



The Effects of Children’s Emotional Development on Their Education

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the “Effects of Children’s Emotional Development on their Education”. The study was guided by the following research specific objectives: to examine the nature of emotional growth in children; to identify factors that affect emotional development in children; to describe the role of teachers in emotional development in children; and to investigate how emotional development affects the education of the children.

The study followed a qualitative approach in which ten (10) secondary school teachers and ten (ten) parents were purposely selected to serve as research participants. Data was collected through interviews and questionnaires. Data analysis was done thematically and by the use of SPSS.

The study found that media violence can contribute to aggressive behaviour, nightmares and fears of being harmed. Many children show glamorize violence and children are most likely to copy their favorite characters in shows. The findings also revealed that academic performance is affected when children lack emotional skills. The study recommends sensitization of parents and teachers on the importance of regulation of the type of programmes and time spent on television watching. It is further recommended that school management should introduce regular guidance and counseling sessions in schools in order to improve children’s social skills and prevent development of undesirable behaviour among children.

Keywords

- ✓ Aggressive Behaviour
- ✓ Academic Performance
- ✓ Regular Guidance
- ✓ Social Skills
- ✓ Undesirable Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

An emotion is a feeling such as happiness, love, fear, anger, or hatred, which can be caused by the situation that you are in or the people you are with. Emotion has some functions in our lives, for example, emotions prepare us for action, shape our future behaviour, and help us to regulate our social interaction. It is important to discuss three important theories of emotion namely: James-Lange theory, Cannon-Bard theory and Schachter Singer two factor theory, which gives us some ideas about emotion. It is essential for us to identify what take place within and outside us when we are stimulated by an emotion. People employ different ways to express their emotions. And there are variations between the emotions expressed by men and women. If emotions are concealed it can grow into mental and physical diseases.

From birth, children rapidly develop their abilities to experience and express different emotions, as well as their capacity to cope with and manage a variety of feelings. The development of these capabilities occurs at the same time as a wide range of highly visible skills in mobility (motor control), thinking (cognition), and communication (language). Yet, emotional development often receives relatively less recognition as a core emerging capacity in the early childhood years. The foundations of social competence that are developed in the first five years are linked to emotional well-being and affect a child’s later ability to functionally adapt in school and to form successful relationships throughout life. Children worlds are filled with emotions and emotional experience. Thus, this study is concerned with the general nature of emotion and their growth in children.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology that was used in the study, the research design, approach taken, target population, sample size and sampling procedure for data collection, pilot test and data analysis.

Research Design

The research design that the researcher used was the case study design. Case study, according to Komb and Tromp (2006), brings about deeper insights and better understanding of the problems faced by the participants. This design is preferred among other designs as the researcher wanted to get the in-depth views from the participants on the effects of children's emotional development on their education.

Research Approach

In this study, a qualitative, rather than quantitative research approach was used. According to Bryman (2008), qualitative research methodology is said to be a research strategy that usually emphasizes on words rather than quantifications in the collection and analysis of data. Creswell (2003) further notes that in this paradigm, the inquirer seeks to examine an issue related to expression of individuals. Therefore, a qualitative research methodology helps to establish the meaning of participants' experiences without engaging them into rigid pre-test categories. Aryl (1996) argued that the experiences must be as they are lived by informants in a particular context, for instance, a community, school, culture, group or institution. In this study, a qualitative research method was assumed to bring about the anticipated outcomes as teachers and parents were selected to express their views on how emotional development in children affects their education.

Target Population

Kombo and Tromp (2006) define population as a group of individuals, objects or items from which the samples are taken for measurement. In collecting data for this study, trained teachers and parents were targeted, focusing on their views on the effects of children's emotional development on their education.

Sample size

Kothari (2004) describe sample as the "list of respondents selected as representative of the total population in order to produce a miniature cross-section". It is a small proportion of the population which is selected for the purpose of collecting views which can be generated as representation of the main population. In this study, the sample consisted of ten (10) teachers and ten (10) parents whose views on the effects of children's emotional development on their education were gathered.

