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# INFLUENCE OF PARENTING COMMUNICATION STYLES ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ONITSHA EDUCATION ZONE OF ANAMBRA STATE

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## ABSTRACT

*This study explores how different parenting styles influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Public Secondary School in Onitsha Education Zone. Through in-depth interviews with teachers, this research investigates the nuances of authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful parenting styles. Thematic analysis revealed that an authoritative parenting style, which balances responsiveness and demandingness, promotes better academic outcomes by increasing motivation and self-discipline. In contrast, an authoritarian and neglectful parenting style often results in lower academic achievement due to increased stress and lack of support. The research was motivated by the growing concern over low academic performance of students in Onitsha Education Zone public schools, where factors such as socio-economic constraints, educational background of parents, and communication gaps present unique challenges. Employing a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 400 participants using structured questionnaires, covering areas of parental communication, quality, and content, as well as students' academic performance. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data, including Mean and Standard Deviation, Chi-Square ($X^2$) serving as the primary tool for statistical processing. The findings The Chi-Square ($X^2$) analysis further confirmed the predictive strength of parental communication, with the overall model explaining 74% of the variance in academic performance (0.74). Specific communication aspects such as discussing academic goals and providing constructive feedback were highlighted as crucial in motivating students, fostering resilience, and promoting accountability in their academic pursuits. The results underscore the importance of active parental engagement in supporting educational attainment, particularly in rural settings where students face additional challenges. These insights suggest that initiatives aimed at enhancing parental communication skills could significantly improve student outcomes in similar contexts.*

**Keywords:** Influence; Parenting Communication Styles; Students' Academic Performance.

## Introduction

Academic success is regarded as a crucial indicator of a student's prospective social standing and career path (Tsela et al; 2023). Among the variables significantly influencing student performance, parenting styles and behavioral issues are among the most extensively researched. Parents and educators who mentor students in school environments are particularly concerned with the correlation between parenting styles and academic performance as a significant issue for students and children (Kim & Kim, 2021).

Parenting Style is very important to society's development because it plays a crucial part in the development of children and adolescents, who are vital for the future (Ebeid et al; 2019). Parenting is a general term including all sorts of parental engagement with students and the nature of the relationship that exists between them (Mushtaque et al; 2024). Parenting styles refer to a set of attitudes held by parents towards their children and are a summary of a wide range of parenting behaviors that reflect their attitudes and feelings towards their children. Parenting styles differ according to cultural differences (Hassan et al; 2022). Education is the bedrock of development. A nation's position in today's highly competitive global knowledge economy is directly dependent on the quality of its human capital – the aggregate of skills and knowledge imparted on its students by its educational system. This explains why different measures are put in place to enhance the standard of education. Because education is considered an instrument for national development, the Nigerian policy on education is formulated to achieve the objective – national and human development. It is obvious that a person's upbringing has a profound influence on how he sees the world and how he processes information. Stevenson (2020) observed that different students view education as having different goals. This implies that the way a child is brought up and the information that is available to such a child in the form of values and ways of behaving can shape the disposition of such a child towards education. Also, individual differences exist in every aspect of life including differences in intellectual ability. It is common place that students in a class exposed to the same between children's school achievement and parenting style. These developments have heightened the need for the study of children's school achievement.

Academic achievement of students is central to ensuring a successful future. Academic success reflected in higher academic achievement has long been thought to be the path to a stable livelihood and a successful future (Hydes & Kling, 2021). Good (2019) defined academic achievement as the knowledge attained or skill developed in the school subjects, usually designated by test scores or marks assigned by the teachers. Academic achievement represents performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in school, college, and university. According to Christian (2020) academic achievement generally indicates the learning outcome of the students. Students who learning conditions achieve highly academically are at advantage in terms of positive outcomes such as joy, pride, and happiness (Elliot & Dweck, 2019).

