

**PARENTAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE AND
CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS AMONG PRESCHOOLERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
CENTRES IN RIVERS STATE.**

By

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the socio-economic status of parents on the development of creative and critical thinking skills among preschoolers in early childhood Centres in Rivers State. The analytic correlational survey design was adopted for the study. It was guided by four research questions and four hypotheses. The population of this study comprised of all the 496,787 parents of preschoolers in the early childhood centres in Rivers State. A total of 1250 parents were used for the study. A validated instrument titled “Parental Socio-economic Status on Preschoolers' Creative and Critical Skills Development Questionnaire (PSSPCCSDQ)” was used for the study. The reliability of the instruments was established using test re-test model to obtain an index of 0.78. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson's product moment correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study established that there was significant relationship between parental socio-economic status in terms of occupation, academic qualification, income, parents' educational support on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State. It was recommended amongst others that Parents should strive to acquire good and quality education for themselves as this will afford them a decent occupation and socio-economic status, thus putting them in right position to providing the necessary support needed for the education of their children.

Keywords: Parent, Socio-economic Status, Preschoolers, Creative skills and Critical skills

Introduction

Creative and critical thinking are processes that are child led but which benefit greatly from the sensitive contributions of others. According to Oke et al. (2022), creativity can be described as the ability to think or reason in other to produce something attractive. Consequently, it can be deduced that creative children have the potential to work hard and find solutions to some of their problems. Therefore, the objective of the child as a creator is often geared towards originality, problem-solving, productivity, and worthy outcomes (Sharp, 2004). Oke et al. (2022), thus explained that, all these can be realized if they are well supported by their parents.

Parents are individuals, who train and take care of their children. They are their children's first teachers and therefore should also help them develop their creative and critical thinking throughout life(Oke et al., 2022). They further explained that, one of the proper roles of parents is to provide encouragement, support and access to the activities that

enable the child to be abreast with certain tasks ahead in their life. Similarly, Arnold (2008) and Powell (2010), explained that, parents' active involvement during the preschool years of their children has positively impacted on the children's pre-literacy development, acquisition of mathematical skills, well-developed social skills, creative and critical skills as well as their positive attitudes toward schooling. In the same vein, most theorists of child development have agreed that children are naturally creative and the role of the parents is to provide encouragement and support for their children. In addition, Bruce (2004), reported that, it is an engagement with creative activities that promote children's abilities to think about new ideas, express themselves, identify issues, and solve various problems. Robinson (2001), also argued that creativity is present in the early childhood of children and they needed to be developed on it. From all these points of view, it is evident that engaging children in creativity is essentially an important milestone in the development of creative thinkers and innovation from childhood to adulthood. Thus, O'Connor (2012), deduced that, if creativity is not encouraged and developed during childhood years, it is not likely to be developed in later life.

Statement of the Problem

Educational achievement of pupils is strongly related to the socio economic status of the parents. Parental socio-economic status has demonstrated many positive influences on children's skills, academic, behavioral, and social outcomes (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003). Children's later reading achievement during the elementary and middle school years is an additional long-term benefit of parental involvement during preschool.

These positive outcomes have given rise to the instillation of government initiatives to increase parental roles in today's schools. This study is however, set out to investigate the roles of parental socio-economic status on the development of creative and critical thinking skills among preschoolers in childcare centres in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of parental socio-economic status on the development of creative and critical thinking skills among preschoolers in early childhood Centres in Rivers State. The specific objectives are to:

1. ascertain the influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical thinking skills among preschoolers in early childhood Centres in Rivers State
2. ascertain the influence of parental income status on the development of creative and critical thinking skills among preschoolers in early childhood Centres in Rivers State
3. ascertain the influence of parental educational qualification on the development of creative and critical thinking skills among preschoolers in early childhood Centres in Rivers State
4. ascertain the influence of parental educational support on the development of creative and critical thinking skills among preschoolers in early childhood Centres in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- 1 How does parental occupation influence the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?
- 2 To what extent does parental income status influence the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?
- 3 What level of influence will parent educational qualification have on the

development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?

- 4 How does parental educational support influence the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- H₀₁: There is no significant influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State.
- H₀₂: There is no significant influence of parental income status on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers state.
- H₀₃: There is no significant influence of parent educational qualification on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State.
- H₀₄: There is no significant influence of parental educational support on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State.

