

Students' Factors, Parental Involvement and School Climate as Correlates of Essay Writing Performance among Secondary School Students with Learning Disabilities in Ibadan

Mubo Olubanke Ajagbe & Kelechi Uchemadu Lazarus
Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education,
University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examined students' factors, parental involvement and school climate as correlates of essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design of the correlational type. The multi-stage sampling procedure was utilised to select 100 Senior Secondary Class One (SSS 1) students from four public secondary schools with learning disabilities that participated in the study. Three research questions were raised and answered. Participants were screened for learning disabilities before they were recruited. Four instruments were used for data collection. Data collected were analysed using inferential statistics of Pearson product moment correlation and multiple regression statistical tools at 0.05 level of significance. The result revealed that gender, religion, parental educational attainment, parental involvement and school climate positively and significantly correlated with essay writing performance of students with learning disabilities. The result also indicated that students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate had significant joint influence on essay writing performance. Also, students' personal factors (gender, religion,) and parent educational attainment, parental involvement and school climate made significant independent contributions to essay writing performance among SSS 1 students with learning disabilities in Ibadan. Therefore, it was recommended among other things that special and regular educators and counselling psychologists should take cognizance of the influence of students' personal factors, parental involvement and school climate in the development of interventions to improve essay writing performance of students with learning disabilities.

Keywords: Students' Factors, Parental Involvement, School Climate, Essay Writing Performance, Students with Learning Disabilities

Introduction

Essay writing skill is one of the important language skills needed by students with and without learning disabilities for academic success. Essay writing strengthens students' learning, thinking and reflecting on previously acquired knowledge. Composing an essay requires robust content knowledge of the topic in question. Without an individual's personal knowledge of a topic it will be difficult for him to draw an outline, prepare a subsequent draft of an essay, develop the ideas, write the essay and revise the essay. Familiarity with general world knowledge as well as inspirations drawn from reading, art, content-area activities, films, television, newspapers, trips, brainstorming and internet searches enable students to write good essays. Ahmed (2010) explained that competence in essay writing helps secondary school students to perform well in their academic programmes, as majority of subjects in secondary curriculum require proficiency in essay writing to record outstanding academic achievement.

However, learning to master writing skills poses a lot of problems to all students, especially among second language learners because the structure, style and organization of the English language differ from what is obtainable in other languages (Ahmed, 2010). Therefore, the need arises for educators to seek ways of assisting all students to improve their essay writing abilities.

The result for the Senior School Certificate Examination by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), (May/June, 2019) showed that out of the 1,590,173 candidates that sat for the examination in Nigeria, 64.18 per cent (1,020,519) obtained credits and above in a minimum of five subjects, including English Language which encompasses essay writing. This result compared to the WAEC result of 2018 is better whereby 50% had credits and above in a minimum of five subjects which include English language (The Punch News, July 26, 2019). The result of 2019 indicated that about 35.82% of 1,590,173 candidates who sat for the examination in Nigeria had no credit in English language, which includes both students with and without learning disabilities. More so, the reports of various chief examiners of the 2019 examination showed that students' performance in essay writing was poor, and that candidates' weaknesses among others, was unfamiliarity with the written words (West African Examinations Council, May/June, 2007-2019).

Deliberate attempts have been made to give candidates tests within their experience and capabilities, yet most of them failed to show an understanding of the requirements of the questions they attempted and their essays were dominated by errors of grammar/poor expression, spelling and punctuation and wrong amalgamation (WAEC, 2019). The importance of essay writing in students' academic success and observable students' poor performance in essay writing in both internal and external examinations make it imperative to investigate influencing factors of essay writing among students with learning disabilities in secondary schools. Bearing this in mind, the influence of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate on essay writing performance of senior secondary school students with learning disabilities were examined.

Students' personal factors considered in this study are those attributes of students which could play a role in their confidence and the belief they have in achieving effective essay writing such as gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment. Camarata and Woodcock (2006) conducted a study that involved persons aged 5 through to 79 years. The finding revealed that females obtained higher scores in writing achievement than males. Scheiber, Reynolds, Hajovsky and Kaufman (2015) found that there were no gender differences in mathematics but there were gender differences in reading and writing ability in favour of females with the effect size for writing being twice as large as that for reading. Gender differences have been found in reading (Reilly, Neumann & Andrews, 2019), verbal ability (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974), spelling and use of grammar (Reilly, Neumann & Andrews, 2016); and writing ability (Reilly, Neumann & Andrews, 2019).