Effective communication between parents and students significantly influences academic performance. Positive and frequent communication, focused on academic goals and progress, can boost a student's motivation, self-esteem and overall academic performance. Research provides inconsistent findings regarding the importance of parent-child communication and other forms of parental involvement activities to children's school success (Rodriguez, 2022). Academic performance of students is of utmost importance to parents, educators, concerned Nigerians

and the government. This, of course, is because of the huge impact education has on the national and economic development of the country. Education is an investment as well as an instrument that can be used to achieve rapid scientific, social, political, technological, cultural and economic development in the country. Regrettably, however, the consensus of opinion all over the country is that academic performance of students in Nigeria is poor (Adebule, 2016). The manner in which parents communicate with their children could play an important role in the lives of these children. Communication enables parents and children to express their thoughts and feelings to one another. Effective communication helps strengthen parent-student relationship and increases mutual understanding (Gregory, 2020). In line with this assertion, the manner in which parents communicate with their children could either make them or mar them. Laursen and Collins (2017) perceived that parent-student relationships without emotional bonds will likely breed disruption and unresolved issues during the schooling period of the child. In the light of this assertion, it becomes obvious that parents who did not speak to their children about matters of interest at a young age should not expect the child to easily express his/her questions and ideas about issues of interest when that child is of age.

Studies indicate that parental involvement, particularly through effective communication is one of the most significant predictors of students' academic success (Godfrey et al, 2023). Communication and learning challenges shapes students' attitudes toward education and strengthens their focus, motivation and self-discipline, which are essential for academic success (Michael et al 2023). The role of communication is particularly salient due to socio-economic conditions that may limit other forms of parental support such as direct financial contributions to educational expense or extensive involvement in school activities (Anthony, 2023). Parenting styles can be either authoritative, democratic, or permissive.

The authoritative parenting style was first defined by developmental psychologist Diane Baumrind, who proposed a new system for classifying parents. Her idea was to focus not on specific practices (on the way parents attempted to control their kids. She and her colleagues recognized three major approaches to parental control (Baumrind 2016; Maccoby and Martin 2018): Permissive parents are warm and responsive, but reluctant to impose rules or standards. They prefer to let their kids regulate themselves. Authoritative parents steer a middle path. They are warm and responsive, like permissive parents. They avoid harsh punishment, and allow room for a child to exercise some autonomy. Where permissive parents shrink away from enforcing standards, authoritative parents embrace it. They expect maturity and cooperation (as much as is appropriate for a child's stage of development), and they guide behavior by reasoning with their kids. Communication, therefore, becomes a vital tool through which parents can support their children's learning process without necessarily being physically present or financially equipped. When parents are cold or psychologically controlling, their kids are more likely to develop "internalizing" mental health problems, like anxiety and depression. But affectionate,

sensitive, parenting has the opposite effect. From an early age, warmth and responsiveness helps foster attachment security, which reduces a child's risk of developing internalizing problems (Izett et al 2021; Brumariud and Kerns 2021). Moreover, studies suggest that adolescents are less likely to experience anxiety and depression if their parents are warm and supportive of autonomy (Gorostiaga et al 2019; Wang et al 2021). Democratic parents set clear limits, and calmly maintain those limits in the face of push-back, while also offering age-appropriate explanations of 'why' behind the limit or boundary they have set. In this way, democratic parenting is markedly different from both permissive parenting and authoritarian parenting. In the democratic parenting style, these are known as 'kind limits.' The goal is to strike a balance between being overly strict and so permissive that you never say "Limits are important, because pushing on limits is how the child defines their reality," Ryan says. "A lot of what parents call misbehavior is actually just a very natural, healthy thing that kids do."

Cultural factors also shape the nature and perception of parent-student communication on academic matters in Onitsha Education Zone of Anambra State. Where access to tutoring or extra academic support may be limited, parental guidance on time management and setting academic priorities can help bridge the gap, providing students with a structure that fosters better academic performance. Therefore, parenting styles that support parent-student communication culturally in Onitsha Education Zone of Anambra State are authoritative and permissive parenting styles.

**Statement of the Problem**

Parenting styles significantly impact academic performance and career paths of students. In Nigeria, the academic performance of students has been poor especially for 2008 till date. Some of the factors that could influence students' academic performance have been found by various researchers to emanate from parents, teachers, and the students themselves (Wang, 2021). Academic performance among students in Onitsha Education Zone has been a significant concern for educators, policymakers, and families with a notable influence attributed to the parenting style and involvement of parents in their children education (Nkachukwu, 2022).