Methodology

The research design used for this study was the correlational design. The rationale for the use of correlational design was to elicit responses from the large sampled respondents and use such data to establish the relationship between influence parental socio-economic status and the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers. The area of this study is Rivers State. The State has six tertiary institutions which include the Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Elechi Amadi Polytechnic, Ken Sara Wiwa polytechnic, University of Port Harcourt and the Federal college of Technical Omoku. The population of the study comprises of Four hundred and ninety-six thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven (496,787) parents of preschoolers in early childhood Centres in Rivers State (RSUBEB, 2017). One thousand six hundred and seventy-seven (1,677) parents of preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State constitute the sample size of this study. The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted obtain the sample size for the study. To achieve this, the cluster sampling technique was used first to separate the population in to the three (3) senatorial district of the State and two Local Government Area (1 riverine and 1 upland) each was sample from each of the senatorial district. Secondly, the disproportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to separate the 6 LGAs in to riverine and upland LGAs and one LGA was each randomly selected from the stratified sample. Finally, the simple random sampling technique was used to select 10% of the population of the last two LGAs which is 16,770 to arrive at 1,677 which constitute the sample size for this study. To select the respondents, the researcher folded 15,000 papers with 'No' inscription and 1,677 papers with 'Yes' inscription. As many parents that picked the papers with "Yes" were selected for the study. The instrument titled "Parental Socio-economic Status on Preschoolers' Creative and Critical Skills Development Questionnaire (PSSPCCSDQ)" was used. The instrument comprised of two sections (A and B). Section A elicited information from the respondents on their demographic data like the gender of parents and the preschoolers, the age of the preschoolers, the occupation, academic qualification and income status of the parents. Section B of the instrument is a 42 items 4point scale questionnaire with 5 subdivisions each, eliciting information on the

type of creative and critical skills available, the level and kind of support from parents to the preschoolers, the occupation of the parents, the education qualification of the parents and the income status of the parents. The respondents (parents) of the preschoolers are to: strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) or strongly disagree (1) with the statement posed to them in the questionnaire.

Validity of the instrument

The instrument for data collection was validated by three experts. One (1) was chosen from Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education, Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt, while two (2) others were selected from the Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education Studies, Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education for correction and validation. Their corrections and suggestions were used to validate the instrument for both face and content validity.

Reliability of the instrument

The test re-test reliability test model was used ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The instrument was administered to 30 respondents in Bayelsa State which is outside the sampled population but has similar geographical characteristic like the study area. After two-weeks interval, another set of the same questionnaires were administered to the same set of people and the questionnaires were filled out and returned. The data collected from the administration of the instruments was correlated using Pearson's product moment correlation to obtain the reliability coefficient of 0.78, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

Administration of the instrument

The administration of the instrument was done with the help of three research assistants. One thousand six hundred and seventy-seven (1,677) copies of the instruments were distributed across the sampled childcare centres within the study area with the help of the research assistants who were instructed on how to administer the said instruments to the parents of the preschoolers. With help of the teachers, the instrument was administered directly to the respondents with proper instruction on how to respond to the instrument. The completed copies of questionnaire were retrieved on a later date to give the parents the time to respond to questions posed by the instrument.

Method of data analysis

The data generated from the instrument were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson's product moment correlation at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Presentation of Result

Research Questions1: How does parental occupation influence the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on the how parental occupation influence the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres

S/N	Parental Occupation	N = 1,250
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		SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	SD
1	Parental occupation plays a vital role in preschoolers academic wellbeing	390	431	273	156	0	3.84	1.00
2	Occupation should afford parents the opportunity of providing for the children	235	156	78	274	507	3.22	1.56
3	Occupations of parents should afford them the time to render academic support to the children	351	234	431	234	0	3.56	1.09
4	Occupation of parents should be able to motivation the children	234	235	78	469	234	3.19	1.42
5	Occupation of parents should be less stressful so as to enable them spend time with their children	313	312	391	78	156	3.44	1.27
	Grand mean						3.42	1.01

Table 4.1 shows that the mean and standard deviation on how parental occupation influence the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State was 3.42, SD=1.01. The key parental occupational influence was that parental occupation plays a vital role in preschoolers academic wellbeing (M = 3.84; SD = 1.00) and was followed by the fact that occupations of parents should afford them the time to render academic support to the children (M = 3.56; SD = 1.09) while the least was that occupation of parents should be able to motivation the children (M = 3.19, SD = 1.42).

