



Impact of Over-Learning and Parents Meddlesomeness on Academic Performance of Private Primary School Pupils' in Owerri North, Imo State

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Abstract

This study investigated Impact of over-learning and parents' meddlesomeness on academic performance of private primary school pupils' in Owerri North, Imo State The study adopted descriptive survey design and four research questions were asked to guide the study. The population of the study comprised all basic 3-6 parents of pupils in the selected schools, giving a total of five hundred and thirty-seven (537). The sample size for the study comprised three hundred (300) respondents, randomly drawn from the study population. Two instruments titled: Identification of Over-learning Among Pupils Rating Scale (IOSPRS) and Identification Pupils with Parents Meddlesomeness Rating Scale (IOPPMRS) were used for data collection. The IOSPRS and IOPPMRS were face and content validated by experts in Child Psychology and Education Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability coefficient of the instruments IOSPRS and IOPPMRS were estimated using Cronbach Alpha Statistics as 0.78 and 0.82 respectively while that of temporal stability were estimated using test re-test approach and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Formula as 0.89 and 0.90 respectively. Mean, standard deviation and proportion were used to answer the research questions while the z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. The findings showed that: a proportion of 41% pupils from the sample size (300) were found to be undergoing over schooling which significantly differ with the proportion of the pupils 59% undergoing normal schooling; the cumulative mean score of the pupils Undergoing normal learning was found to be significantly higher than pupils undergoing over-learning. Also, it was found that the proportion of pupils whose parents meddle with their learning was 31% and pupils whose parents do not meddle with their learning was 69%. Therefore, it was recommended that school authorities through the PTA forum should enlighten parents on the dangers of over-learning and parental meddlesomeness among others.

Keywords: Academic performance, Over-learning, Parents meddlesomeness, Private primary school, Pupils

Introduction

Over-schooling is creating serious problems in the Educational and intellectual development of children in primary school. The issue of Over-learning is prominent in private primary schools. Most private primary schools in Owerri North often overburden their pupils with excessive homework, note copying, and extra mural classes. Too much home work can affect pupils' mental health, emotional behaviours, social life, and academic outcome (Uzochukwu, Anierobi, Nwikpo & Unachukwu, 2022). The hours pupils spend in class and the hours they study on school work can make them feel overwhelmed and unmotivated. Though home work is an important part of being successful inside and outside the classroom, too much of it can affect both pupils' physical and mental health. Oxford (2016) found that 56 percent of students consider homework as a primary source of stress and too much homework can result in lack of sleep, headaches, weight loss, exhaustion and poor eating habits. Nwosu, Azarah, and Iwuoha (2026) found that over-learning neither enables the intellectual development, nor enhances the psychomotor development of primary school pupils. Over-learning can lead to depression, difficulty concentrating in class, sleeping in class during extra lessons, unable to complete homework. Parents/end up doing the home work. Phobias of going to school, difficulty interacting with family members (Nnadi, Akpa & Oke, 2026).

It is pertinent to note that most parents in Nigeria and Imo State in particular are involved in pupils' education. Parents' involvement in their children's' education is a key to long term success owing to the fact that their involvement, more securely sets pupils to develop a lifelong love for learning. Parental involvement on pupils' education has been found to have significant impact on their success. Ejuchegahi (2025) found a significant positive relationship between parents' involvement and academic performance. Shimi, Azmi, Ganesh, Subramaniam, Vignasveran, Moganselman and Rajamogan (2024) found parental involvement in their children's' education as an influential factor to academic success because it facilitates and motivates them for studies. In the same vein, Mugumya, Ntale and Nkata (2022) noted that communication between parents and children was the major reason for success in schools. Ranganathan and Kavitha (2022) postulate that, positive relationship exists between parental involvement and pupils' academic performance. It was also found that parental involvement in students' education was an important social support for school engagement and achievement (Yang, Zhang & Chen, 2023). This is in line with Ejuchegahi (2023) who found that when parents get involve actively in pupils' education, it can lead to better academic performance, sustenance and stimulation of students' interest.

