

# Parental Socio-Economic Status, Self-Concept and Gender Differences on Students' Academic Performance in Borno State Colleges of Education: Implications for Counselling

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## Abstract

This is a survey study, designed to determine gender differences and socio-economic status, self-concept on students' academic performance in Colleges of Education, Borno State: Implications for counselling. The study set two research objectives, answered two research questions and tested two research hypotheses. The target population of this study comprises of all the students of Colleges of Education in Borno State during 2013/2014 academic sessions. This study used Purposive Sampling Technique to select two Colleges of Education; Krejcie and Morgan's (2006)'s principle of determining sample size for research was used to select the sample and proportionate sampling procedure was also employed to draw 322 NCE III students. The instruments used in this study consisted of Socio-economic Status Questionnaire (SESQ), student's self-concept scale (SSS) and Students' Academic Performance Aptitude Tests (SAPAT) with reliability indices of 0.87, 0.62 and 0.62 respectively. Based on the obtained indices coefficients, both the instruments were reliable for use in this study. Descriptive statistic was used to answer the research questions and t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The results obtained in this study indicated that, there was significant differences exist between gender and socio-economic status among the students in Colleges of Education in Borno State. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Recommendations were made to government, College Authorities, parents, counsellors and other stakeholders in education, that College counsellors should use their techniques to counsel students to sustain and maintain the good relationship between the variables under study in Colleges of Education in Borno State.

## Introduction

The world is becoming more and more competitive. Quality of performance has become the key factor for personal progress. Parents desire that their children climb the ladder of performance to as high a level as possible. This desire for high level of achievement puts a lot of pressure on students, teachers, parents and schools and in general the education system itself. In fact, it appears as if the whole system of education revolves round the academic performance of students, though various other outcomes are also expected from the system. Thus a lot of time and effort of the schools are used for helping students to achieve better in their scholastic endeavours. The importance of scholastic and academic performance has raised important questions for educational researchers (Nuthanap, 2007).

Socio-economic status can be defined as a person's overall social position to which attainments in both the social and economic domain contribute. (Ainley, 1995). When used in studies of children's school achievement, it refers to socio-economic status SES of the parents or family. Socio-economic status is determined by an individual's achievement in education, employment and occupational status and income and wealth. Several comprehensive review of the relationship between socio-economic status SES and educational outcomes.

Socio-economic status of parents refers to the conditions in the family that are concerned with or related to the interaction of social and economic factors. Social factors are factors that relate to a society or its organisation, they are factors that relate to rank and status in a society (Soanes, 2006). Socio-economic status of parents of a student is usually determined by combining parents' educational, occupational and income levels (Jeynes, 2002). Another major variable often used in the analysis of socio-economic family background is number of siblings in the family (Tian, 2006). Parents' educational levels could play an important role in determining a child's intellectual/academic performance (Hanafi, 2006). Parents with high level of education are most likely to engage in activities that would develop the intellectual potentials in their children and pave the way for them (the children) to perform satisfactory in school. For example, highly educated parents are most likely to give their children the necessary academic foundations at home that will help them perform well in school. Also highly educated parents have knowledge of the necessary high quality reading materials and nutrition to provide for their children to enable them to perform well in school. The theoretical linkage between parents' educational levels and students' could be found in human capital theory.

Sidhu (1987) defined self-concept as those perceptions, beliefs, feelings, attitudes and values which the

individual used in describing him/herself. Personality is not a specific quality of a person but a quality of his/her behaviour. How he/she behave depends upon how he/she feels about him/herself, about other people and about his/her relationship with them. These feelings make up his/her self-concept what he/she think about him/herself as a person. A person's self-concept is the fundamental core of his/her entire personality and determines the quality of behaviour.

It can be predicted that poor self-concept is implying lack of confidence in facing and mastering the school environment. In fact, the self-concept does appear to be related to school adjustment. Substantial evidence indicates that children and adults with poor self-concept when compared with those who have high self-concept are more anxious and less adjusted generally and less popular. The pattern of parental rewards and punishments seems to affect the self-concept and quite certainly, the self-concept of bright but under achieving young stars are less positive than those of children who are doing well as can be expected in school. Incidentally, children tend to mould their self-concept according to the way they think their teachers regard them.

