

# PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF GENDER AND PARENTAL EDUCATIONAL FACTOR ON CHILDS NEGLECT BEHAVIOUR AMONG PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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## Abstract

*Childs neglect is the most frequent form of child abuse with children born with disability as well as those that acquire the condition at later age. The objective of the study is to examine the perceived influence of gender and parental educational factor on child's neglect behaviour among parent of children with visual impairment. Three research questions were used. The study utilises survey research design. Population for the study consists of all children with visual impairment with the use of 40 samples who were purposively selected from the target population through the use of purposive sampling technique. Questionnaire method was used to collect data for the study, which was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression analysis. The findings reveal that, Hence there is a positive significant relationship between gender, parental educational factor and child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment. The study also shows that, the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance and gender was significant. The study therefore recommends that, Parents, family and the society at large should allow the children with visual impairment to have and enjoy equal right like there sighted counterpart*

**Keywords:** Neglect behaviour, Gender, Parental educational Factor, Visual impairment, Children

## Introduction

The visually impaired whether old or young are confronted with a lots of challenges ranging from isolation, overprotection, rejection, denial and neglect. This unfair reaction is what some children with visual impairment received as a result of their impairment from parent, siblings, families and the society. Childs neglect is a behaviour that occurs between parent and children. It could be as a result of child s impairment, condition, gender, and a host of others. It is characterized by inability of either the father or mother or both in meeting the essential needs of their children educational, socially and psychologically.

Child s neglect is a form of child abuse and is a deficit in meeting child s basic needs. Including the failure to provide adequate supervision, health care, clothing or housing as well as other physical, emotional, social, educational, and safety needs. All societies have established that there are necessary behaviours a caregiver must provide in order for a child to develop physically, socially and emotionally. Causes of neglect may result from several parenting problems including mental disorders, unplanned pregnancy, substance abuse, unemployment, over employment, domestic violence and in specific cases poverty.

Child neglect depends on how a child and society perceives the parent behaviour, it is not how parent believe their behaving towards their child. Parental failure to provide for a child, when options are available is different from failure to provide when options are not available. Poverty and lack of resources are often contributing factors and can prevent parent from meeting their children s needs. It is the most frequent form of child abuse, with children born to young mothers at a substantial risk for neglect. In most cases, giving birth to a child who is having visual problem may cause series of reactions from both parent and if care is not taken, it could leads to neglect.

Shumba and Abosi (2011) state that child neglect is the failure of a parent or other person with responsibility for the child to provide needed food, clothing, shelter, medical care or supervision to the

degree that the child's health, safety and well-being are threatened with harm. Neglect is also viewed by Krason (2007) as lack of attention from the people surrounding a child and the non-provision of the relevant and adequate necessities for the child's survival, which would be a lacking in attention, love and nurture. Some of the observable signs in a neglected child include frequent absenteeism from school, begs or steals food or money, lacks needed medical and dental care, is consistently dirty or lack of sufficient clothing for the weather. Molina (2006) posits that neglected children may experience delays in physical and psychosocial development possibly resulting in psychopathology and impaired neuropsychological functions including executive function, attention, processing speed, language memory and social skills.

A recent evidence review reports a number of social and environmental factors that are associated with neglect (Brandon, Glaser, Maguire & McCrory, 2014). These include:

- **Poverty:** Child neglect is more often associated with poverty than other forms of child abuse (although it must again be noted that the majority of poor families do not neglect their children). Poverty can lead to social isolation, feelings of stigma, and high levels of stress. Pervasive stress can make it difficult for parents to cope with the psychological, physical and material demands of parenting.
- **Poor living conditions:** Neglect is often associated with having poor living conditions. Poor living conditions include: an unsafe home (e.g. cluttered home, holes in the floor, broken windows, exposed wires, leaky roof, infestation of rodents/insects, fixtures and appliances that are broken or not working); overcrowding; and instability (e.g. frequent moves, homelessness, short stays with friends/family, stays in shelters). It is important to bear in mind, however, that neglect also occurs in households with good living conditions but where parents are physically and emotionally unresponsive.
- **Social isolation:** Parents who neglect their children have, or perceive themselves to have, fewer individuals in their social networks and to receive less support than other parents. This may exacerbate other parental vulnerabilities.
- **Men:** Most of the evidence around neglect relates to mothers rather than fathers. Men can be a source of risk and a source of protection to children they are raising. Fathers can be overlooked in assessment in child protection (Bayne and Holland, 2012).