Research Questions 2: To what extent does parental socio economic status influence the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on the extent parental socio economic status influence the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood Centres

S/N	Parental income status	N = 1250						
		SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	SD
1	Parents of high income status are able to provide the basic needs of their children	508	664	78		0	4.34	0.59
2	Parents of high income status ensures that their children have less to worry while studying	351	430	391	78	0	3.84	0.91
3	Children from homes of parents with high income status are more motivated to study.	703	313	156	78	0	4.31	0.92
4	Children from homes of parents with high income status are often provided with the basic required material to encourage their learning.	235	391	312	312	0	3.44	1.06
5	Children from homes of parents with poor or low income status are often distracted by challenges of providing their basic study needs	312	704	78	78	78	3.88	1.05
6	Children from homes of parents with low income status are often in lack.	313	78	234	508	117	2.97	1.36



Grand mean	3.80	0.39
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Table 2 shows that the mean and standard deviation on the extent parental income status influence the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres was 3.80, SD=0.39. The key parental income status was that, parents of high income status are able to provide the basic needs of their children ($M=4.34$; $SD=0.59$) and was followed by the fact that children from high income status home are more motivated to study to maintain that status ($M = 4.31$; $SD = 0.92$) while the least was that children from high status home are often provided with the basic required material to encourage their learning ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.06$).

Research Questions 3: What level of influence will parental educational qualification have on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation on the level of influence parent educational qualification have on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres

S/N	Parental Educational Qualification	N = 1250						
		SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	SD
1	When parents are educated they tend to encourage their children to study	79	351	78	430	312	3.15	1.30
2	Educated parents supports their children most in terms of academics	156	0	234	78	782	3.00	1.39
3	Educated parents take out time to teach their children at home	273	234	352	313	78	3.25	1.22
4	The education of parents enabled them to secure good jobs so as to cater for the academic needs of the children	429	587	156	78	0	4.09	0.84
5	Educated parents know what to do to encourage their children to study	235	585	274	156	0	3.72	0.91
6	Educated parents motivates their children to want be like them	79	390	586	195	0	3.28	0.80
	Grand mean						3.44	0.61

Table 3 shows that the mean and standard deviation on the level of influence parent educational qualification have on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres was 3.44, SD=0.61. The key parental educational qualification influence was that The education of parents enabled them to secure good jobs so as to cater for the academic needs of the children ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.84$) and was followed by the fact that Educated parents know what to do to encourage their children to study) while the least was that educated parents supports their children most in terms of academics ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.39$)

Research Questions 4: How does parental educational support influence the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?

Table 4: Mean and standard deviation on how parental educational support influence the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres

S/N	Parental Educational Support	N = 1250						
		SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	SD
1	Parents need to support their child's learning by providing them with adequate learning materials	429	743	78	0	0	4.28	0.57
2	Parents need to identify a regular time and place in your home for your child to do homework	351	743	156	0	0	4.16	0.62
3	Parents need to monitor your child's homework.	664	508	78	0	0	4.47	0.61
4	Parents need to monitor your child's television viewing habit	821	429		0	0	4.66	0.47
5	Parents need to ensure that your child has excellent attendance at school	743	507		0	0	4.59	0.49
6	Parents need to discuss with your child the importance of a good education	586	469	195	0	0	4.31	0.73
7	Parents need to support and reinforce the school's discipline plan	391	742	117	0	0	4.22	0.60
8	Parents need to read to your young child. If your child is older you need to encourage reading by paying attention to what your child reads as well as how often he/she reads	391	625	234	0	0	4.13	0.70
9	Parents need to be knowledgeable about what information and skills your child should master at his/her preschool level.	273	821	156	0	0	4.09	0.58
10	Parents need to be part of some school activities like PTA and others, to increase the safety and operations of your child's school.	507	665	78	0	0	4.28	0.76
11	Parents need to regularly read the school newsletter.	312	430	508	0	0	3.84	0.79
	Grand mean						4.28	0.38

Table 4 shows that the mean and standard deviation on how parental educational support influence the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres was 4.28, SD=0.38. The key parental educational support was that parents need to monitor their children's television viewing habit (M = 4.66, SD = 0.47) and was followed by the fact that Parents need to ensure that their child/children has excellent attendance at school (M = 4.59, SD = 0.49) while the least was that parents need to be knowledgeable about what information and skills their child/children should master at his/her preschool level (M = 4.09, SD = 0.58).