The sources of gender differences in educational outcomes have been the subject of considerable study and debate. One particularly contentious issue involves the possible role played by biological differences between males and females. Test of general intelligence suggests that there are no overall differences between males and females. However, there do appear to be large gender differences with respect to overall age scores on specific cognitive tasks. For example, males out-perform females at visual-spatial tasks which are thought to complement mathematical problem-solving, while females excel at certain verbal tasks (Neisser, 1996).

In our society academic performance is considered as a key criterion to judge one's total potentialities and capacities. Hence, academic performance occupies a very important place in education as well as in the learning process. Academic performance has become an index of individual's future in this highly competitive world. Academic performance has been one of the most important goals of the educational process. It is also a major goal, which every individual is expected to perform in all cultures, Academic performance is a key mechanism through which adolescents learn about their talents, abilities and competencies which are an important part of developing career aspirations, academic performance and career aspirations in adolescent are often correlated (Abu-Hilal 2000 p.12).

Immediate performance of a learner can be seen by the instructor or learner after natural and smooth completion of a sequence of learning process (Gagne, 1977). Grades obtained in examination indicate candidate's ability, mastery of content and skills in applying knowledge to particular situation (Bourne, 2007). According to Freeman (2004) academic performance is a key measure of school success, because high performance in school open doors to further education and to well-paying jobs. The author further stressed that for females to have the same opportunities as males in education and labour market, it is important for them to be equally well prepared academically. Authentic academic performance covers individuals' academic abilities and skills in applying practical abilities (Bourne, 2007).

Academic performance refers to indicators or the interpretation of the test result which imply a comparison of sample behaviour. The comparison can be one sample behaviour with another taken at different point in time or with that taken from another students or group of students (Capper, 1996). On the concept of academic performance, Ebel (1979) defines academic 'performance as assessment out-come of a formal instruction in cognitive domain within a defined subject matter is clearly taught Striker, Rock and Bennet (2001) sees academic performance as work or function which an individual indicates as his or her abilities, motives, interest and personality traits. Thus, it predicts what an individual will archive in future. The researcher further stress that better academic performance at early stage of the school career predicts accomplishments in later stages of career as well as after leaving schools.

### **Previous Studies**

The social and the economic component of socio-economic status, in other words, may have distinct and separate influence on educational outcomes. While both components are important, social factors (for instance, parent's educational attainment) have been found to be more significant than economic factors, such as a family's capacity to purchase goods and services in explaining different educational outcomes. It is argued that families where the parents are advantaged socially educationally and economically foster a high level of achievement in their children. They also may provide higher levels psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school (Williams 1993). Earlier investigations have revealed that an individual's background characteristics affect his/her cognitive and non-cognitive behaviours (Xixia, 1999). In her study indicated that gender is one of the most significant and influential characteristics in academic performance

The effect of parental involvement in their children's school has on academic performance is less clear (Domina 2005). Parental involvement in school has been linked to both positive and negative influences on academic achievement. It is through that type of involvement may make a difference and that in some cases parents become involved after their child has already had academic difficulties (McNeal 2001). Other recent

research has found more conclusively that while parental involvement may not help academic scores. It does help prevent behavioural problems (Domina 2005).

Maternal characteristics are another key factor that affect academic (Eamon 2005). Mothers who are more educated and have higher self-esteem have children who receive higher test scores. Also mothers who delay childbearing have been shown to provide more “cognitively stimulating” and supportive environments at home which has a positive effect on school performance (Eamon 2005). Similarly family size has been linked with higher academic achievement. Students with fewer siblings are likely to receive more parental attention and have more access to resources than children from large families. The additional attention and support lead to better school performance (Eamon 2005).

Studies on the relationship between self-concept and students’ academic performance in educational settings have been a major focus of research for many years (Hamachek, 1995). Most of these researches have supported the belief that there is a persistent and significant relationship between self-concept and academic performance and that a change in one seems to be associated with a change in the other. In a major longitudinal study Broker, Erickson and Joiner as cited in Hamachek (1995), in his study investigated the relationship between self-concept of ability and academic performance of more than 1000 male and female students from the time they started seventh grade to the time they completed 10<sup>th</sup> grade. They found out that self-concept was a significant factor in achievement at each grade level studied.