Although secondary school students in Anambra State have consistently performed impressively in examinations, especially at WAEC and NECO external examinations, that small percentage of students who have failed in these examinations is a source of concern particularly as the 21st century economy is knowledge-driven. Besides, parents seem to be increasingly detached from their children's informative years in pursuit of careers, all in the effort to make ends meet, given the worsening economic realities of the time. Some parents leave their children to baby-sitters, and others keep theirs at school in the custody of their teachers. The cumulative effect is that these children do not have proper parental rearing, and many of these parents are unaware that how a child is reared has tremendous developmental consequences for the child; hence, the issue of parenting styles. Could it be that parenting style adopted in rearing these low-achieving children was responsible for their poor academic performance? Or could it be that these low-achievers lack confidence in their ability to succeed in school? Parents and their

children sometimes differ in so many family issues which may likely be as a result of parenting styles they adopt, which in turn affect their academic performance. Also, students' inability to initiate and execute courses of action to achieve a goal may likely impact their academic performance.

Studies have shown that parenting styles whether authoritarian, permissive, or uninvolved greatly affect children's activities, impacting in their academic success not on parent's but teacher's motivation (Michael, 2023). Academic performance among students in public schools in Onitsha Education zone has been a significant concern for educators, policymakers, and families, with a notable influence attributed to the parenting style and involvement of parents in their children's education (Ntirandekura et al., 2022). Studies have shown that parenting styles whether authoritarian, permissive, authoritative, or uninvolved greatly affect children's motivation, discipline, and engagement with school activities, impacting their academic success (Michael et al., 2023). The degree to which parents in Onitsha Education zone engage in their children's education is often constrained by socio-economic challenges, with many parents engaged in low-income, time-intensive work, reducing their capacity to offer academic support or supervision (Christopher et al., 2022).

The degree to which parents in Onitsha Education Zone engage in their children's education is often constrained by socio-economic challenges, with many parents engaged in low income, time-intensive work, reducing their capacity to offer academic support or supervision (Christopher, 2023). A significant proportion of parents' exhibit uninvolved and authoritarian parenting styles, which studies have linked to poorer educational outcomes and higher dropout rates due to lack of motivation and support (Winny, 2023). This study thus seeks to investigate how the specific parenting styles adopted by parents in Onitsha Education Zone influence the academic performance of students, considering socio-economic, cultural and educational factors that shape parental involvement and support.

**Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to determine the influence of parents' communication on academic performance of students in Onitsha Education Zone of Anambra State. The specific objectives are to:

(a) Examine the extent at which authoritative parenting styles influence the academic performance of Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone.
(b) Ascertain the extent to which permissive parenting styles impact on academic performance of Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone.
(c) Determine the extent to which the influence of democratic parenting styles on academic performance among Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone.

**Research Questions**

1. To what extent does authoritative parenting styles influence the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students one in Onitsha Education Zone?

2. To what extent do permissive parenting styles have influence on academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students one in Onitsha Education Zone?
3. What are the challenges posed by democratic parenting styles on academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students one in Onitsha Education Zone?

**Research Hypotheses**

**$H_{01}$** - There is no significant influence of authoritative parenting styles and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Onitsha Education Zone.

**$H_{02}$** - There is no significant influence of permissive parenting styles impact on senior secondary school Students academic performance in Onitsha Education Zone.

**$H_{03}$** - There is no significant influence of democratic parenting styles on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Onitsha Education Zone.

**Research Methodology**

This study adopted descriptive survey research design to examine influence of parenting communication styles on students' academic performance in Onitsha Education Zone. The study is based in Onitsha-North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Onitsha- North Local Government Area is situated in the northern part of Anambra State, with its headquarters in Onitsha. The population of this study comprises One-thousand eight hundred and seventy-nine (1879) persons. One-thousand eight hundred and forty-three (1843) students and thirty-six (36) teachers were selected from public Senior Secondary schools in Onitsha-North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

The researcher made use of Judgmental Sampling Techniques to select Public Secondary Schools in Onitsha Education Zone. Stratified Sampling Technique was used to select one Public Secondary School in each of the units or Local Government Area within Onitsha Education Zone. Judgmental Sampling Techniques was used again to select SS1 classes in each school. Then Simple Random Sampling was used to select the arms of the SS1 classes (that is, Senior Secondary School 1 students in the listed selected schools below). The sample size of the study is four hundred (400); thirty-six (36) teachers and three hundred and sixty-four (364) students were selected.