The study by Reilly, Neumann and Andrews (2019) showed that girls performed better than boys in writing ability across all grades and assessment waves. Based on this finding the researchers explained that writing is a generative task that utilizes other components of verbal and language abilities that typically show larger gender differences. Writing involves careful

organization of ideas, logical and coherent expressions and grammatical accuracy. To produce a quality written work, better spelling and grammatical skills are needed and females have been found to perform higher in these areas. Also, this study indicated that age of students also influence their reading and writing abilities. It was also found that a developmental progression existed from initially small gender differences in Grade 4 toward larger effects as students made progress through schooling. Differences for reading were small-to-medium by Grade 12 and medium-sized for writing by Grade 12 and were stable over the historical time (Reilly, Neumann & Andrews, 2019). Hence age can be said to influence students' writing ability.

With reference to religion and academic achievement, Jeynes (2002) carried out a meta-analysis of fifteen studies and found that attendance to religious schools and personal religious commitment were related with higher levels of academic achievement for Black and Hispanic students. Toldson and Anderson (2010) obtained a positive relationship between the religiosity and academic performances of African-American high school students. Bryant (2007) found that involvement in high religious group does not have strong relationship with success in academics. In another study, no significant correlation was found between religiosity and academic performance among accounting students at the International Islamic University Malaysia (Zubairu & Sakariyau, 2016).

Parents' educational attainment also considered a strong indicator of parents' functioning, could predict student's academic performance. Kaur and Kaur (2013) demonstrated through their study, that students of highly educated parents obtained high achievement motivation, good study habits and low inferiority complex in comparison to students of low educated parents. Maluleke (2014) examined parental involvement in the education of students in Limpopo, South Africa. The findings showed that parental involvement was not widely practised in the district as a result of certain challenges such as parents' limited education and socio-economic status (SES). Charamba (2016) corroborated this finding with the discovery that parents' limited education was a challenge to parental involvement. Considering the impact of parents' educational attainment presented so far, the present study is therefore set out to probe further into the influence that parents' education has on essay writing performance of students with learning disabilities.

Parental involvement is another factor considered in this study. Van Zyl (2013) described parental involvement as a mutually beneficial support and/or active participation between parents and the school in terms of their children's endeavours to improve basic caring (which also relates, support and assistance given to children's school related responsibilities) and nurturing by parents at home, preferably with the help of the community. Paul and Ngirande (2014) examined 114 parents of students in South Africa and all participants demonstrated high parental involvement in the education of the students. Also, three components of parental involvement namely: parenting, parent-teacher communication and home and family support were found to be positively related to performance. Studies have revealed that outcomes gained through improved parental involvement include increased student success, greater parent and teacher satisfaction and better-quality school climate (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017). In addition, Bariroh (2018) examined the influence of parental involvement on the learning motivation and achievement of children with special needs. The findings revealed that parental involvement

significantly influenced children's motivation and achievement. In view of the previous findings the present study investigated that potency of parental involvement as a factor that can influence essay writing performance of students with learning disabilities.

School climate is based on patterns of students', parents', and school personnels' experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal interactions, teaching and learning practices and organisational structures (Norton, 2008). Fakunle and Ale (2010) found a significant relationship between school climate and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. A study involving middle school students in the Commonwealth of Virginia, United States of America by Bergren (2014) revealed that some school climate factors such as socio-economic status (SES), attendance and school size jointly had an influence on students' achievement and teachers' job satisfaction with SES being the most influential factor. Nichols (2019) found that school climate factors such as school size, percentage of low SES, attendance, discipline and provisionally licensed teachers affect learning significantly. Other studies that have indicated a direct relationship between a positive school climate and academic achievement include Thapa, Cohen, Higgins-D'Alessandro and Guffey (2012) and Kutsyuruba, Klinger and Hussain (2015).

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine students' factors, parental involvement and school climate as correlates of essay writing performance among students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Three research questions that were raised and answered to guide the conduct of the study were:

- i. What is the pattern of relationships that exist between students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate and essay writing performance among students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the joint contribution of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance among students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the relative contribution of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance among students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria?