A study by Marsh (1993) found out that the relationship between self-concept and academic performance is very specific. General self and non-academic aspects were found not to be related to academic performance while general academic self-concept was related moderately to academic performance measures. Specific measures of subject-related self-concepts were found to be highly related to academic success in that content area. Research has also supported the view that academic self-concept and academic achievement are mutually reinforcing to each other to the extent that a positive (or negative) change in one facilitates a commensurate change in the other.

### **Statement of the problem**

The problem of poor academic performance is evidenced by the large number of students who come for reseating and carry over courses to the next level of the study. For instance, a study carried out by Pindar (1999) indicated that a total of 181 students out of the 338 final year Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) students of Kashim Ibrahim College of Education Maiduguri during 1993/1994 academic session could not graduate that session because they failed at least one course each. During the 1994/95 session, out of the 549 final year Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) students, 317 could not graduate because of the same problem. The problem of the Nigerian educational system is that students are not taught in a way that enhances creative thinking and assessment procedures do not reward creativity. This is a serious challenge to our educational system especially in the Colleges of Education.

The researchers observed over the years that a large number of NCE students proceed to next level with weak grades, carry over courses and some were even withdrawn from the College because of poor performance. In the end, the NCE graduates will be employed to teach at the primary and junior secondary school levels of education. In addition, if the NCE students are performing badly there is the possibility that those taught by these students will perform badly academically. The quality of education provided in any society and the nature of change effected by education are both dependent on the quality of teachers and by the effectiveness of their teaching.

On N.C.E. students’ self-concept, the researchers have observed that many students in Colleges of Education come from low income earning families. They lack enough money to support themselves in meeting their physiological, social, emotional and psychological needs. This implies that some of them come to class without even taking breakfast. Not all of them attend parties and other gatherings for lack of good dresses that they could use to attend parties or various occasions. When the need to contribute to the clubs and societies arises, they fail to provide as required and this state of affairs makes the student socially withdrawn and develops poor self-concept about him/herself. They seldom feel that they are not important as compared to their colleagues who possess good things of life.

Gender issue has become the talk of today’s forum. Although the literacy rate is more among the boys than girls, it is quite interesting to observe that girls are securing better ranks than boys in almost all competitive examinations. From the last ten years, it is very fascinating to find note to the girls figure to be more often in top ten two ranks in tenth class annual examination. Earlier some of the researches reported that intelligence was the only factor that causes gender variations among high achievers. (Robinson, 1965). Latter some attributed familial factors like parental aspiration beliefs and their socio economic status as the main factor that cause age and gender difference among high achievers.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study is to determine:

1. Examine whether there is any gender difference in students' self-concept and academic performance in Colleges of Education in Borno State.
2. Examine whether there is any gender difference in students' socio-economic status and academic performance in Colleges of Education in Borno State.

### Research Questions

1. Is there any gender difference in students' self-concept and academic performance in Colleges of Education in Borno State?
2. Is there any gender difference in students' socio-economic status and academic performance in Colleges of Education in Borno State?

### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in this study

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant gender difference on students' academic performance based on their parental socio-economic status in Colleges of Education in Borno State.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant gender difference on students' academic performance based on their self-concept in Colleges of Education in Borno State.

### Methodology

The research design for this study is survey. Survey according to Ary, Jacob, and Razaviah (1979) sought to obtain information from people concerning current status of phenomena or events over a period of one year. Furthermore, survey according to Kerlinger and Lee (2000) are generalized means of data collection through interviews or questionnaire. The targeted population for this study was 4,517 students who have registered in Colleges of Education in Borno State. According to the Ministry of Higher Education, Borno State (2014), there were 4,517 students registered to pursue Nigeria Certificate of Education in Borno State Colleges of Education during 2013/14 academic session. The institutions are; Umar Ibn Ibrahim College of Education Science and Technology Bama, College of Education, Waka Biu and Kashim Ibrahim College of Education, Maiduguri. Table 1 shows the three NCE awarding institutions and their number of students across levels during 2013/14 academic session.