Adeyeye (2024) noted that parents' involvement in the child's academics, stands as an important factor that brings about greater motivation, attendance rate, good grades, and strong emotional, moral, social and intellectual development. Olawunmi, Ajibola and Adeola (2024) found that pupils' high academic performance was significantly as a result of parent's active participation in school events such as Parents Teachers Association (PTA) meetings, teacher collaborations and school – based activities. It was also found that lack of institutional channel of communication, inadequate infrastructure and language barriers makes it difficult for some Nigerian parents to obtain timely pertinent information from schools (Eden, Chisom & Adeniyi, 2024). The study by Ibrahim and Nasir (2024) revealed that parental involvement significantly contributes to students' academic success. Ipem, Nwaji, Alaribe and Eguzo (2024), found that early education of a child is critical for his/ her cognitive, moral and social development. Cognitive development in pupils deals with how they think, explore and figure out things. Thus, parents' involvement could be very needful. Delia (2023) states that childhood education; improve the child's mental, social and emotional growth. Primary education being the fundamental starting point of the entire education system requires every child to learn basic education which will help the child in the cognitive, affective, Psychomotor and interpersonal domain; thus, need to be taken proper care of by parents and guidance.

The prime goals of primary education include among other things: effecting the smooth movement of children from home to school, prepare the pupils for primary level of education, provide adequate care and supervision for pupils while their parents are at work; be it market, farm or office, inculcate social norms and teach them the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes and forms through play. This level of education is meant to guide the growth and development of the child by promoting responsible behaviour, respect for others and the willingness to follow general accepted rules (Ipem et al., 2024). Parental involvement and over-learning of primary school pupils are interrelated and interconnected

hence they are inseparable. Over-learning creates excessive academic demands, pressure and stress on pupils (Ibiam & Eleke, 2022). It often leads to negative consequence on the physical, emotional and mental well-being of pupils (Nuhu, 2020; Kanu & Ambra, 2021). Over-learning can lead to stress, anxiety, burnout, decreased emotion, negative creativity and play (Ibok, Undie, Masor, Unoh, Etura & Udobong, 2023). Ejide and Iwogbe (2023) stipulated that excessive over-learning does not facilitate nor enhance the cognitive and the psycho motor development of a child. Nnadi, Akpa and Oke (2024) identified difficulty concentrating in the class, sleeping in the class during extra lessons, difficulty interacting with family members, and complaints of headaches as well as fear of going to school as the effects of excessive over-learning on students' academic performance. Other include sleeping early, finding it difficult to complete homework. Thus, parent end up doing the homework outside the design curriculum content (Omede & Jimba, 2019).

Over-learning poses threat to the development of children in primary education. Schools most often over burden pupils with excessive homework, note copying and extra – moral lessons. Shebani, Aldehafri and Alsaïdi (2025) found that parental involvement significantly promotes both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, enhancing academic passion, study habit and English language grades. Anierobi, Uzochukwu, Nwaikpo and Unachukwu (2019) found over-learning has great impact on the cognitive and psychosocial development of primary school pupils. Chado (2022) identified ways in which parents demonstrate their involvement at home as: reading with children, helping with homework, discussing school events, attending school functions including PTA meetings.

It is a welcome idea for parents to be involved in pupils' education such as helping them with their homework, communicating with the stakeholders providing conducive environment for study, monitoring pupils' academic progress, setting a routine and other assistance needed by pupils to progress academically. This can help pupils to have better understanding of their subject matter, improve their skill of problem solving and better performance. Parental support can build confidence, enhance motivation and bring about positive learning outcome (Aung, Bhaumik & Duraipandi, 2025). It is indeed a known fact that parental involvement could positively influence primary school pupil's academic performance. However, excessive involvement, meddlesomeness or over-learning, can lead to negative consequences. While parental engagement in a child's education is generally beneficial, excessive pressure, micromanagement, and an overemphasis on academic achievement can create undue stress, anxiety and potentially hindering a child's overall development (Az Research Consult, 2025).

