

The Effect of Home Environment Factors on Sudanese Undergraduate Students Performance who major English as a Foreign Language

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Abstract.

This study aims at investigating the effect of home environment factors on Sudanese undergraduate students' performance majoring English as a foreign language. The researchers used questionnaire and interview as the tools for data collection. The population of the study is university teachers and students. The study consist of (40) students and (20) teachers from different colleges. The descriptive and analytical method was used in analyzing the data. The researchers used the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for analyzing data. The results revealed that the students effected by such factors to perform English language, clear endings of this study; parents' education, occupations, economical status and surrounding play a vital role in the process of learning English as a foreign language. Finally, home environment factors play a great role enhancing students' four skills of English language. The study recommended that Parents need to be more conscious on encouraging their learners' in English if possible, they can use English with them to reduce impact of home factors. And for the teachers Increasing awareness among students of the importance of teamwork, so that those with poor performance may get the support and help of their classmates through teamwork. Key-word: Environment, home, factors.

المستخلص.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقصي أثر عوامل البيئة المنزلية على أداء الطلاب السودانيين الدارسين للغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية. استخدم الباحث الاستبيان للطلاب والاختبار أو الاسئلة المبلشرة للمعلمين لجمع البيانات. مجتمع الدراسة هم الطلاب والمعلمين بجامعة الفاشر, العينة المختارة عبارة عن (40) طالباً و(20) من المعلمين من كليتي التربية والآداب. المنهج الوصفي والتحليلي استخدم لتحليل البيانات وتم أيضاً تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها إحصائياً عن طريق الحزمة الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية. كشفت النتائج ان الطلاب يتأثرون بالعوامل البيئية في تعلمهم للغة الانجليزية. النتائج الواضحة لكل من تعليم الوالدين, مهنتهم, الحالة الاقتصادية والمحيط لها دور فعال في اداء الطلاب. وصت الدراسة , على الآباء تشجيع الأبناء بكل الوسائل وأن يكونوا على وعي وإدراك تام لأهمية تعلم اللغة الانجليزية, كما أوصت الاساذة بتعزيز الاهتمام لتقوية قدرات الطلاب لتخفيف أثر تلك العوامل .

الكلمات المفتاحية: البيئة, المنزل, العوامل.

1. Introduction

Home is our first school for emotional learning. From there we learn how to feel about ourselves and how others react to our feelings, how to think about this feelings and what choices we have in reacting and how to read and express hopes and fears. This emotional coaching operates not just, through what parents say and do directly to their sons/daughters, but also through the models, they offer for handling their feelings and those that pass between them.¹⁰

It is very important for parents to develop self-understanding of their emotions and feelings in order to transform that understanding in their children. The more the parents are able to understand their emotions, the better they will be able to manage their child's emotional personality. Emotional competence or incompetence of parents has affirmative or adverse effects on learners.⁽²⁾ Students' social environment is determined by a set of social factors associated with their social class, cultural level, home language, environmental languages, ethnic and religious context etc. In this study researcher will try to find out how the surroundings effect on learners and students along with their foreign language

learning, is the environment such as home, surrounding people are playing effective role in students foreign language (English) or they are suffering while learning.⁽³⁾

2. The importance of home environment in learning process

Home environment is a most powerful informal learning situation in which the family, more specially parents, act as an educator. ⁽⁴⁾, family is a place in which the whole ranges of human experiences take place. ⁽⁵⁾ Also stated that, what parents do in the home that counts for learning development of children. It understood that, lack of encouragement, low quality of parental involvement and lack of stimulating activity in the home will reduce the home's effectiveness as a learning environment. According to ⁽⁶⁾, home environment shows generally stronger relationship to cognitive development. Several researchers have found relationships between home environment and academic achievement. Students, who have received good home environment and positive attitudes from parents, can academically perform well.⁽⁷⁾

3. Attitudes and Values of parents towards English learning

Values differ among parents, goals and standards for their individuals' families will differ from one another. It is widely recognized by educationists and researchers ⁽⁸⁾, that parents –child relations are closely associated with important aspects of children's emotional, social and cognitive development. Parents viewed as primary facilitators of children's self-concept, interpersonal skills, achievement and role behavior. Students who evidence problematic relations with their parents are more likely to exhibit emotional behavior and underachievement.⁽⁹⁾

