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Parenting and Its Effects on Children: A Review of the Facilitation Exercise Held at Uzebu Community Edo State Nigeria

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***Abstract:** This research paper presents an active process to understudy the role of parenting in our world today. It is based on a facilitation exercise on parenting and care gives training sessions organized at Uzebu community Edo State, by SOS children's village Benin City Edo State Nigeria. Sixty (60) female participants participated in the training on positive and effective parenting styles, as well as what factors constitute negative and ineffective parenting styles. Empirical review of literature was done to understudy what other scholars had put forward in relation to the facilitation exercise at Uzebu community. Findings revealed that parents now work longer hours to cater for their children, and so spend lesser time bonding, interacting and communicating with them. Some vital recommendations was put forward some of which includes that parents should adopt positive disciplinary measures to deal with deviant behaviours in children, and that parenting should not be left in the hands of biological parents alone.*

***Keywords:** Parenting, social learning, positive discipline, corporal punishment.*

Introduction

Being a parent and becoming a parent are two different things that are based on semantics or how individuals come to terms with it. The action of being a parent is being responsible and being in charge of a child or one's children, while becoming a parent is the act of expecting to be guardian of a child. Extrapolating from the above, a parent is an individual or individuals who have legal custody of persons under their care. Step parents, single parents, grand parents are examples of individuals who exercise moral and legal custody over persons younger than them. Parenting is therefore, the act or process of discharging moral and legal guidance to persons. It



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entails providing for them, protecting them, loving and caring for such young person in order to ensure maximum cognitive, social, emotional, physical and mental growth and development. O'Connor (2002) stated that defining parenthood is not easy to come by due to difference in perception among scholars and researchers on the issue of parenting and what constitutes effective parenting and ineffective parenting styles.

Parenting is one of the toughest jobs on the planet because it involves relating with individuals who may not necessarily understand why certain things are not done for them, and why they have to do certain things for themselves. The role parents play in our rapidly globalizing world can not be understated or underrated, that is why government, local and international organizations need to develop tools and devote resources towards understanding the core issues of parenting and child care support across cultures and countries, to mitigate the disparities and peculiarities that exist among peoples. This is pertinent because everyone come from a source, which is the family, and when proper child care support and development are not provided in the family, or at home, our world would continuously witness social problems and vices like teenage pregnancy, school bullying, sexual and gender based violence, incest and other deviant behaviours and crimes like terrorism, murder, human trafficking, drug trafficking, violent conflicts and so on. Individuals who carryout such anti social behaviours are from families, but poor family relationship and upbringing are likely factors that tilted their behaviours toward violence and other crimes. Parents, guardians, teachers are positive influencers of younger people, but the rate of influence needed to produce a socially acceptable individual can not be measured or quantified. This then means that the rate of positive influence must be maintained continuously in the areas of providing care and parental responsibility to young ones. Exercising positive discipline on children should be an area parents should not shy away from, as such corrections ensures the moral, psychological, social and physical molding of a child. Parenting also requires a great deal of patience, unfortunately, the word patience is what people find difficult to grasp in our world today, due to their economic, social, religious and other obligations. Parenting also requires a great deal of love, communication, understanding, and



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confidence in your child or ward. Becoming an effective parent entails an all round interaction and communication with your children and getting feedbacks from them. It involves ensuring their various levels of intelligent quotients are developed, and their hidden talents discovered and nurtured to grow. It also needs to be noted that children will differ from their parents in amazingly different and beautiful ways, so the idea of parents trying to foist an identity or future on children that's not in line with the child's passion, dreams and visions should be entirely discouraged.

Theoretical Framework

Social learning theory forms the theoretical framework for this paper. It is based on the proposition that behaviours can be learned by viewing, imitating or copying the actions of others, be they family members, friends or strangers. According to Bandura (1963) learning is a series of cognitive processes that occurs through observation and via the mechanism of rewards, sanctions or punishment. This can also be tagged reinforcements. When a parent regularly rewards the child for great academic performance, such child tends to keep up excelling in school. While when a child is disciplined for engaging in a street fight, such deviant behaviour is likely to discontinue. Bandura (1963) stated that five (5) steps existed for learning to take place, these steps are;

- Observation
- Attention
- Retention
- Reproduction and
- Motivation.

The social context or environment remains key for learning to take place, and a child can learn positive as well as negative behaviours at home, school, market, religious places of worship, Mass and online media, and among peer groups. So parents should not only model positive behavioural traits like kindness, honesty, hardwork, integrity, love, compassion, truthfulness, and contentment for their children to emulate, they should also observe for bad



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behavioural traits which their children may have imitated outside the home, and correct same before it is reproduce by them, or before they get the needed motivation and reinforcements to continue such deviant behaviours.