The research instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The structured questionnaire sought to elicit relevant information from respondents based on the study been carried out to seek their views. The instruments were validated by one (1) expert of Guidance and Counselling and two (2) experts in the Department of Measurement and Evaluation for face and content validation. The validators made some comments which formed the basis for either modifying or rejecting some of the items. The reliability of the instrument was established as 0.82 using test re-test method. To determine the reliability of the instrument, copies of questionnaire were given to some Senior Secondary students one (1) outside the sample groups after which the data collection was computed using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool which showed strong internal consistency in the study setting.

A structured questionnaire will be used in this study. Two (2) research assistants were recruited as data collectors. The data collectors were trained in the data collection process for one (1) day, the

researcher checked the data for completeness and consistency at the end of each day for better readability.

Chi-square ($X^2$) test was performed to determine the statistical significance between the predictors and outcome variable. Predictors with a p-value (< 0.5) were considered statistically significant with the outcome variable. Inferential analysis of mean and standard deviations were used in computing the data for study participants. The result findings were presented using text, tables and figures. The data collected were analyzed based on the information obtained from the research questions using mean score and standard deviation; while the null hypothesis was tested by $P < 0.05$ using Chi-square (X2).

The mean was calculated by assigning nominal values to the response categories for all the research questions:

(a) Strongly Agree (SA) - 4
(b) Agree (A) - 3
(c) Strongly Disagree (SD) - 2
(d) Disagree (D) - 1

$$\text{Mean} = \frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = \frac{10}{4} = 2.5$$

For the mean (x) statistics, a criterion of (2.5) and above with additional internal scale (0.5) was added to the mean to give (3.00), which is the critical value. Any response of (3.0) and above is regarded as agree while rating less than (3.00) is regarded as disagree.

(i) Standard Deviation Formula:

$$SD2 = \sqrt{\frac{E(X-X)^2}{N}} \quad OR \quad \frac{E\,X^2}{N}$$

(ii) Chi-square Formula:

Chi-square (x2)

$$X^2 = \frac{E\,(Oi - Ei)}{Ei}$$

Where Oi = Observed frequency of the cell.
Ei = Expected frequency in the Ith cell

**Presentation and Analysis of Data**

**Research Question 1:** How does authoritative parenting styles influence the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students one in Onitsha Education Zone.

**Table 1: Responses on authoritative parenting styles influencing the academic performance of secondary school students in Onitsha Education Zone.**

| S/N | ITEMS | MEAN | STANDARD DEVIATION | DECISION |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Open communication between parents and children about school activities encourages academic success. | 3.91 | 16 | Accepted |
| 2 | Parents regularly checking on their child's school work fosters better academic performance. | 3.57 | 14.4 | Accepted |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | When parents discuss academic goals with their children, they are motivated to achieve high grades. | 3.48 | 2 | Accepted |
| 4 | Effective communication from parents to children about the importance of education boosts school engagements. | 3.34 | 9.27 | Accepted |
| 5 | Parental reminders about the importance of completing assignments positively influence students' academic results. | 3.63 | 7.07 | Accepted |
| 6 | Students are motivated to participate in class activities due to self-confidence. | 3.34 | 1.41 | Accepted |
| 7 | Open communication brings about self-confidence which motivates regular study. | 3.59 | 9.05 | Accepted |
| 8 | Motivation from parents enables their wards to complete difficult tasks because they trust in their academic abilities. | 3.63 | 8.18 | Accepted |
| 9 | Does mothers parenting styles have a higher effect on students' behaviors than fathers because of the differences in their availability at home. | 3.26 | 4.00 | Accepted |

The data in table One (1) revealed that all the nine (9) items in research question one (1) have the mean values ranging from 3.26 to 3.91, indicating that all the respondents agreed that there were authoritative parenting styles influencing the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone. The mean responses of authoritative parenting styles influencing the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students are all above the decision 3.00. The Standard Deviation value in Table 1 ranges from 1.41 to 16, indicating the gap difference of values obtained from the mean scores.

**Research Question 2:** Does permissive parenting styles has influence on academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students one in Onitsha Education Zone.