Language learning takes place in a social context which, shapes learning in two ways. The context as is stated by this author will influence learners' input. Also, there are two possible learning opportunities, formal and informal ones, which are influenced by the social context as well.⁽¹⁰⁾

4. Literature Review

a. Definition of home:

Home is defined differently by different scholars⁽¹¹⁾

“A home is a place of residence or refuge when it refers to a building; it is usually a place in which an individual or a family can live and store personal property. Since it can be said that humans are generally creatures of habit, the state of a person’s home has been known to physiologically influence their behavior, emotions and overall mental health”.

Also defined as a basic unit of society. It is the combination of different relations (parents, brother and sister which so called a family) which make it a block⁽¹²⁾

Home is basically the combination of different individuals sharing a social relation. They closely related to one another in their feelings and emotions⁽¹³⁾

So according to the above quotation home has got dual character as follow:

- Physical that is a place where a person lives.
- The association of one’s emotions and feelings with a particular place and people.

b. Definition of Factors:

According to the⁽¹⁴⁾ “Factors are something that helps produce or influence a result, one of the thing that causes something to happen”. Or “Noun,one of the elements contributing to a particular result or situation.

c. Types of Factors

- i. Block Factor: unavoidable factor whose effect is not of direct interest.
- ii. Derived Factor: factor whose level is derived from pseudo-factor.
- iii. Design Factor: factor whose effect is of direct interest.
- iv. Pseudo-Factor: formal factor combined to derive the level of a real factor⁽¹⁵⁾

d. Definition of Environment.

- Environment is defined as the medium in which the living organism or other creatures of God lives, and it's the sum of condition and factor that help the organism to survive and sustain. Environment has direct and indirect affect on our lives, it express all the thing that surround us ,such water, air ,human, animals,palnts.⁽¹⁶⁾

- The term home environment Refers to aspect of people domestics lives that contribute to their living conditions, values and mutual interaction between group or individual whereas share same attitudes or not⁽¹⁷⁾

5.The Effect of Home Environment Factors on Students' Performance.

Home is the first institution where a learner gets in to society. We can say that home is the first social unit where a person open his eyes and get exposed to society: His family members are the first whom he/she starts interaction with. So the home itself and its members will have deep effect on the learner because a learner initially gets inspiration from these two entities. ⁽¹⁸⁾ says that home and the relations of family play an essential role in the development of a learner's perspective, attitude, behavior, believes and his personality.

So the setup of the home, the relation among the family members and the time and support given to a learner by its family members and how that time is spent influence a student. All these factors contribute to a learner's manner, attitude and character, they also affect his perception. All these things depend on parent's education, profession and system of society. According to some researchers "home environment can be categorized into two major elements physical and social: Physical home environment means the building and its contents has effects on a person, likewise its social environment that is the relationship of student and parents,

student and his siblings students and surroundings has also deep influence on learning process as well.

6.The Effect of Interrelation of Home Environment and Students' performance:

As we have seen that home influences student in his/her all fields of life (behavior, attitude, believes, personality and manners) throughout his life, likewise one is deeply influenced in his second language learning by his home environment and that home environment plays an important role in learning of second language. As we know that home environment is made by family members, so like first language acquisition family can contribute to their children's second language learning in many ways.⁽¹⁹⁾

“In first language, parents are a child's first educator. A child's family and home environment have a strong impact on his/her language and the same is true for literacy development and educational achievement of second language learning” (Jennifer Cole, 2011). This is very obvious that home environment factor is the learner's first teachers and at the very start student of second language learns from the surroundings. So it means that family and home are the two important factors which contribute to a learner's language learning and his/her literacy development. Therefore, learner can receives facilitation and engorgements by the family while learning a second language and other mental factors, thus may value the learning.

