance in social studies was measured using performance test. Data were collected from a sample of 1037 student and analyse using simple linear regression statistical analysis at .05 level of significant. the result of the analysis is presented in table 4.

TABLE 4: Simple linear regression statistical analysis of student to teacher relationship as a Predictor of Academic Performance in Social Studies

Predictor of Academic Performance in Social Studies						
Descriptive Statistics						
		Mean		Std. Deviation		N
Student to teacher relationship		18.32		2.159		1037
Performance test		25.26		3.469		1037
Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.141 ^a	.020	.019	2.139		
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	96.452	1	96.452	21.085*	.000 ^b
	Residual	4734.533	1035	4.574		
	Total	4830.986	1036			
Coefficients ^a						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	20.540	.488		42.052	.000
	Student to teacher relationship	-.088	.019	-.141	-4.592	.000

*Significant at $p < .05$

From the descriptive statistics in Table 4, the mean score for "Student to teacher relationship" was 18.32, indicating that, on average, students reported their relationship with teachers to be at this level. The standard deviation for this variable was 2.159, suggesting some variability in the responses. For the variable "Performance test," the mean score was 25.26, indicating that, on average, students achieved at this level on the test. The standard deviation for this variable was 3.469 (SD = 3.469), indicating some variability in test scores. The sample size for these variables were 1037. A linear regression model was employed to examine the relationship between the predictor variable, "Student to teacher relationship" and the outcome variable "Performance test". The model summary indicates that the model had a correlation coefficient (R) of .141. This value suggests a weak positive relationship between the predictor and outcome variables. The coefficient of determination (R Square) was .020, indicating that only 2% of the variance in the outcome variable was explained by the predictor variable.

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the relationship between the predictor variable "Student to teacher relationship" and the dependent variable "Performance test". The model summary indicates that the regression model significantly predicted the dependent variable, $F(1, 1035) = 21.085$, $p < .000$. The regression model accounted for a significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, with the regression sum of squares being 96.452. This indicates that the predictor variable, "Performance test," contributed significantly to the model. The ANOVA results revealed that the regression model,

with " Student to teacher relationship" as the predictor, significantly predicted the " Performance test " variable. The model accounted for a significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, indicating the importance of the predictor in explaining the relationship between students and teachers.

The regression analysis revealed that the predictor variable, " Student to teacher relationship," significantly influenced the dependent variable, " Performance test." The constant term in the model was 20.540 ($B = 20.540$, $SE = .488$, $t = 42.052$, $p < .000$), indicating that when the performance test score was zero, the predicted value for the student's relationship with their teacher was 20.540. The coefficient for the "Performance test" predictor was $-.088$ ($B = -.088$, $SE = .019$, $Beta = -.141$, $t = -4.592$, $p < .001$), indicating that for every unit increase in the performance test score, the predicted value for the student's relationship with their teacher decreased by .088 units. This negative relationship was statistically significant, as indicated by the p-value. Therefore, higher performance test scores were associated with lower predicted values for the student's relationship with their teacher.

Student to parent relationship and students' academic performance in Social Studies.

This hypothesis stated that student to parent relationship does not significantly predicts students' academic performance in Social Studies. Student to parent relationship was the independent variable in this hypothesis while students' academic performance in social studies was the dependent variable. To test this null hypothesis, data collected from 1037 respondents who participated in the survey were analysed using simple linear regression statistical analysis at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5: Simple linear regression statistical analysis of student to parent relationship as a Predictor of Academic Performance in Social Studies

Descriptive Statistics						
		Mean	Std. Deviation	N		
Student to parent relationship		16.77	3.213	1037		
Performance test		25.26	3.469	1037		
Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.243 ^a	.059	.058	3.118		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Performance test						
ANOVA^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
1	Regression	634.161	1	634.161	65.232*	.000 ^b
	Residual	10061.897	1035	9.722		
	Total	10696.058	1036			
a. Dependent Variable: Student to parent relationship						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Performance test						
Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		p-value
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	11.068	.712		15.544	.000
	Student to parent relationship	.226	.028	.243	8.077	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Student to parent relationship						