Parents' Meddlesomeness is also known as overparenting or helicopter parenting. It refers to excessive parental involvement and control that exceeds age-normative expectations. This type of parenting, according to Wang et al. (2025) is characterized by over protectiveness, constant monitoring, over involvement in the child's school activities, excessive intervention, problem solving. Wang, Kaufman, Mastrotheodoros and Branje (2024) found that helicopter parenting can negatively impact on children's well-being leading to increased anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem as they grow older. Chen, Sun, and He (2024) found that parental autonomy support can lead to poor self-concepts in children. Gao, Hou, Hao and Yu (2023) indicated that helicopter parenting can lead to emotional problems in children. Tan, Wan, Long, Wang, Ma and Ma (2024) noted that parental autonomy support can lead to depressive symptoms and lack of self-esteem. Meddlesomeness is the process of interrupting or interfering in other peoples' matters. It describes the tendency to interfere in the affairs of others in an unwanted way (Wang et al., 2025). In most cases parents think they know everything in the school thus interfere in matters that do not concern them. Any little thing that happens in the school, they are there to give advice, teach the teacher, fight and quarrel with teachers and proprietors. In doing this, they exceed their boundaries of showing interests and curiosity in offering advice. Parents meddlesomeness can be described as the process of overstepping boundaries; where an individual fails to respect the autonomy and agency of other (Gao, Hou, Hao & Yu, 2023). It is the act of interfering or involving oneself in the affairs of others without being asked or invited to do so. It involves feelings of resentment, frustration, and mistrust.

A meddlesome person is the one who tries to influence or change things that do not concern them, the person is interfering with the activities and concerns of other people in an unwanted manner. Some parents in Owerri North L.G.A., comes to their children's school to show whom they are. If the teacher corrects their children. They will dress in their regalia to prove how stupid, arrogant, proud and courageous they are to fight the teacher. A meddlesome parent is impertinent, intrusive, obtrusive and

officious. They are referred to the above adjectives because they trust themselves into the affairs of others. They stress an annoying and usually prying interference in their children's school affairs (Collins Dictionary). Meddler means to interfere in something that does not concern you, and it is from the root word mix. Meddlesomeness can come as a result of desire to help or protect which can have negative consequences (Grand Rising Staffs, 2025). It can involve offering unsolicited advice, trying to fix problems that are not one's own, or constantly questioning someone's decisions. This can be highly damaging in relationships where there is a power imbalance such as between parents and children or between authorities and subordinates. In this case, meddlesomeness can be used as a means of exerting control or dominance. Meddlesomeness can have long-term consequences, which include among others strain relationship and decreased trust. It can create a sense of dependency where a child relies on others to solve their problems or make decision for them. This can be a threat to self- confidence and may prevent the child to develop essential skills.

This study is anchored on the self- determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985). This theory suggests that human behaviour is motivated by three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. This implies that children need to feel a sense of control and agency over their action (Autonomy), need to feel effective and capable in their endavour (Competence) and need to feel connected and valued by others (Connectedness). Thus, over controlling and parents' involvement can undermine children's autonomy, competence and motivation potentially leading to negative academic outcomes. It is against this background that the researchers decided to work on the impact of over-learning and meddlesomeness on the academic performance of private primary school pupils in Owerri North LGA of Imo State.

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed by members of the society, proprietors, teachers, stakeholders in education and researchers that many parents are involved in the excessive over-learning of their children and meddlesomeness. This has caused lots of frictions between parents, owners of schools and classroom teachers. Pupils whose parents are involved in over-learning and meddlesomeness are not finding it easy. These pupils even study more than the University students. Most of these pupils are too tender yet their parents prefer keeping them in school with the teachers to study more at this tender age against their interest and mental capabilities. The issue here is that when they come back, their parents will not allow them to rest until the whole assignments for each subject are completed. The children sometimes eat late in the night and also sleep late to wake early again to dress up for school or to complete the remaining assignments if they were unable to finish it the previous day.