As the learner starts learning, the family starts to contribute basically by giving motivation to their students' second language learning. The elements of learner's support to second language can be start and learnt at home firstly . One can deeply affected by both kinds of these environments (physical and geographical) in his/her social life, in manner, in his academic input and his language as well as each field of life. So if a learner is having such positive influence of these home factors, he/she will be very much receptive towards

second language. ⁽²⁰⁾

7.Previous studies

First study

The study Entitled (The impact of home environment factors on academic performance)

After data collection, The result revealed a positive and significant relationship between permissive parenting style with academic performance. However, no relationship exists between authoritarian parenting and demanding parenting with academic performance of students . Also,the result from the study identified income, educational background and occupational level as well as permissive parenting style as the main predictive variables influencing students' academic performance.⁽²¹⁾

Second study

This study investigated (The Role of Home Environment in Second language Learning. By Rachid Khan, National University of Modren Languages, Islamabad).

This study shows that, There is a close relationship between language, culture and society. All of them are interrelated with one another and are influenced by one another. The study focus on the relationship of home environment that is part of society and the learning of second language.⁽²²⁾ For showing this relationship in the area of Malakand Dargai forty language students and four language teachers were taken from two language institutes (Modern English Language Institute & Oxford English language Institute). Data was collected through close ended questionnaires and interviews. The findings shows that yes there is close relationship between home environment and second language learning, that home environment plays a vital role in the learning of second language as it does in first language acquisition. There are some factors of home that deeply influence second language learning, like educational, economical and social background of family and

the most effective of them are educational and economical background of family. An educated and good financed family support second learning effectively, that is why there is said to be close relationship between second language learning and home environment factors.

8. Statement of the Study Problem

A quick glimpse of the performance of students in university level in English proficiency in four skills indicate that the majority of students face difficulties in English language skills, it has been found that some students reach university level with almost no ability to understand and use it as well. This means that, the students have some problems with English language resulting from either the lack of practice or carelessness due to certain social factors. Such poor input and output which enormous obstacles to learn and develop, may very well be attribute to the role of home environment factors proved in the study.

9. Question of the Study

This paper addresses the following questions:

1. To what extent do home environment factors affect the performance of English as foreign language?

10. Hypotheses of the Study

1. There are home factors that affect Sudanese students learning English as a foreign language in University level.

2. Most influential social factors are social status (among group measuring).

11. Objective of the Study

The study tries to achieve the following objectives to suit the purpose of the current study.

1. To find out to what extent the influence of home environment factors in performance of English language.

12. Significance of the Study

The present study seek to investigate if there exists any relationship

between academic performance and Home Environment factors. Parental involvement can have a positive or negative effect on academic achievement.

13. Procedures of Data collection

The students' questionnaire and teachers' interview were developed through the following stages:

- Designed by the researcher in consultation with some colleagues.
- Presented to the supervisor for approval.
- Referred to three experts for judgment.

14. Methodology of the Study

The researcher used the descriptive analytical method of the study. The tools used for collecting data are two in numbers: a students' questionnaire and teachers' interview. Teachers in both faculties Education and Arts were selected randomly to cope their competences and experiences in English. So the two measuring instruments used for collecting data for the present study are preferred because of the nature of the study and data will be analyzed to answer the research questions and to verify the hypotheses then the questionnaire and interview. Further more, data will be statistically analyzed by statistic package for the social science (SPSS) program..

15. Sample and Sampling Techniques

Random sampling was used to select students who participated in the study. This was 40 students and 20 teachers carried out by selecting male and female students and teachers.. The selection was done after due consultation and approval from relevant authority to use the specified number of students and teachers for the study.

16. Tool One. Questionnaire

The study chose the questionnaire as one of instrument that meets its requirements. It is chosen, designed and given to find the attitudes of the students towards home environment and English

learning in general and home environment' affection in particular. The questionnaire consists of four sections items: the first section provides 2 items about the background of the students; their gender, academic grades. The second section checks the attitude of the students or their point of views towards the social factors. The third section seeks the responses of the students regarding the most influential social factors about the ability of the students; their comprehension, understanding and awareness towards these factors and the last section is about the parents' attitudes, values towards learning process they give to the students.

17. Tool Two. Interview

The interview had been used as the second source for data collection. It was in depth an interview that permits interviewees to control it in such a way that allows them to distinguish their feelings about the issue being explored; i.e. home environment factors and its effect on students' performance.