Methodology

This study adopted survey research design of the correlational type. The rationale for this research design is that it involved no manipulation of any variable of study because the variables of the study had occurred in nature prior to the commencement of the study; the researcher only assessed the variables of the study. The independent variables are students' factors, parental involvement and school climate, while the dependent variable is essay writing performance among students with learning disabilities. The population of the study comprised of all the senior secondary class 1 students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Local

Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopted multi-stage sampling procedure; the first stage involved the use of simple random sampling technique to select four (4) public secondary schools out of forty-four (44) public secondary schools within Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. The second stage involved the use of purposive sampling technique to select twenty-five (25) Senior Secondary Class 1 (SS1) students with learning disabilities from each of the four (4) secondary schools selected within Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. This makes sample size to be one hundred (100) SS1 students with learning disabilities. Four instruments were used for data collection as follows:

Screening Checklist for Suspected Learning Disabilities (An adapted version): The Screening Checklist for Suspected Learning Disabilities developed by Herriot (2004) is a screening tool for learning disabilities. The adapted instrument contains 70 items which cut across different areas of learning disabilities. The rating scale consisted of items on thirteen major behavioural characteristics which are reading, written language, oral language, mathematics, social, memory deficits, attention deficits, executive functions, language processing, perceptual motor, phonological processing, visual-spatial processing and processing speed. The original scale has 113 questions in all but only 70 items were used. Each item was assessed on a 4 point scale with 1 indicating “Almost Never”, 2 “Sometimes”, 3 “Often”, and 4 “All the time”. Meaning that, rating which fall below the average received either 1 or 2 scores, while ratings above average received 3 or 4 scores. This implies, that the lowest scores will be 70 ($70 \times 1 = 70$). While the overall score for pupils who scored the highest on the rating the scale will be 280 ($70 \times 4 = 280$). For the purpose of this study a score above 140 suggests the presence of learning disabilities. A pilot study was conducted using 50 students who were not part of the study sample. The initial consistency of the subscales were as follows: Reading ($\alpha = .79$), Written language ($\alpha = .81$), Oral Language ($\alpha = .78$), Mathematics ($\alpha = .91$), Social ($\alpha = .84$), Memory Deficit ($\alpha = .67$), Attention deficit ($\alpha = .87$), Executive function ($\alpha = .85$), Language Processing ($\alpha = .89$), Perceptual Motor ($\alpha = .76$), Phonological Processing ($\alpha = .83$), Verbal Spatial Processing ($\alpha = .62$) and Processing Speed ($\alpha = .85$).

Parental Involvement Scale: Parental involvement scale is a ten-item, self-developed scale divided into two sections. The first section captures the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents such as: name of school, gender, religion, class, age, family background (monogamy or polygamy) and parental educational attainment. The measure uses a 5-point scale response format. It was developed through thematic analysis of literature and theoretical background of parental involvement. It was developed in a manner to assess the extent to which parents are involved in the essay writing skills development of their children. Examples of these items include “my parents do create time to check my essay writing classwork and assignment” and “sometimes my parents do give me assignment on essay writing”. The scale yielded internal consistency coefficient value of 0.79 when the researchers subjected data from a pilot study to Cronbach alpha statistical analysis.

School Climate Scale: The School Climate scale is a 33-item scale that was designed following Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, Higgins-D’Alessandro (2013) description of school climate. The scale covered four out of the five domains of school climate. Aspects included are: teaching

and learning (8 items- a typical item in this section reads: “my teachers give me clear instructions about how to do my work”); safety (6 items - a typical item in this section reads: “discipline at my school is fair”); interpersonal relationships and social support (8 items- a typical item in this section reads: “teachers in my school treat students with respect”); and institutional environment (11 items- a typical item in this section reads: “the inside of my school building looks nice”). The present researchers reported internal consistency coefficient value of 0.88 after a pilot study was conducted.

Essay Writing Assessment Tool: This section examined the essay writing ability of the students with learning disabilities. Respondents were asked to write an essay of about 200 words, and were assessed with standardised “National Examinations Council (also known as NECO)” Marking Guide, following the critical key guides for marking English essay which are: content, expression, organisation and mechanical accuracy. The pilot study, to test the reliability of the study was conducted on fifty (50) students who were not part of the study sample. It yielded alpha coefficient of ($\alpha = 0.82$). The researchers personally administered the questionnaires on the fixed dates to the students with the help of four trained research assistants. One hundred (100) copies of the questionnaires were administered and retrieved and they were all properly filled because of the close monitoring by the researchers. Pearson product moment correlation was used to establish the relationship between the variables. Multiple regression was also used to establish the joint and relative contribution of the independent variable to the prediction of the dependent variable.