Sampling Procedure

This study used purposive sampling. Participants were identified on the basis of their ability to provide needed information. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), purposive sampling is used when a researcher targets a group of people who are viewed to be reliable for the topic under investigation. The population of teachers and parents was huge. Due to limited time and resources, the study collected data from 20 participants (ten teachers and ten parents) identified through the Teacher Parent Association (PTA).

Instrument for data Collection

For researcher used interview guides for both teachers and parents and questionnaires for the parents only. The interview guides enabled the participants to express themselves on the knowledge of the topic. The questionnaires enabled the participants to respond to the questions at their convenience and submit on time.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection according to Kombo and Tromp (2006) is defined as the gathering of specific information aimed at providing or refuting some facts. This study used primary source of data which was provided by the respondents through interview guide devices. And secondary data such as books, journals and internets were used to collect data from already existing literature on the effects of emotional development in children on their education.

Pilot Test

In order to check if the designed tool works well, the researcher conducted some interviews with two parents and one teacher, selected randomly. The results of the pilot study helped the researcher to plan well for the main study.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data analysis refers to examining, categorizing, tabulating, and displaying and verifying of information collected in the field (Yin, 2003) in order to make sense of vast amounts of information, often from different sources. This study, being qualitative in nature, used a thematic data analysis approach where themes and topics or major subjects come up in discussions (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). This was further assisted by the use of SPSS to tabulate and display the information graphically.

Summary

This chapter has provided the methodologies used in the gathering of the data in this study. The themes discussed include; research paradigm and design, study population, target population, sample selection, research instruments, data collection techniques, and data analysis. The next chapter presents research findings.

DATA ANALYSIS

The research yielded the following data:

Emotional development

A total of 20 interviews were conducted for teachers and parents to know if they understood the term emotional development.

TABLE 4.1 Emotional development

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	12	60
Maybe	5	25
No	3	15
Total	20	100

Interpretation:

The table above shows different categories of responses granted by teachers and parents. Most of the respondents stated that they understood what emotional development was. Then, 25 percent responded with a maybe to their understanding of emotional development and only 15 percent stated they did not understand the term.

Emotional development

A total of 20 interviews were conducted for teachers and parents to establish whether emotional development does affect children.

TABLE 4.2 Emotional development

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	70
Maybe	4	20
No	2	10
Total	20	100

Interpretation:

The table above shows different categories of responses granted by teachers and parents. Most of the respondents stated that emotional development does affect children, 20 percent stated maybe to whether emotional development does affect children and only 10 percent refused that it does not affect the children.

Factors that affect Emotional development

A total of 20 interviews were conducted for teachers and parents to find out what factors affect emotional development in children.

TABLE 4.3 Factors that affect Emotional development

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
School environment	6	30
Media influence	4	20
Communication	7	35
Television	3	15
Total	20	100

Interpretation:

With reference from Table 4.3, the most frequent response were: school environment at 30 percent which appealed more to the teachers, media influence at 20 percent which appealed more to the teachers, communication at 35 percent which was spoken of by both the teachers and the parents and finally television which fell at 15 percent.

Importance of Emotional development

To know the importance of emotional development, the teachers were interviewed to find out their agreed or disagreement.

TABLE 4.4 Importance of Emotional development

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	100
No	0	0
Total	10	100

Interpretation:

With reference from Table 4.4, the most frequent response was an agreement to the importance to emotional development to the children. This was further stated that to stimulate the learners academic performance their emotional development is very important.

Role of teachers in emotional development

A total of 10 interviews were conducted for teachers to find out the role of teachers.

TABLE 4.5 Role of teachers in emotional development

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Identify their emotions	2	20
Establish relation with family	3	30
Regulate emotions appropriately in the classroom	3	30
Create emotional atmosphere in the classroom	2	20
Total	10	100

Interpretation:

The study showed that the teachers agreed they had a role in a child's emotional development. The responses were at 30 percent for the establishing of a relationship with the family and the regulating of emotions in the classroom. Then at 20 percent the teacher has to create an emotional atmosphere in the classroom and the identifying of emotions from the children.

Emotional development influence on education of the children

A total of 10 interviews were conducted for teachers to find out how emotional development can affect education of the children.