The interview consist of two sections with seven direct questions. The first section provides information of three items; about the experiences, qualifications and the gender of participants. The section checks the teachers' point of view about the issue in seven questions of interview.

16. Results and discussion

Table (1) the frequency distribution for statements of the first hypothesis

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly agree	77	29.2
Agree	75	28.0
Neutral	44	16.7
Disagree	42	15.6
Strongly disagree	28	10.5
Total	266	100.0

It is clear from table (1) That there are (77) answers with percent-

age (29,2%) have strongly agreed about all statements that related to the first hypothesis, (75) answers with percentage (28.0%) have agreed on that, (44) answers with percentage (16.7%) were neutral about that. Finally, (42) answers with percentage (15.6%) have disagreed also (28) answers with percentage (10.5%) have strongly disagreed about that.

The researchers observe that there are significance differences among the answers of respondents. According to what mentioned in the table (1), this indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (1%) among the answers of the respondents, which support the respondents who have agreed with the first hypothesis.

Table (2) The frequency distribution for statements of the second hypothesis.

Answer	Number	Percent
Strongly agree	85	30.4
Agree	90	32.2
Neutral	45	16.1
Disagree	39	14.2
Strongly disagree	20	7.1
Total	279	100.0

It is clear from table no. (2) that there are (85) answers with percentage (30.4%) have strongly agreed about all statement that related to the hypothesis, (90) answers with percentage (32.2%) have agreed on that, (45) answers with percentage (16.1%) were neutral about that, while (39) answers with percentage (14.2%) have disagreed; also (20) answers with percentage (7.1%) have strongly disagreed about that.

From above results, we see that the second hypothesis that states "Most influential social factors are social status (among group measuring). is fulfilled. Therefore, the researcher adds his voice to those who support the second hypothesis.

The result

The main purpose of this study is to assess the effect of home factors on students' English language performance in EFL university students. The research has tried to name parents' education, parents' financial status, parents' attitudes and parents' occupation to see whether these factors are significantly affecting students' English language performance at university level or not. This study proved that there is an effect of such factors on students' English language performance. The three angles we explored were: parents' education, parents' financial status, and parents' values. It is expected that the findings of this study will pave the way for other researchers to undertake further investigations and find solutions on the basis of the discerned results.

The analysis has been divided into two different contexts, all of which led to the conclusion that there are a number of home factors which play a significant role in determining the level of students' performance in English Language. paper has presented the main findings, conclusion, recommendations, suggestions for further studies. Provided answer to the research questions and verified the hypotheses as well as interview discussion.

17. Conclusion

According to the results of the analysis the study has, confirmed that, home factors has a great role in developing EFL performance. Thus, the result showed that there are many drawbacks which hinder students to better performance, the drawbacks as which means that they face some difficulties while learning English as a foreign language and have clear performance, parents educational background is seriously proved by the participants as one of important factors play a role in the process of performance, surrounding, occupation of parents as well as general social environment around the learners.

18. Recommendations

Based on the data analysis and the discussion of the results , the rarcher offers the following recommendations :

1. Parents need to be more conscios on encouraging their ‘learners’ in english if possible, they can use EhGLISH with them to reduce impact of home factors.
2. Schools and colleges can arrange debates competition to increase awareness of English language on fequency topic to enhance students’perfprmance.
3. Students deserve to receive strong motivation to overlap the gaps between these factors and their real life to reflect better performance of English language.

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*The Hypothesis

There are home factors that affect Sudanese students learning English as a foreign language in University level.

No	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neu-tral	Strongly disagree	dis-agree
1	Home environment play an essential role in performance of English as the second language.					
2	I study English with special care due to my parents positive attitudes towards English language.					
3	Middle families get some time and opportunities of having interaction and practicing the language, this play a vital role to perform better					

No	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neu-tral	Strongly disagree	dis-agree
4	Higher social class people give care and value English more than those at lower educational level					
5	My parent's expectations and value to English is helpful for my English target at home.					
6	My surroundings (Arabic speaking people) have negative impact in language achievement					
7	English as a foreign language can be learned efficiently in natural environment rather than academic centers					

Appendix B

Teachers' interview

- Teacher No.(1) up to (20).

1-Do parents have clear impact on their students' performace?How?
pleaseclarify.

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