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE IN RELATION TO THE FACILITATION EXERCISE HELD IN 2021 AT UZEBU COMMUNITY IN EDO STATE NIGERIA

A review of the researches of other scholars proves that there is a great deal of empirical reports and documentations on the concept of parenting, and that parents had roles to play in the positive nurturing, development and growth of their children. Maccoby (2000) stated that there were clear evidences that parents indeed have an influence on children's behaviours. This was evident at Uzebu community in Edo State Nigeria, during the parenting and care givers training sessions organized by SOS children's village Edo State Nigeria. Participants insisted that parents who were prone to hitting their children and wards, observed that when they left for work, the object of punishment (sticks, whips, shoes, canes and so on) utilized in punishing their children was used by the most senior child in disciplining the younger ones. This act of corporal or physical punishment of a child over negative behaviour is totally wrong as it could lead to death, injuries, mental illnesses and the development of aggressive tendencies in children.

Globally, the economy has not been favourable for parenting. Hoghughi (1998) observed that the increasing level of poverty, economic decline, inflation and maternal depression is affecting the parenting processes in countries all over the world. Participants at Uzebu community agree with this assertion that both parents now have to work harder and longer hours to make ends meet. This provides them with little time to bond with their children, socialize and teach them, and enculturate positive values in them. Sadly, this vacuum is rapidly being filled by peer groups at home and schools, teachers at the school, social media, social learning factors, and so on. While parents no longer have the luxury to teach their children positive behavioural values, other agencies have filled in this gap, while parents with other children or with house maids now leave such duties to be carried out by them. The notion that single parenting has its downsides has been tested by Smith (2010). Smith (2010) is of the opinion that an increase in



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single parenthood in our society is rapidly giving rise to deviance behaviours in individuals (children and youth alike). This is evidence in the fact that it takes two individuals to produce a child, so nurturing and caring for such child can not be left for a single parent only. This is where all types of support comes in from the state and other family members like grand parents, uncles and aunts, especially if either of one's biological parents is dead. In the case of divorce or unlawful separation, social support is still needed for the child from both parents. This was why Bronfenbrenner (1987) insisted that intra family engagements had positive influence on children and parental management. Gilligen (2000) shares in these assertions by noting how pertinent it was to promote and encourage pro-social development skills in children by encouraging contacts with persons who are related to the child. Such contacts will lead to the development and learning of positive social skills.

Individuals have rights and duties, so also do children have their own rights carefully stated in the child rights laws of various states, and in the convention on the rights of the child (CRC). Pedro cited in Pastor, Ciurana, Navajas, Cojocar., and Vazquez (2015) held the view that relating with children should be based on love, mutual respect, and the individual needs, limitations and capabilities of each child. This is why continuous communication and interaction between parents and children is essential. Dialogue is also an effective means of resolving conflicts or disputes between parents and children when such conflicts crop out. These conflicts can be tackled through regular communication and interactions between parents and children. This way, parents get to know their peers, set guidelines, boundaries and limit on their children's behaviours. Pastor et al (2015) observed from various studies that embarking on regular leisure time with one's children had tremendous benefits. Findings from the parenting and care givers training sessions at Uzebu community in Edo State Nigeria, it was observed from the participants that some parents don't have enough time to bond with their children or attend parenting training sessions, workshops and seminars due to work and business schedule, and they often sought counseling from religious leaders and family members when faced with the challenges of parenting. Hoghughi (1998) asserted that parenting is probably one of the most talked about



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public health issues in the world today, because when not properly done, issues like childhood illnesses, accidents, truancy, teenage pregnancy, juvenile crimes, mental illnesses and substance abuse becomes rampant. To checkmate such negative occurrences, Quetsch, Wallace, Norman and Travers (2015) in their empirical analyses on parent-child interaction therapy with children with disruptive behaviour disorders, stated that parents who regularly interacted with their child via the method of play therapy, found that this play therapy proved effective in mitigating childhood misbehaviours and deviance.

Conclusion

Parents have a great role to play in molding the characters and behaviours of their children. This can be achieved through positive and effective parenting styles, where regular interaction and communication with the child is key, as well as loving and caring for them, teaching and playing with the child, including adopting positive disciplinary measures when such child drifts towards bad behaviours. Both parents, if alive, have a strong role to play as first contact with the child. They are the ones who teach the child the language of the society, culture of the people, religious life, and serve as a visible model via social learning which the child copies positive behavioural traits while still at the various stages of development, and before they reach the socially approved age for academic education.

Recommendations

The researcher has recommended the following suggestions towards ensuring positive and effective parenting on children;

- Government and private organizations should periodically sponsor programmes and training sessions or seminars that would offer individuals positive parenting skills and trainings, so they can become effective in the job of parenting and care giving.
- Parenting should not be left in the hands of biological parents alone. This is because as society becomes more complex as a result of rapid globalization via information and communication technologies, the push should be for the growth and development of a



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"parenting community" where all individuals recognize that they can assist in the onerous task of parenting by being a good role model to children and the youth.

- Parents and caregivers should regularly and positively interact with their children via play therapy as observed by Quetsch et al (2015).
- Parents should adopt positive disciplinary measures to handle matters of deviance behaviours in their children and wards. This can be through setting limits, behavioural expectations and guidelines for their children to follow.
- Corporal punishment must never be used in dealing with deviant behaviours in children because of the dangers it could cause like injuries, trauma, mental health and illnesses and so on.
- Parents should seek professional help by visiting a counselor, social worker, psychologist or therapist when faced with the challenges of parenting.

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