TABLE 4.6 Emotional development influence on education of the children

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Positive interaction between peers and teachers	2	20
Motivational impact	3	30
Cognitive impact	3	30
Influences child's self-confidence	2	20
Total	10	100

Interpretation:

The study showed that emotional development builds positive interaction between children and their teachers which was rated at 20%. Motivational impact at 30% is also a result of emotional development influence on the education of the children. Emotional development also influences the learners self-confidence which was rated at 20%. Lastly, cognitive impact is also an influence of emotional development on the education of the children.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents research findings. The views presented represent the views on the effects of children's emotional development on their education. The findings of the study are presented using a thematic approach in relation to guiding questions of the study. The research questions which the study sought to address were:

- i. What is the nature of emotional growth in children?
- ii. What are the factors that affect emotional development in children?
- iii. What is the role of teachers in emotional development in children?
- iv. How does children's emotional development affect their education?

Participants' Views on Effects of Children Emotional Development on Their Education

Participants presented their views in relation to the second, third and fourth objective of the study which sought to examine the factors that affect emotional development in children, the role of teachers in emotional development in children and how emotional development affect the education of the children. The themes which emerged from this objective are: school, media influence, television, communication, interaction, and low academic performance.

School

One of the findings of the study is that school is one of the factors that affect emotion development in children. One of the teacher noted that;

“A health emotional climate makes the child relaxed, cooperative, happy and motivated to study and to conform to rules. An unhealthy emotional climate makes the child nervous, tense, irritable, quarrelsome, hypercritical, disinterested in studies and prone to troublesome behaviour” (an interview with a teacher, 2023).

Media influence

The study also found that media is another factor that influence emotional development in children. One parent said;

“Media, especially television and computer form the basis for many of the child’s concepts. The child is likely to develop concepts that are unrealistic.” (An interview with a parent, 2023)

Television

Related to media, television was singled out as an important factor that affects emotional development in children. One parent said;

“Most children grow up watching an extraordinary amount of television. Young children are especially likely to be influenced by television; one reason is that below 8, children do not understand a great deal of what they have seen on television. They find it hard to separate true-to-life from fantasized television content.” (An interview with a parent, 2023)

Communication

One teacher sees that a teacher has a role in emotional development of children through communication. He said,

“In the classroom, communication between learners and the teacher is very vital because communication can help children to develop social and emotional skills. Also children’s interactions with their peers have a great impact on their social, emotional, and behavioural development. Teachers are important socializers and sources of support outside of the home environment for children, and teacher-student relationships that are positive, supportive, warm, and low in conflict are linked to students’ positive school outcomes.” (An interview with a teacher, 2023)

Academic performance

The study investigated the linkage between children’s emotional development and their academic performance. It has been noted that emotional development in children is associated with low academic performance. One teacher who participated in the study said:

“The lack of emotional skills has an important role, especially in the basic behavioural problems encountered up to mid-childhood period. Not only are children’s social lives better if they have social emotional competence, academic performance is affected, as well.” (An interview with a teacher, 2023)

CONCLUSION

Everyone expresses emotions. In education, the role of emotional development on children’s education cannot be over-emphasized. In agreement with Jarrell et al (2017), this study has found a strong connection between children’s emotional development and their education. This means that children need to learn various skills by interacting with their teachers and peers in order to develop their social and emotional competence.

At the same time, the ability to effectively manage emotions takes effort and time to develop. Schools should assist students in their emotional development so that they may form positive relationships with others.

SUGGESTIONS

The following are the major recommendations of the study:

1. Parents and teachers should be sensitized on the importance of regulating programmes and time spent watching television. Parents should be enlightened on the importance of giving proper parental guidance on the impacts of television programmes viewed and excessive television viewing.
2. The community should provide a playing ground for their children. This will enable them to venture into other activities apart from television. This will contribute to their physical, social, cognitive, emotional, language and moral development.
3. The school management should introduce regular guidance and counselling sessions in schools so as to help children develop proper social skills and avoid developing undesirable behaviour.

Areas for Further Research

It is hoped that the results from this study will create interest for further study to explore other ways in which emotional development in children can have a positive impact on their education.

The following areas should be considered for further research:

- a) The role of emotion in academic development.
- b) Factors that affect children's emotional development.
- c) Effects of domestic violence on emotional and academic development.
- d) The development of emotional intelligence and its application.
- e) Factors that promote positive emotional development.

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