Result Research Question 1: What is the pattern of relationships that exist between students’ personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate and essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

This was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tool and the result is presented in the Table 1:

Table 1: Correlation matrix showing the relationship between the variables of the study

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Gender	1.60	.492	1.000						
Age	1.48	.502	.131	1.000					
Religion	1.52	.502	.033	-.199*	1.000				
Parent educational status	1.60	.492	.019	.423**	-.516**	1.000			
Parental involvement	33.12	4.868	.167	.195	.523**	-.359**	1.000		
School climate	101.12	8.772	.348*	.185	-.023	.401**	.011	1.000	
Essay writing performance	4.92	1.236	.345*	.055	.518**	.522**	.446**	.603**	1.000

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Table 1 reveals the inter-correlational matrix between the dependent variables (students' personal factors {gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment}, parental involvement and school climate) and dependent variable (essay writing performance) among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Local Government, Oyo State, Nigeria. The result indicated that gender ($r = .345, p < 0.05$), religion ($r = .518, p < 0.05$), parental educational attainment ($r = .522, p < 0.05$), parental involvement ($r = .446, p < 0.05$) and school climate ($r = .603, p < 0.05$) positively and significantly correlated with essay writing performance while age was ($r = -.055, p > 0.05$) positive and not significantly correlated with essay writing performance) among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State. This implies that essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State can be improved if their parents were educated, involved in teaching them and the school climate is educationally enabling.

Research Question 2: What is the significant joint contribution of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance among students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria?

This was analysed using multiple regression statistical tool and the result is presented in the Table 2:

Table 2: Summary of regression for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of essay writing performance

R= .782					
R (adjusted) = .611					
R ² (adjusted) = .586					
Standard error of estimate = .796					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	92.507	6	15.418	24.363	.000
Residual	58.853	93	.633		
Total	151.360	99			

Table 2 shows the joint contribution of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The result shows students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate yielded a coefficient of multiple correlations (R) of 0.782 and multiple correlations square of 0.586. This shows that about 58.6% (Adj.R²=.586) of the total variance of essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State was accounted for by the linear combination of the of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent

educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate while the remaining 41.4% could be assigned to other estranged factors not considered in this study. The result in the table also indicated that students’ personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate had significant joint influence on essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria ($F_{(6,93)}= 24.363$; $p<0.05$).

Research Question 3: What is the relative contribution of students’ personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria? This was analysed using multiple regression statistical tool and the result is presented in the Table 3:

Table 3: Relative contribution of independent variables-students’ factors, parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance

Model	Unstandardized		Stand. Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	6.719	.987		6.810	.000
Gender	.832	.179	.331	4.661	.000
Age	-.096	.190	-.039	-.504	.615
Religion	-2.085	.211	-.847	-9.902	.000
Parent educational status	-.110	.137	.577	3.802	.025
Parental involvement	1.286	.208	.512	6.176	.000
School climate	-.015	.311	.408	5.365	.005

a. Dependent Variable: essay writing performance

Table 3 reveals the relative contribution of students’ personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The result also showed that students’ personal factors (gender, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate made significant independent contribution to essay writing performance ($\beta=-0.331$; $t = 4.661$; $p<0.05$. $\beta=0.847$; $t = 5.371$; $p<0.05$; $\beta=0.577$; $t = 3.802$; $p<0.05$. $\beta=-0.512$; $t = 6.176$; $p<0.05$. $\beta=0.408$; $t = 5.365$; $p<0.05$) while age ($\beta=-0.039$; $t = -0.504$; $p<0.05$) made no significant independent contribution to essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. This implies that students’ personal factors (gender, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate are potent predictors of essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Relationship existing between Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

Research question one addressed the question of the pattern of relationships that exist between students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate and essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. This was analysed and the result revealed that gender, religion, parental educational attainment, parental involvement and school climate positively and significantly correlated with essay writing performance while age was positive but not significantly correlated with essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State. It can be deduced that essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan North Local government, Oyo State can be improved if their parents were educated, involved in assisting students with essay writing and the school climate is educationally enabling. This finding corroborates the findings of Fakunle and Ale (2010), Bergren (2014) and Nichols (2019) who found that school climate had significant positive relationship with students' performance. Kaur and Kaur (2013) also found positive significant relationship between parents' educational background and students' academic performance.