Culturally, some ethnics believed that, male child are more important and relevant to their family existence. They are of the view that, when they died, such male child carries on their lineage while the female child do not because she grew up, she will get married and their name will be wiped off. Another ethnic group also hold the believe that, female child are significantly important to them due to the fact that, when she was about to get married, she will serves as source of wealth to them through bride price the groom s family will pay on their daughter. So, all this assertion affect their dealings with their child. When a child is visually impaired and happens to be the only male child in the family, such child might receive optimum attention from both parent and this may not go well if such child is not the only male child in the family. In this case, mothers are left behind to take care of such child with the father exhibiting negligence towards the child and his mother.

Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, and Fraleigh (1987) purport that parental education level affects parenting style which, in turn, affects children's academic success. They added further that families with higher educational levels are likely to be more permissive and less strict in parenting. According to Mullis and Jenkins (1990) and White (1982), parental education shows a strong correlation to students' academic achievement. It is believed that parental educational factor has a great implication either positively or negatively on child's upbringing. DeBaryshe, Patterson, and Capaldi (1993) argued that parental education is directly related to styles of parenting and not student's academic performance. They stressed further that, parents with lower educational attainment used coercive strategies for discipline which, in turn, predisposed their children to antisocial and abnormal behaviours.

**Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study is to:

1. Examine the relationship among gender, parental educational factor and child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment.
2. Identify the joint contribution of gender and parental educational factor to child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment
3. Examine the relative contributions of gender and parental educational factor to child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions serves as guide for this study:

1. What is the relationship among gender, parental educational factor and child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment?
2. What is the joint contribution of gender and parental educational factor to child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment?
3. What is the relative contribution of gender and parental educational factor to child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment?

**Methodology**

The study adopts survey research design. The data were collected using self-made questionnaire, this is to enable the researcher find out the influence of gender and parental educational factor on child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment. Population for the study comprises of all children with visual impairment in Osun state. Purposive sampling technique was used to select forty (40) respondents from the target population including the totally blind and low vision. The data was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient and multiple regression analyses which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results****Table 1: Demographical characteristics of respondents in the study**

| S/N | Variables                   | Labels        | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| 1   | Gender                      | Male          | 24        | 60.0       |
|     |                             | Female        | 16        | 40.0       |
|     |                             | <b>Total</b>  | 40        | 100.0      |
| 2   | Degree of vision            | Totally blind | 22        | 55.0       |
|     |                             | Low vision    | 18        | 45.0       |
|     |                             | <b>Total</b>  | 40        | 100.0      |
| 3   | Time of onset of impairment | Congenital    | 15        | 37.5       |
|     |                             | Acquired      | 25        | 62.5       |
|     |                             | <b>Total</b>  | 40        | 100.0      |

Table 1 shows the demographical characteristics of the respondents. 24(60.0%) respondents were male, and 16(40.0%) were female. 22(55.0%) respondents were totally blind, 18(45.0%) had low vision. 15(37.5%) respondent's onset of impairment was congenital, and 25(62.5%) was acquired.

**Research Questions**

**Research Question One: What is the relationship among gender, parental educational factor and child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment?**

**Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the correlation between Gender, Parental educational factor, and Child neglect behaviour**

|                                    | Child neglect   | Gender          | Parental educational factor |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Child neglect</b>               | 1               |                 |                             |
| <b>Gender</b>                      | .990*<br>(.000) | 1               |                             |
| <b>Parental educational factor</b> | .982*<br>(.000) | .994*<br>(.000) | 1                           |
| <b>Mean (<math>\bar{x}</math>)</b> | 26.70           | 29.40           | 29.30                       |
| <b>S.D</b>                         | 13.14           | 13.361          | 13.16                       |

\* Sig. at 0.05 level

Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between Child neglect behaviour and Gender ( $r=.990$ ,  $p (.000) <.05$ ), Parental educational factor ( $r=.982$ ,  $p (.000) <.05$ ). Hence there is a positive significant relationship between gender, parental educational factor and child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment.