In this hypothesis, descriptive statistics were computed for two variables: student to parent relationship and performance test scores as shown in Table 5. A sample of 1,037 participants was included in the analysis. The mean score for student to parent relationship was 16.77, $SD = 3.213$. The performance test scores had a mean of 25.26, $SD = 3.469$, suggesting the average performance on the test. The standard deviations for both variables ($SD = 3.213$

for student to parent relationship, $SD = 3.469$ for performance test) reflect the degree of variability in the data. These findings provide valuable insights into the nature of student-parent relationships and academic performance within the studied sample. The coefficient of determination (R Square) indicates that approximately 5.9% of the variance in the dependent variable can be accounted for by the independent variable (Student to parent relationship) in this model. The correlation coefficient (R) suggests a weak positive relationship between the predictor and the outcome variable, with an R value of .243.

The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model explains a significant amount of variance in the dependent variable, as evidenced by a large F-value of 65.232 ($df = 1$, $p < .000$). These findings suggest that student to parent relationship is a significant predictor of performance test and provides valuable insights into the relationship between these variables. This result implies that the null hypothesis should be rejected while the alternate hypothesis should be maintained. The coefficient for the student to parent relationship (.226) indicates that, for every one-unit increase in the student to parent relationship score, the performance test is estimated to increase by .226 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of .243 suggests that the predictor variable has a moderate positive impact on the dependent variable. The t-value of 8.077 ($df = 1035$, $p < .000$) indicates that the coefficient for the student to parent relationship is statistically significant. These findings provide evidence of a significant relationship between student to parent relationship and the performance test, suggesting that higher test scores are associated with better student-parent relationships.

Discussion of result

Student-student relationship and academic performance in Social Studies

The finding that student-student relationships significantly predict students' academic performance in Social Studies in public secondary schools in Cross River State highlights the importance of interpersonal connections and social interactions among students in the learning process. This suggests that the quality of relationships between students has a substantial impact on their academic performance in the subject. Positive student-student relationships create a supportive and conducive learning environment where students feel valued, respected, and comfortable expressing their ideas. Such relationships foster collaboration, cooperation, and peer learning, which can enhance understanding, critical thinking, and overall academic performance in Social Studies.

When students have positive relationships with their peers, they are more likely to engage in meaningful discussions, exchange ideas, and provide constructive feedback to one another. These interactions contribute to a deeper understanding of Social Studies concepts, as students are exposed to different perspectives and interpretations. Additionally, student-student relationships can foster a sense of belonging and emotional well-being, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting a positive attitude towards learning. When students feel connected and supported by their peers, they are more motivated and engaged in the classroom, which in turn positively influences their academic performance. The findings emphasize the significance of creating opportunities for students to develop positive relationships with their classmates. Educators can facilitate this by promoting collaboration through group work, discussions, and cooperative learning activities. Encouraging students to respect and value one another's opinions, fostering a culture of inclusivity and mutual support, and providing guidance on effective communication and teamwork can contribute to the development of positive student-student relationships.

Previous scholars have documented that the transition from elementary to middle school brings changes to students' social network as they enter a new environment with

multiple subject-specific classes and a greater reliance on peers for guidance and identity development. Middle school peer groups have entry barriers and prioritize social acceptance over academic performance. Students' motivation to be accepted by peers can overshadow their academic motivation, leading to a shift in priorities. Three dimensions of peer interactions - social network centrality, reciprocated friendships, and sociometric status - which influence the social and emotional well-being of young adolescents and their adjustment to middle school. Rejection by peers is linked to negative outcomes, while students with high sociometric status experience positive outcomes

The finding revealed that the student-teacher relationship significantly predicts students' academic performance in Social Studies in public secondary schools in Cross River State is an important discovery that highlights the crucial role of the teacher-student dynamic in educational outcomes. This finding implies that the quality of the relationship between students and their teachers has a significant impact on how well students perform academically in the subject of Social Studies. Firstly, this finding underscores the importance of positive and supportive interactions between teachers and students. When students feel respected, supported, and valued by their teachers, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated in their studies. This, in turn, can lead to improved academic performance. A strong student-teacher relationship can foster an environment where students feel comfortable asking questions, seeking guidance, and actively participating in classroom discussions.