Joint Contribution of Independent Variables to the Prediction of the Dependent Variable

Research question 1 states: what is the significant joint contribution of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria? This was analysed and the result revealed that students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate contributed about fifty-eight percentage to the total variance of observed essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State. This means that students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate had significant joint influence on essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Previous studies have not delineated the direction of significant joint influence and/or contribution of school climate, parental involvement, students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment) on essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities, but this study has proven that there was significant joint influence of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate on essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities.

Relative Contribution of Independent Variables to the Prediction of the Dependent Variable

The relative contribution of students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate to essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria was examined and the result revealed that students' personal factors (gender, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate made significant independent contributions to essay writing performance while age made no significant independent contribution to essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. This implies that students' personal factors (gender, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate are potent predictors of essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

The present finding concerning the relative contribution of gender to essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities is in line with the finding of Camarata and Woodcock (2006), Scheiber, Reynolds, Hajovsky and Kaufman (2015) as well as and Reilly, Neumann and Andrews (2019) who found gender differences in writing ability of students and that females obtained higher scores in writing achievement than males. In addition, the significant relative contribution of parent educational attainment on essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities was observed in this study through the finding of the study. This finding is in consonance with the findings of Maluleke (2014) and Charamba (2016) who revealed that parents' limited education was a major challenge to parental involvement which directly impacts students' academic achievement. In other words parents with high education are in a better position to model good academic behaviours to their children at home, support children's education and contribute largely to the academic performance of their children and in this case influence the essay writing performance of senior secondary school students with learning disabilities.

Significant relative contribution of parental involvement on essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities was observed in this study through the finding of the study. This is an indication that the more the parents of student with learning disabilities get involved in the essay writing of their children, the higher the performance on essay writing. This corroborates the finding Bariroh (2018) who found that among children with special needs, parental involvement significantly influenced children's motivation and achievement. Also, the present finding also supports Durisic and Bunijevac's (2017) report that studies have shown that the involvement of parents led to improved students' achievement. On the account of relative contribution of school climate on essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities, the present finding provides support to the findings of Thapa, Cohen, Higgins-D'Alessandro and Guffey (2012) and Kutsyuruba, Klinger and Hussain (2015) who found a direct relationship between a positive school climate and academic achievement.

Conclusion

The study examined students' personal factors, parental involvement and school climate as correlates of essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Three research questions were raised and answered. The results revealed that student personal factors (gender, religion, parental educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate positively and significantly correlated with essay writing performance while age was positive but not significantly correlated with essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities. It was also discovered that students' personal factors (gender, age, religion and parent educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate had significant joint influence on essay writing performance among senior secondary school students with learning disabilities. Also, students' personal factors (gender, religion, parental educational attainment), parental involvement and school climate made significant independent contributions to essay writing performance among senior secondary class one students with learning disabilities in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the results obtained from this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Special educators and counselling psychologists should take cognisance of the influence of school climate, parental involvement and students' personal factors in the development of interventions to improve essay writing performance of students with learning disabilities.
2. Special educators with specialization in learning disabilities should organise psycho-educational programmes such as workshops and seminars to educate students with learning disabilities on how to manage and channel their personal factors for example gender, religious behaviours and parental educational attainment toward improving their essay writing performance.
3. Students with learning disabilities should cooperate with educational stakeholders to improve their school environment with respect to obeying school rules, maintaining positive relationships and sustaining emotional and social support for one another. All these dimensions of school climate have positive effects on students' essay writing performance.
4. Parents of students with learning disabilities should endeavour to create time to get involved in the development of their student's essay writing skills because of the finding of this study that there was significant contribution of parental involvement to essay writing performance of students with learning disabilities.
5. Government, educational stakeholders and school administrators should endeavour to work together to implement policies that have capacity to foster positive and academic facilitating school climate. This will invariably improve essay writing performance of students with learning disabilities because the finding of this study has revealed that school climate had significant influence on essay writing performance.

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