**Research Question Two: What is the joint contribution of gender and parental educational factor to child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment?**

**Table 3: Summary of Regression analysis showing joint contribution of gender and parental educational factor to child neglect behaviour**

| R                | R Square              | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| .990             | .981                  | .980              | 1.86123                    |
| <b>A N O V A</b> |                       |                   |                            |
| <b>Model</b>     | <b>Sum of Squares</b> | <b>DF</b>         | <b>Mean Square</b>         |
| Regression       | 6608.225              | 2                 | 3304.112                   |
| Residual         | 128.175               | 37                | 3.464                      |
| Total            | 6736.400              | 39                |                            |

Table 3 shows the joint contribution of the two independent variables (Gender and Parental Educational factor) to the prediction of the dependent variable i.e. Child neglect behaviour. The table also shows a coefficient of multiple correlation ( $R = .990$  and a multiple  $R^2$  of .981. This means that 98.1% of the variance was accounted for by two predictor variables when taken together. The significance of the composite contribution was tested at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The table also shows that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded F-ratio of 953.790 (significance at 0.05 level). This implies that the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

**Research Question Three: What is the relative contribution of gender and parental educational factor to child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment?**

**Table 4: Summary of regression analysis showing relative contribution of gender and parental educational factor to child neglect behaviour**

| Model                       | Unstandardized<br>Coefficient<br>B | Std.<br>Error | Standardized<br>Coefficient<br>Beta<br>Contribution | T      | Sig. |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|---|--------|------|
| (Constant)                  | -1.868                             | .727          |   | -2.571 | .014 |
| Gender                      | 1.107                              | .197          | 1.125   | 5.610  | .000 |
| Parental educational factor | -.135                              | .200          | -.135   | -.676  | .504 |

Table 4 reveals the relative contribution of the two independent variables to the dependent variable, expressed as beta weights, viz: Gender ( $\beta = 1.125$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and Parental educational factor ( $\beta = -.135$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Hence, it could be deduced that gender was significant i.e. could independently and significantly predicts child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment in the study.

### Discussion of Findings

The result shows that, there is a positive significant relationship between gender, parental educational factor and child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment. This was supported by Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, and Fraleigh (1987) who purport that parental education level affects parenting style. They added further that families with higher educational levels are likely to be more permissive and less strict in parenting. According to Mullis and Jenkins (1990) and White (1982), parental education shows a strong correlation to students' academic achievement.

The study also implies that, the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance. It is believed that parental educational factor has a great implication either positively or negatively on child's upbringing. This was supported with the view of DeBaryshe, Patterson, and Capaldi (1993) who argued that parental education is directly related to styles of parenting and not student's academic performance. They stressed further that, parents with lower educational attainment used coercive strategies for discipline which, in turn, predisposed their children to antisocial and abnormal behaviours.

The findings also shows that, gender was significant i.e. could independently and significantly predicts child neglect behaviour among parents of children with visual impairment in the study. Culturally, some ethnics believed that, male child are more important and relevant to their family existence. They are of the view that, when they died, such male child carries on their lineage while the female child do not because she grew up, she will get married and their name will be wiped off. Another ethnic group also hold the believe that, female child are significantly important to them due to the fact that, when she was about to get married, she will serves as source of wealth to them through bride price the groom s family will pay on their daughter. So, all this assertion affect their dealings with their child. When a child is visually impaired and happens to be the only male child in the family, such child might receive optimum attention from both parent and this may not go well if such child is not the only male child in the family. In this case, mothers are left behind to take care of such child with the father exhibiting negligence towards the child and his mother.

### Conclusion

It should be noted that, haven child who is visually impaired in the family does not mean such a child must be isolated from the family or treated as someone with little or no contribution to the society. When

this individual is neglected, it would rather compound their problems thereby leading to additional obstacles apart from the one they are experiencing as someone with visual problem.

### Recommendations

It was established in this study that gender and parental educational factors has significant influence on child s neglect among parents of children with visual impairment. Thus, this paper therefore recommends that:

- i. Parents must desist from given priority to one child than the other but rather they should all children irrespective of their gender, condition, status as one
- ii. Also, Childs with disability should not be excluded from their siblings in the family but must be included into all daily activities performed by his or her colleagues in the family. This will help in giving them sense of belongings as well as promoting their self-worth in the society.
- iii. Parents must be counselled on how to deal with their child s with disability letting them know that being disabled does not mean such a child cannot make it in life and that there is ability in disability.

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