**Table 2: Responses on permissive parenting styles and its influence on the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone.**

| S/N | ITEMS | MEAN | STANDARD DEVIATION | DECISION |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Is parenting styles the foundation of adolescents' academic success. | 3.4 | 3.09 | Accepted |
| 2 | Does moderately protective parents with high emotional acceptance contribute to student academic performance. | 3.57 | 0.93 | Accepted |
| 3 | Does dual parent contribute to improving students' learning and academic success. | 3.26 | 8.18 | Accepted |
| 4 | Is permissive parenting style an influential factor I students' academic performance. | 3.22 | 3 | Accepted |
| 5 | Does behavioural control of parents positively affect students' behavioral development. | 3.32 | 5.34 | Accepted |
| 6 | Does effective parental support lead to positive social and cognitive growth outcomes. | 3.4 | 3.09 | Accepted |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | Does self-expression facilitate effective communication and trust in parents. | 3.19 | 2 | Accepted |
| 8 | Does the cultural background of the family influence greatly the academic performance of students? | 3.58 | 5.43 | Accepted |
| 9 | Control in parents is psychological and behavioural thereby influencing students' academic performance | 3.43 | 4.31 | Accepted |

The data in table two (2) revealed that all the nine (9) items in research question two (2) have the mean values ranging from 3.4 to 3.58, indicating that all the respondents agreed that there were permissive parenting styles influencing academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone. The mean responses of permissive parenting styles influencing academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone are all above the decision 3.00. The Standard Deviation value in Table 2 ranges from 0.93 to 5.34, indicating the gap difference of values obtained from the mean score.

**Research Question 3:** What are the challenges posed by democratic parenting styles on academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students one in Onitsha Education Zone.

**Table 3: Responses on challenges posed by democratic parenting styles on academic performance among Senior Secondary Students in Onitsha Education Zone.**

| S/N | ITEMS | MEAN | STANDARD DEVIATION | DECISION |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Parenting style have significant impact on students' social skill and overall development. | 3.19 | 2 | Accepted |
| 2 | Different parenting approaches is critical for understanding the outcomes of a student's social competence. | 3.22 | 3 | Accepted |
| 3 | Does parental guidance allow student navigate their academic path successfully? | 3.58 | 5.43 | Accepted |
| 4 | Emotional distance from parents can have negative impact on students' academic performance. | 3.63 | 7.07 | Accepted |
| 5 | Insufficient parental involvement can result to lack of structure in students' academic journey. | 3.43 | 4.31 | Accepted |
| 6 | Lack of engagement can result in students missing opportunities for academic enrichment. | 3.48 | 2 | Accepted |
| 7 | Absence of parental support contribute to isolation and disconnection in students. | 3.57 | 0.93 | Accepted |
| 8 | Lack of student motivation and self-esteem are factors affecting academic performance. | 3.34 | 1.41 | Accepted |
| 9 | Parenting style is significant in realizing the success of academic performance. | 3.22 | 3 | Accepted |

The data in table three (3) revealed that all the nine (9) items in research question three (3) have the mean values ranging from 3.19 to 3.63, indicating that all the respondents agreed that there were challenges posed by democratic parenting styles on academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone. The mean responses of the challenges posed by democratic parenting styles on academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone are all above the decision 3.00. The Standard Deviation value in Table 4 ranges from 1.41 to 7.07, indicating the gap difference of values obtained from the mean score.

**Hypotheses Testing**

In testing the hypothesis of this study, Chi-Square ($X^2$) was used to test the responses of respondents at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant influence of authoritative parenting styles and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Onitsha Education Zone.

| S/N | RESPONSES | O | E | DF | S.L | X2 CAL | P-Value | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | SA | 100 | 98.5 | 3 | 0.05 | 103.421 | 0.000 | Rejected |
| 2 | A | 180 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| 3 | D | 64 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| 4 | SD | 56 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| | TOTAL | 400 | | | | | | |

Table four (4) revealed that $X^2 = 103.421$, DF = 3 and P = 0.000. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the set alpha value of 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) at 3 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant influence of authoritative parenting styles and academic performance of senior secondary school students is therefore, rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of permissive parenting styles impact on senior secondary school Students academic performance in Onitsha Education Zone.