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Table 5: Mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Variable	Mean	SD	N	r-value	p-value
Parental Occupation	3.42	1.01	1250	.675	.000
Creative and Critical skill Development	4.47	0.44	1250		

Table 5 shows that the mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State were 3.42; SD=1.01 and 4.47, SD=0.44 for parental occupation and Creative and Critical Skill Development respectively. The result of the Pearson's product moment correlation shows that there is significant influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r=.675$, $p<.05$). The null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of parental income status on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers state?

Table 6: Mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental income status on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Variable	Mean	SD	N	r-value	p-value
Parental Income Status	3.80	0.39	1250	.555	.042
Creative and Critical Skill Development	4.47	0.44	1250		

Table 6 shows that the mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental income status on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State were 3.80, SD=0.39 4.47, SD=0.44 for parental income status and Creative 3.80, SD = 0.39 and 4.47, and Critical skill Development respectively. The result of the Pearson's product moment correlation shows that there is significant influence of parental income on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .555$, $p < .05$). The null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected at 0.05alpha level.

H₀₃: There is no significant influence of parent educational qualification on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State?

Table7: Mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental educational qualification on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Variable	Mean	SD	N	r-value	p-value
Parental Educational Qualification	3.44	0.61	1250	.410	.004
Creative and Critical skill Development	4.47	0.44	1250		

Table 7 shows that the mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental educational qualification on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State were 3.44, SD=0.61 and 4.47, SD=0.44 for Parental Educational Qualification and Creative and Critical skill Development respectively. The result of the Pearson's product moment correlation shows that there is a significant influence of Parental Educational Qualification on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .410, p < .05$). The null hypothesis (H_{03}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.

H₀₄: There is no significant influence of parental educational support on the development of creative and critical skills in preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Table 8: Mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental educational support on the development of creative and critical skills among preschooler in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Variable	Mean	SD	N	r-value	p-vale
Parental Education Support	4.28	0.38	1250	.798	.000
Creative and Critical skill Development	4.47	0.44	1250		

Table 8 shows that the mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental educational support on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State were 4.28, SD=0.38 and 4.47, SD=0.44 for Parental Educational support and Creative and Critical Skill Development respectively. The result of the Pearson's product moment correlation shows that there is a significant influence of Parental Educational support on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .798, p < 05$). The null hypothesis (H_{04}) was rejected at 0.05alpha level.

Summary of finding

1. Parental occupation plays a vital role in preschoolers academic wellbeing and was followed by the fact that occupations of parents should afford them the time to render academic support to the children
2. Parents of high income status were able to provide the basic needs of their children and their children are more motivated to study to maintain that status

3. Parental Educational Qualification enabled them to secure good jobs so as to cater for the academic needs of the children and this has also propelled them to know what to do to encourage their children to study.
4. Parental Educational Support enables them to monitor their children's television viewing habit and this enables them to ensure that their child/children has excellent attendance at school
5. There is significant influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .675, p < .05$). The null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.
6. There is significant influence of parental income status on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .555, p < .05$). The null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.
7. There is a significant influence of Parental Educational Qualification on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .410, p < .05$). The null hypothesis (H_{03}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.
8. There is a significant influence of Parental Educational support on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .798, p < .05$). The null hypothesis (H_{04}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.

Discussion of findings

Influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and Critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Finding from this study shows in Table 5 that the mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State were 3.42, SD=1.01 and SD=0.44 for parental occupation and Creative and Critical Skill Development respectively. The result of the Pearson's product moment correlation shows that there is significant influence of parental occupation on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .675, p < .05$). The null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level. This finding is consistent with those of Memo Muhammad, F.J & Muhammad, A. K. (2010) in their research on the impact of socioeconomic status on students' educational achievement at secondary schools districts of Malir, Karachi, in Indian. They found that there was significant relationship between parents' occupation and students' academic performance in matriculation examination. Students whose fathers have better occupation performed well in matriculation examination than those students whose fathers have a less prestigious occupation. Fathers with the high occupation are in a better condition to assist and encourage their children toward educational attainment. They can provide whatever is needed to support and encourage their children morally, intellectually, spiritually and psychologically. But parents with less prestigious occupation due to instability and financial problems cannot provide adequate modern facilities to enhance their children education. Mother's occupation also influences students' academic performance. It was observed that students with a mother who have better occupation performed well in matriculation examination than their peers from mothers with less prestigious occupation. Also Saifullah, (2011) pointed out that parents' occupation significantly influence students' achievement. He used the data from three different colleges in Gujarat district. The result indicated that children of government employees secured more marks (60.02%) than the

private job holders, because of the certainty and reliability of the government jobs. Parents with government jobs are more secured, and their family are at peace relatively compared to those who work in the private organization.