This is seen by the researchers as highly detrimental to pupils' mental health and can lead to burnout, stress, depression, tension, anxiety and frustration. They sometimes experience severe headache, tiredness, illness, even loss of memory. When they get to school, they feel sleepy but their teacher will make sure they don't sleep in the class either by asking them to keep standing, kneel down or any other punishment that will make them to be awake and alert. The problem is that despite lots of studies that have been carried out in the related areas, over-learning and parents' meddlesomeness continued to be a night mare to the society at large. Though studies have been carried out on over-learning and meddlesomeness, most of them are foreign and cannot be generalize to Nigerian setting. Moreover, none at the researchers' disposal were carried out in Imo State and Owerri North in particular where the present study is being carried out. This is a necessary gap to fill. Therefore, this study investigated impact of over-learning and parents' meddlesomeness on academic performance of private primary school pupils' in Owerri North, Imo State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the Impact of over-learning and parents' meddlesomeness on academic performance of private primary school pupils' in Owerri North, Imo State. Specifically, the study tried to:

1. find out the proportion of pupils who undergo Over-learning and normal learning
2. ascertain the cumulative average scores of pupils who have Over-learning and normal learning
3. determine the proportion of pupils have parental meddlesomeness and those without parental meddlesomeness.

4. determine the cumulative average scores of pupils who have parental meddlesomeness and without parental meddlesomeness.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the proportion of pupils who undergo Over-learning and normal learning?
2. What are the cumulative average scores of pupils who Over-learning and normal learning?
3. What proportion of pupils have parental meddlesomeness and those without parental meddlesomeness?
4. What are the cumulative average scores of pupils who have parental meddlesomeness and without parental meddlesomeness?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the proportion of pupils who undergo Over-learning and normal learning.
2. There is no significant difference between the cumulative average scores of pupils who have Over-learning and normal learning.
3. There is no significant difference between the proportion of pupils whose parents meddle in their schooling and those whose parents do not meddle in their schooling.
4. There is no significant difference between the cumulative average scores of pupils who have parental meddlesomeness and without parental meddlesomeness.

Method

The research design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey design because it involved the assessment of public opinion on the impact of over schooling and parents' meddlesomeness on the academic performance of private primary school pupils in Owerri North L.G.A of Imo State. The use of this design is justified because it tries to investigate an event in a natural setting without the researcher trying to manipulate the dependent and independent variables. The population of the study comprised all basic 3-6 pupils of Supreme Regan school Amakohia and Living Word Academy primary school Akwakuma in Owerri North L. G. A; giving a total of 537 pupils. The sample size for the study comprised three hundred (300) pupils/respondents, randomly drawn from the study population.

However, the researcher decided to focus on basic 3, to 5 pupils because they are regarded by the researchers as the most vulnerable in the issue of over schooling and meddlesomeness. Two researchers' developed rating scales titled: Identification of Over Schooling Among Pupils Rating Scale (IOSPRS) and Identification of Pupils with Parents Meddlesomeness Rating Scale (IOPPMRS) were developed for data collection. The IOSPRS and IOPPMRS comprises 15 and 11 items respectively. While IOSPRS was used to Identify pupils who undergo over schooling, IOPPMRS was used to identify pupils with parental meddlesomeness. When the scores of the pupils in IOSPRS are equal or greater than the expected average which is the product of the number of its items and average of the four-point scale (that is $15 \times 2.5 = 37.50$) then that pupil with such score is undergoing over school but where the pupil score on IOSPRS is not up to the expected average the pupil is regarded as having a normal schooling. The same applies to pupils scores on IOPPMRS. Those pupils whose scores are equal to or above the expected average (that is, $11 \times 2.5 = 27.50$) are pupils who experience parental meddlesomeness. The IOSPRS and IOPPMRS were validated by experts in Child Psychology Education and Education Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability coefficient of internal consistency of the instruments IOSPRS and IOPPMRS were estimated using Cronbach Alpha Statistics as 0.78 and 0.82 respectively while that of temporal stability were estimated using test re-test approach and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Formula as 0.89 and 0.90 respectively. The researcher guided the pupils by good explanation of what each of the item is before they rated the scales. The mean, standard deviation and proportions were used to answer the research questions while the z-test statistics was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 levels of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What are the proportion of pupils who undergo Over-learning and normal learning?