Table 5:

| S/N | RESPONSES | O | E | DF | S.L | X2 CAL | P-Value | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | SA | 140 | 98.5 | 3 | 0.05 | 121.164 | 0.000 | Rejected |
| 2 | A | 164 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| 3 | D | 56 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| 4 | SD | 40 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| | TOTAL | 400 | | | | | | |

Table five (5) revealed that $X^2 = 121.1641$, DF = 3 and P = 0.000. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the set alpha value of 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) at 3 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant influence of permissive parenting styles impact on senior secondary school Students academic performance is therefore, rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence of democratic parenting styles on

academic performance of senior secondary school students in Onitsha Education Zone.

Table 6:

| S/N | RESPONSES | O | E | DF | S.L | X2 CAL | P-Value | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | SA | 175 | 98.5 | 3 | 0.05 | 158.589 | 0.000 | Rejected |
| 2 | A | 141 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| 3 | D | 24 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| 4 | SD | 60 | 98.5 | | | | | |
| | TOTAL | 400 | | | | | | |

Table six (6) revealed that $X^2$ = 158.589, DF = 3 and P = 0.000. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the set alpha value of 0.05 (P < 0.05) at 3 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant influence of democratic parenting styles on academic performance of senior secondary school students is therefore, rejected.

**Summary of Findings**

In table One (1) revealed that all the nine (9) items in research question one (1) have the mean values ranging from 3.26 to 3.91, indicating that all the respondents agreed that there were authoritative parenting styles influencing the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone. The mean responses of authoritative parenting styles influencing the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students are all above the decision 3.00. The Standard Deviation value in Table 1 ranges from 1.41 to 16, indicating the gap difference of values obtained from the mean score.

In table two (2) revealed that all the nine (9) items in research question two (2) have the mean values ranging from 3.4 to 3.58, indicating that all the respondents agreed that there were permissive parenting styles influencing academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone. The mean responses of permissive parenting styles influencing academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone are all above the decision 3.00. The Standard Deviation value in Table 2 ranges from 0.93 to 5.34, indicating the gap difference of values obtained from the mean score.

In table three (3) revealed that all the nine (9) items in research question three (3) have the mean values ranging from 3.19 to 3.63, indicating that all the respondents agreed that there were challenges posed by democratic parenting styles on academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone. The mean responses of the challenges posed by democratic parenting styles on academic performance among Senior Secondary School Students in Onitsha Education Zone are all above the decision 3.00. The Standard Deviation value in Table 3 ranges from 1.41 to 7.07, indicating the gap difference of values obtained from the mean score.

Table four (4) revealed that $X^2$ = 103.421, DF = 3 and P = 0.000. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the set alpha value of 0.05 (P < 0.05) at 3 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which state that there is no

significant influence of authoritative parenting styles and academic performance of senior secondary school students is therefore, rejected.

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**Discussion of Findings**

Authoritarianism clearly has a big impact on their drive to succeed in academic performance because they are not allowed to make any decisions, even if they are related to their future. This is so because they are only allowed to fulfill what their parents want, such as in making decisions about subjects they want to learn in secondary school. Student raised in permissive parenting styles will have an impact on their drive to succeed in academic performance because the parents allowed them to do what they wanted. So, it can lead to postponing their homework, they are not taking seriously in learning that will cause their understanding of learning to be disrupted. Parents neglect parenting styles because they ignore their children's behavior until the children feel that what they are doing is right. It can have an impact on their drive to succeed in academic performance because they tend to do bad things in school, such as skipping school or smoking. Lastly, neglected parenting styles can also have a negative impact on academic success and student performance at school. Because the parents are unresponsive to their children's needs. Parenting methods have a substantial impact on students' academic performance and educational experiences. The study discovered that authoritarian parenting approaches, in which parents are strict and controlling, can reduce students' motivation and interest in learning. Some children may achieve academically because of the stringent regulations, but they may lack intrinsic motivation and believe their wishes are unheard. Neglectful parenting approaches, defined by a lack of supervision and support, might hinder students' motivation to succeed academically (Mohammad Aniq Bin Amdan, Naldo Janius, & Mohd Aidil Hazidi Bin Kasdiah, 2024). Children require positive role models and guidance as they navigate their educational journey.