Additionally, the finding suggests that teachers who establish meaningful connections with their students may have a better understanding of their individual needs, strengths, and challenges. This knowledge enables teachers to tailor their instructional approaches and provide personalized support to maximize student learning outcomes. When students perceive that their teachers care about their success and well-being, they may be more inclined to invest effort and take ownership of their learning, which can positively influence their academic performance. Several studies have shown that the student-teacher relationship has a significant influence on students' academic performance in Social Studies. King (2016) found a significant influence of the student-teacher relationship on academic performance. Mahe (2016) discovered a positive relationship between student-teacher relationships and academic performance among secondary students. Abraham (2013) revealed a significant influence of the student-teacher relationship on academic performance. Additionally, assigning students of the same race to teachers is associated with more favourable teacher ratings, and there is strong evidence that Black students perform better on performance tests when assigned to a Black teacher, although the evidence for Latino/a students is less consistent.

The finding revealed that student-parent relationship significantly predicts students' academic performance in Social Studies in public secondary schools in Cross River State suggests the importance of parental involvement and support in a student's educational journey. When parents actively engage with their children's education, it can have a positive impact on their academic performance. A strong student-parent relationship can foster a supportive and nurturing environment at home, which can contribute to a student's motivation, self-confidence, and overall academic success. When parents show interest in their child's education, communicate effectively with teachers, and provide guidance and encouragement, students are more likely to feel valued and motivated to excel in their studies.

Parental involvement can take various forms, including attending parent-teacher conferences, monitoring and assisting with homework, discussing academic goals with their child, and engaging in educational activities outside of school. These activities help to establish a partnership between parents and teachers, promoting a cohesive approach to supporting the student's learning and development. Furthermore, a strong student-parent relationship can also

enhance communication channels between home and school, enabling teachers to better understand the student's individual needs, strengths, and challenges. This knowledge allows teachers to tailor their instruction and provide appropriate support to optimize the student's learning experience.

Several studies have provided compelling evidence regarding the influence of student-parent relationships on academic performance. Okendu (2017) identified a significant impact of student-parent relationships on academic performance in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Abdulkareem, Fasasi, and Akinnubi (2016) revealed a significant relationship between student-parent relationships and academic performance in schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. Parent-child relationship not only directly affects college students' academic performance but also indirectly influences it through gratitude and psychological capital. A significant difference in academic performance between students with positive and negative parent-child relationships, while also establishing a positive correlation between parent-child relationships and academic performance among secondary school students. Confirmed that parent-child and parent-school involvement practices have varying effects on student attitudes, behaviours, and academic outcomes, which ultimately impact student performance.

Conclusion

This study highlights the critical role of peer relationships in boosting academic performance in Social Studies among junior secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria. Positive student-student relationships foster a collaborative and supportive environment where students can engage in discussions, share knowledge, and provide constructive feedback, all of which contribute to improved comprehension and critical thinking. The findings underscore the importance of fostering social bonds within the classroom, showing that such connections not only enhance learning experiences but also strengthen students' engagement with their studies. Moreover, the study demonstrates that both student-teacher and student-parent relationships play essential roles in shaping academic outcomes. Supportive teacher-student interactions encourage active participation and sustain student motivation, while parental involvement reinforces students' confidence and connects home and school into a unified support system. By implementing group-based activities, structured feedback sessions, and parental involvement workshops, schools can create a robust support network that cultivates both academic and personal growth. This holistic approach is essential for advancing Social Studies performance and promoting a well-rounded educational experience.

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