Table 1: Proportion of Pupils Who Undergo Over-Schooling and those of Normal Schooling

Total No. of Pupils	No. OLP	Proportion of OLP	No of NLP	Proportion of NLP
300	122	0.41	178	0.59

Note OSP = Over schooling pupils; NSP = Normal Schooling Pupils.

Table 1 should the total number of pupils as 30.00 while the number under going over schooling and normal schooling as 122 and 178 respectively give normal schooling as 122 and 178 respectively given a proportion of 0.041 and 0.59 respectively.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the proportion of pupils who undergo over-school and those of normal schooling.

Table 2: Summary Result of z-test of Hypothesis One

Category of Proportion	Proportion	P	Q	z-cal.	SL	z-tab.	Decision
OLP	0.41	0.52	0.48	3.07	0.05	1.96	H ₀₁ rejected
NLP	0.59						

OLP = Over Learning Pupils; NLP = Normal Learning pupils

Table 2 showed that the z-calculated (3.07) is greater than the z-tabulated value at 0.05 significance level (7.96) hence the null hypothesis one is rejected and its alternative accepted.

Research Question Two: What are the cumulative average scores of pupils who have over-learning and those with normal schooling?

Table 3: Cumulative Average Scores of Pupils Who Have Over-Learning and Those with Normal Schooling

Category of Mean	X	S
OLP	55.48	6.52
NLP	65.03	7.83

Table 3 should the mean and standard of the cumulative average score standard deviation of both category of pupils. Over-learning pupils and normal pupils have mean cumulative average scores as 55:48 and 65.03 respectively while their standard deviation is 6.53 and 7.83 respectively.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the cumulative average score of pupils who undergo over-learning those of normal schooling.

Table 4: Summary Result of z-test of Hypothesis Two

Category of Mean	X	S	z-cal.	SL	z-tab.	Decision.
OLP	55.48	6.52	11.47	0.05	1.92	H ₀₂ rejected
NLP	65.03	7.83				

OLP = Over Learning pupils; NLP = Normal Learning pupils

Table of showed that the z-calculated value (11.47) is greater than the z-tabulated value hence, the null hypothesis two is rejected and the alternative accepted.

Research Question Three: What proportion of pupils have parental meddlesomeness and those without parental meddlesomeness?

Table 5: Proportion of Pupils Who Have Parental Meddlesomeness and those without Parental Meddlesomeness

Total No. of Pupils	No. of PPM	Proportion of PPM	No. of PWPM	Proportion of PWPM
300	92	0.307	208	0.693

PPM = Pupils with parents' meddlesomeness /PWPM = Pupils without parent's meddlesomeness.

Table 5 showed the total number of respondents as 300. The mean rating indicating that 92 pupils scored above the expected average indicating that their parents meddle in their schooling which also indicates a proportion of 0.307 (i.e., 92/300). Also 208 pupils scored below the expected average ($2.5 \times 11 = 27.50$) This mean that their parents do not meddle into their schooling giving a proportion 0.693.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between the proportion of pupils whose parents meddle in the learning and those whose parents do not meddle in their learning.

Table 6: Summary Result of z-test of Hypothesis Three

Category of proportions	of Proportion	P	Q	z-cal.	SL	z-tab.	Dec.
PWPMS	0.31	0.57	0.43	6.13	0.05	1.96	H ₀₃ is rejected
PWPDMS	0.69						

PWPMS =Pupils whose parents meddle with their schooling; PWPDMS = Pupils who parents do not meddle with their schooling.

Table 6 showed that the z-calculated value (6.13) is greater than the z-tabulated values at 0.05 levels of significance hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Question Four: What are the cumulative average scores of pupils who have parental meddlesomeness and without parental meddlesomeness?