Influence of parental socio economic status on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

According to findings from this work as shown in Table 4.6, the mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental socio economic status on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State were 3.80, SD=0.39 and 4.47, SD=0.44 for parental socio economic status and Creative and Critical skill Development respectively. The result of the Pearson's product moment correlation shows that there is significant influence of parental socio economic status on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r = .555, p < .05$). The null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level. This result is in agreement with the views of Bradley & Corwyn, (2002) who stated Socio-economic status (SES) is a multidimensional construct typically indexed by education, income and/or occupation. According to them, SES has been linked to many aspects of child development, including functional and structural brain development, academic achievement and physical and mental health. The relation between SES and cognition is a long-standing area of research in developmental psychology, with studies including broad measures such as school achievement (e.g., Sirin, 2005) as well as studies including measures of specific aspects of cognitive function (e.g., Noble, McCandliss & Farah, 2007). An influential meta-analysis by White (1982), mainly based on samples from the US, reported that SES is related to both intellectual function (IQ) and school achievement.

Influence of parental educational qualification on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Result of findings from this work as indicated in Table 4.7 shows that the mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental educational qualification on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State were 3.44, SD=0.61 and 4.47, SD=0.44 for Parental Educational Qualification and Creative and Critical skill Development respectively. The result of the Pearson's product moment correlation shows that there is a significant influence of Parental Educational Qualification on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r=.410, p<.05$). The null hypothesis (H_{03}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level. This finding is in line with the result of findings from Grissmer (2003), who opined that parents' level of education is the most important factor affecting students' academic achievement. Taiwo (1993) submits that parents "educational background influences the academic achievement of students. This, according to him, is because the parents would be in a good position to be second teachers to the child; and even guide and counsel the child on the best way to perform well in education and provide the necessary materials needed by the child. This was supported by Musgrave (2000) who said that a child that comes from an educated home would like to follow the steps of his or her family and by this, work actively in his or her studies. He said further that parents who have more than a minimum level of education are expected to have a favored attitude to the child's education and to encourage and help him or her with school work. They provide library facilities to encourage the child to show examples in activities of intellectual type such as reading of

newspapers, magazines and journals. They are likely to have wider vocabulary by which the children can benefit and develop language fluency. Onocha (1985) concludes that a child from a well educated family with high socio-economic status is more likely to perform better than a child from an illiterate family. This is because the child from an educated family has a lot of support such as a decent and good environment for academic work, parental support and guidance, enough textual and academic materials and decent feeding. He or she is likely to be sent to good schools where well seasoned teachers will handle his or her subjects.

Influence of parental educational support on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State

Findings from this study established in Table 4.8 that the mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation on the influence of parental educational support on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State were 4.28, SD=0.38 and 4.47, SD=0.44 for Parental Educational support and Creative and Critical skill Development respectively. The result of the Pearson's product moment correlation shows that there is a significant influence of Parental Educational support on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State ($r=.798, p<.05$). The null hypothesis (H_{04}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level. This assertion is consistent with the views of Pong, (2005) argued that academic performance is therefore not merely based on the educational processes within school, it depends no less on the circumstances that young live in, on the encouragement and support teenage receive at home, the atmosphere in the peer group, and lifestyles of adolescents in different places. When parental encouragement and student performance in school settings have been studied, other factors have been associated with academic performance and achievement among children. These factors include motivation goal orientation and self-efficacy (Bandura 1997). The engagement of parents in educational activities and some financial matters significantly affect the educational development of the student. If the parents don't take part in their children's educational matters the students don't perform well. Many researchers (e.g Driessen, 2005). Have reported that if the parents take part in their children's educational activities on regular basis, it enhances the performance of the children. Poor performance is significantly interlinked with some factors like; constituent mishandling, felony, and psychological issues. Parental involvement in school related matters of children is utmost important. Parent's involvement may comprise regular meetings with the instructors, guiding mechanism for all school matters, and interaction with the child, to check the mark sheets of the student on regular basis. If the parents maintain this the child performs well in their academics.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATIONS

This chapter took care of the summary of the entire work, the conclusions based on findings of study, the recommendation, contribution to knowledge and the suggestion for further studies.