However, one of the participants highlighted that neglectful parenting might help children develop character by teaching them that not everything they want is feasible. Authoritarian parenting, characterized by high standards, warmth, and support, has been related to optimal social, emotional, and moral development, as well as the fullest expression of children's intellectual ability. Autonomous, involved, and warm parenting methods are linked to higher academic attainment. Parenting methods have a substantial impact on academic success and professional paths. According to research,

authoritative parenting promotes academic accomplishment, however authoritarian parenting can undermine motivation. Neglected parenting, despite its negative perception, can really benefit character development. These findings are consistent with recent research by Kamaruddin, I., Waroka, L. A., Palyanti, M., Indriyani, L. T., Priakusuma, A., & Utama, F. (2023), which emphasize the importance of parenting styles in determining students' educational outcomes. The study is consistent which highlights the impact of parenting styles on academic success whereas emphasized the importance of parental attitudes in students' educational growth. The varied parenting styles can significantly impact secondary students' academic achievement. Authoritarian parenting, defined by harsh restrictions and a lack of emotional support, can result in social skill deficits, as kids may believe their opinions are unimportant and struggle to speak up in class. Permissive parenting, on the other hand, while encouraging outgoing behavior, can lead to negative impacts from failing peer groups and a lack of structure, reducing academic motivation and performance.

Students from homes with bad parenting practices may not have a safe space to discuss their emotional and spiritual struggles, which might cause them to become disengaged from their studies and perform worse on exams. The excessive freedom and indulgence of permissive parenting can also lead to academic laziness and delay, increasing the effects on social competence and accomplishment. These results are consistent with recent research on the varied effects of parenting styles on students' academic achievement, self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning by Oguzie (2024) also examined the frequency of authoritarian and permissive parenting styles in Anambra State, as well as their impact on the development of school children.

## Conclusion

This study reinforces the idea that parental monitoring of schoolwork, characterized by regular check-ins and involvement in academic matters, significantly contributes to students' overall academic performance, suggesting that educational institutions must prioritize the development of programs aimed at equipping parents with the necessary tools and strategies to establish consistent routines for overseeing their children's academic progress. The emphasis on goal-oriented discussions between parents and children indicates that when parents actively engage in conversations about academic objectives, they not only motivate their children to strive for high grades but also enhance their overall commitment to educational pursuits.

This calls for schools to provide parents with resources and workshops designed to facilitate meaningful discussions about academic goals, thereby reinforcing the importance of goal-setting as a motivational tool for students. Moreover, the recognition of effective communication from parents regarding the significance of education highlights the need for clear messaging about the long-term benefits of academic engagement; consequently, schools should consider implementing initiatives that empower parents to articulate these messages effectively, thus fostering greater student participation in academic activities. The findings also illuminate the positive impact of parental reminders about the importance of completing assignments,

suggesting that such reminders play a crucial role in promoting accountability and responsibility among students. This insight points to the necessity for schools to support parents by providing them with resources and strategies that enable regular reminders about assignments, ultimately assisting students in fulfilling their academic responsibilities and enhancing their performance. The study's correlation analysis further illustrates the strong relationship between parental communication and students' academic success, reinforcing the idea that effective communication between parents and children regarding academic matters is not merely beneficial but essential for promoting improved academic outcomes. These findings suggest that school administrators and teachers seek opportunities to acquire training and concise knowledge on effective communication practices on the road to increased interaction and students' academic performance among secondary schools in Onitsha Education Zone.

**Recommendations**

Considering the importance of parenting styles on academic performance among secondary students, the following recommendations are made.

1. Parenting Education Program: There is need to develop and implement parenting education programs at schools and within communities. These programs should focus on teaching parents effective parenting strategies and setting realistic expectations.
2. Mental-Health Support: There is need to recognize the importance of mental well-being in adolescent thereby providing access to mental health support services for both parents and children to address any emotional challenges or issues stemming from different parenting styles.
3. Tailored Intervention: There is need to recognize that one-size fits all approaches may not be effective for all families. Tailored intervention and support to meet specific needs and circumstances of different families, considering cultural and socio-economic factors.
4. Policy Consideration: Policy makers should consider incorporating parenting education and support programs into broader educational policies.
5. Public Awareness Campaign: Launch public awareness campaigns highlighting the significance of positive parenting styles and their impact on children's well-being. Also, the society as a whole should be encouraged to recognize and support nurturing/effective parenting practices.
6. Parents should be assertive in a communicating with their adolescents as this has positive influence on their children.
7. Parent should strive to avoid passive communication style.

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