Table 7: Cumulative Average Scores of Pupils Who Have Parental Meddlesomeness and Without Parental Meddlesomeness

Category of Mean	X	S
PPMS	57.22	8.77
PPDMS	62.96	7.59

PPMS = Pupils whose parents meddle with their schooling; PPDMS: Pupils whose parents do not meddle with their schooling

Table 7 showed the mean of the cumulative average scores of pupils whose parents meddle with their schooling and that of those whose parents do not meddle with their schooling as 57.22 and 62.96 respectively with standard deviation of 8: 77 and 7.59 respectively.

Hypothesis Four: What are the cumulative average scores of pupils who have parental meddlesomeness and without parental meddlesomeness?

Table 7: Cumulative Average Scores of Pupils Who Have Parental Meddlesomeness and Without Parental Meddlesomeness

Category of mean	X	S	z-cal.	SL	z-tab.	Decision
PWPMS	57.22	8.77	5.40	0.05	1.96	Ho4 rejected
PWPDMS	62.92	7.59				

Table 8 showed that the z-calculated (5.40) is greater than the z-tabulated at 0.05 level of significance hence the null hypothesis four is rejected and its alternative accepted.

Discussion of Results

The result showed that a substantial portion of pupils (0.41) out of the sampled 300 pupils are undergoing over schooling. Though the proportion of pupils who are undergoing normal schooling is significantly greater than the proportion of pupils undergoing over-schooling yet this reasonable proportion (0.41) calls for a serious concern. This means that the stress and anxiety that are associated with over-school pupils. This could be the lots of reasons why these pupils were identified to be undergoing over schooling. The finding is in consonance with the findings of (Ibiam and Aleke, 2022; Uzochukwu, Anierobi, Nwikpo and Unachukwu 2022), Who found that over-schooling impact on the intellectual and emotional development of the child. Besides the burnout, depression, tension,

frustration, fatigue and poor concentration which are prevalent among the affected pupils may impact their overall development.

Again, the result has shown that the cumulative mean scores of pupils who are undergoing normal schooling is significantly higher than that of the pupils who undergo over-schooling. This shows that over-schooling negatively influences pupils academically. It could also be said that over-schooling has a negative impact on the pupils. The finding is in agreement with that of (Anierobi, Uzochukwu, Nwaikpo and Unachukwu 2019; Huhu, 2020; Kanu and Ambra 2021). who noted that over-schooling impact on the cognitive and psychosocial development of primary school pupils. This finding is very instructive to the present and school authorities; especially parents who believe that through this means their children could improve academically. Also, schools who opens by 7: 30 am and closes up to 4 to 5 pm may have to reconsider their policies. Similarly, the result showed that a proportion of 0.31 pupils of the sampled size (300) are experiencing parental meddlesomeness. This in corroboration with Wang, Boele, Bulow et al (2025) who identified parental meddlesomeness in their study and characterized it with overprotectiveness, constant monitoring, excessive intervention, and overinvolvement in the child's school activities.

The results also showed that pupils without parental meddlesomeness performed significantly better academically than the category of pupils whose parents meddles with their schooling. Parents need to partner with the school for the overall development of the pupils. However, where the parents overstepped their boundaries, and fails to respect the autonomy of the school (Chen, Sun, and He, 2024), it creates the feeling of resentment, frustration, mistrust and lack of self-concept among the pupils concerned. it can negatively influence the academic achievement of the affected pupils which the result has shown. It means that the school authority should help to enlighten parents on these two behaviors over schools and meddlesomeness which negatively influence learning and academic achievement. Besides reaching out to parents through Parents Teachers Association (PTA), teacher in their individual relationship with the parents needs to explain these behaviors to parents and their negative consequences.

Conclusion

The study has investigated the impact of pupils over schooling and their parental meddlesomeness on their academic performance. Results have shown that both behaviors negatively affect pupil's academic performance. It is left for the stakeholders of primary school education to explore and harness the findings for the good of primary education.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and their implications the following recommendations are made:

The school should ensure that their normal school hours does not last too long, and should reduce the take home assignments given to pupils after school to reduce mental health related issues.

The school should through PTA enlighten parents on the dangers of over schooling and parental meddlesomeness.

The school should ensure that the unnecessary extra-moral lessons are not encourage.

Parents should ensure that their children have sufficient time for relaxation after schools

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