5.1 Summary of the study

5.1.1 Chapter One

This study investigated the influence of parental variables on the development of

creative and critical skills of preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State Chapter one explored the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions and hypotheses, significance of the study and scope of the study. In this chapter, the development of critical and creative skills among preschoolers and how it could be influenced by parental variables like occupation, socio-economic status, educational qualification and educational support were taken into due consideration.

5.1.2 Chapter Two

The chapter two of this work took care of the review of related literatures on the work. This was done under the headings of theoretical framework, conceptual framework, empirical review and the summary of the literature review. The theoretical framework centered on the Family system theory and the Attachment theory behavior while the conceptual framework reviewed on the concept of creative and critical skills among preschool children, the influence of the various parental variables on education. The empirical review talked on the exploration of childhood education and parental variables as the likely predictors.

5.1.3 Chapter Three

The Chapter three of this work discussed on the research methodology. The discussions were centered on the research design, the population of the study, the sample and sampling techniques, Instrumentation, the validation of the instrument, the reliability of the instrument, administration of the instrument and the method of data analysis. The Data collected certified instrument were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and Pearson's product moment correlation in chapter four of this work. The study employed the descriptive survey design and multi stage sampling techniques (cluster sampling technique, stratified sampling technique and simple random sampling techniques) while the reliability of the instrument was done using the test re-test reliability test model

5.1.4 Chapter Four

This chapter took care of the presentation of result, Data analysis, summary of findings and the discussion of findings. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while hypotheses were tested using Pearson product moment correlation statistical analytical tool on statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 21) to check for the influence of parental variables on the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State.

Finding from the various research questions and hypothesis were discussed in relation with some established theories and literatures.

5.1.5 Chapter Five

This chapter talked about the summary of the entire work which comprises of Chapter one, Chapter two, chapter three, chapter four and chapter five. It also took into account the conclusion, recommendation, limitations of the study, suggestion for further studies and contribution to knowledge.

5.2 Conclusion

The following conclusion is drawn from the findings of this study

Conclusively, parental variables like parents' occupation, socio-economic status, educational qualification and parental educational support plays vital roles in the development of creative and critical skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers State. These factors, has the capacity of raising or lowering preschoolers' ability to develop creative and critical skills depending on how much input the parents make in terms making these variables count.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study.

- Parents should strive to attain good and quality educational level for themselves as this will afford them a decent occupation and socio-economic status, thus putting them in right position to provide the necessary support needed for the education of their children.
- Parents should ensure they get more involved in the academic work of their children and wards in terms of helping them stay motivated to developing their creative and critical kills
- Teachers should work to improve teacher-parents relation so as to encourage and motivate the parents to provide the enabling environment for the development creative and critical skills.
- The school authorities should endeavor to provide the right information needed by parents on best to support their children academically.
- Government at all level should ensure that jobs are made available for parents to enable them make earns meet and provide for their children.

5.4 Limitation of the study

Based on the scope of the study, the following limitations were observed in carrying out this study

- 1 The researcher had it rough in raising the required financial resources needed to complete this study
1. There was a high level of apathy on the part of most parents in accepting to fill out the questionnaires
- 2 Since it was a State wide study, the researcher had to cope with the challenges of shuttling between different Local Government Areas of Rivers State

5.5 Suggestions for further studies

Based on the delimitations of the study, the following suggestions were made

- 1 Studies trying to replicate the present one should endeavour to investigate more States in Nigeria.
- 2 A correlation study on the relationship between parental variables and the development of creative and critical skills could be done to ascertain which of these

variables contributed more to the .development of creative and critical skills of preschoolers and their percentage contribution using regression analysis.

3 More family variables like family size; religion etc other than those studied but relating to the study should be involved in a similar study.

5.6 Contribution to knowledge

- Findings from this study have once again stressed on the need for parents to acquire good and quality education so as to enable them support their children
- The study has also helped teachers to know that they have a role to play in terms of assisting the parents to develop and maintain a positive attitude the education of their children
- According to the findings from this work, government at all level have been reminded of the need to provide job for parents to enable them take care of their children's educational needs.
- Again, the family is now more aware that the collectively have roles to play in the education of each member of the family.

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