**Table 3.1: Total Number of Registered Students in Three NCE Awarding Institutions in Borno State by Level and Gender**

S/N	College of Education	N.C.E I		N.C.E II		N.C.E III		N
		M	F	M	F	M	F	
1.	Kashim Ibrahim College of Education, Maiduguri	511	338	453	313	200	151	1,966
2.	Umar Ibn Ibrahim College of Education, Science and Technology, Bama	402	204	336	179	136	74	1,331
3.	College of Education, Waka Biu	201	311	313	303	41	51	1220
<b>Total</b>								<b>4517</b>

**Sources:** Exams and record offices of three Colleges of Education, Borno State.

A sample of 322 NCE III students was chosen from two Colleges of Education, Umar Ibn Ibrahim College of Education, Science and Technology, Bama and Kashim Ibrahim College of Education Maiduguri, Borno State. Two NCE awarding institutions were selected because of the insecurity in the area, NCE III was chosen in this study because they have stayed longer in their respective Colleges and might have gone through all the NCE I and II Education courses. The choice of a sample size for a study depends on the degree of accuracy the researcher wishes to have over their generalizations. The larger the samples size the more the generalization that can be made about the population from which the sample is drawn. (Cohen & Holliday 1996).

The following stages were followed to draw the sample for this study. Stage one, purposive sampling technique was used to select two Colleges of Education in Borno State, because of the insecurity in the area, purposive sampling technique was considered appropriate for this study because Bamidele, Seweje and Alonge (2002) said that in purposive sampling, the researcher can carefully and consciously choose the elements to be included in the sample so that the sample can be developed to suit the researcher's needs. The assumption is that, with sound judgement based on expertise, an appropriate element can be selected which is typical or representative of the population. Stage two, the Krejcie and Morgan's (2006) principles of determining sample size for research activities was used to determine the sample size.

**Table 2: Sampled NCE III Students from the Two Colleges of Education, by Gender**

S/N	College of Education	Sample of M/F		
		M	F	N
1	Kashim Ibrahim College of Education, Maiduguri	101	85	186
2	Umar Ibn Ibrahim College of Education, Science and Technology, Bama	97	39	136
<b>Total</b>				<b>322</b>

Table 2 shows the two sampled Colleges of Education in Borno State

The instruments used in this study were: Socio-Economic Status Questionnaire (SESQ), Students Self-concept Scale (SSS) and Students' Academic Performance Aptitude Test (SAPAT). Descriptive statistic was used to report all the instruments used in this study and t-test was used to analyzed the hypotheses raised in this study to test the differences between gender of students' socio-economic status, self-concept and academic performance in Colleges of Education in Borno State at .05 level of significance.

### Results

H0<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant gender differences in students' socio-economic status and academic performance of students of Colleges of Education in Borno State.

**Table 3: Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and 'r' Value of gender differences in students' Socio-economic Status and Academic Performance of Students of Colleges of Education in Borno State.**

Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	Cal. r	p-value	Decision
<b>Socio-economic status</b>	322	22.38	3.96	320	.300**	.000	S (H0 <sub>1</sub> rejected)
<b>Academic Performance</b>		25.97	4.40				

\* Correlation is significance at 0.05 levels (2-tailed)

Table 3. shows the relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of students in Colleges of Education in Borno State. The analysis revealed a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 22.38 and Standard Deviation (SD) of 3.96 with degree of freedom (df) of 320 and (N) 322 for socio-economic status and a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 25.97 and Standard Deviation (SD) of 4.40 for academic performance with degree of freedom (df) of 320 and 322 number (N) of respondents. The observed cal. r = .300\*\* at P<0.05 level of significance. Thus, it indicated a positive and significant relationship. This implies that there exist relationship between student's socio-economic status and academic performance; therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

H0<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant gender difference in students' self-concept and academic performance in Colleges of Education in Borno State.

**Table 4: Mean Scores, Standard Deviations and t-value of Gender Difference in Students' Self-concept and academic performance in Colleges of Education in Borno State.**

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Df	t- value	p- value	Decision
<b>Male</b>	188	27.49	.905	320	-3.45	.1795	NS (H0 <sub>2</sub> accepted)
<b>Female</b>	134	27.44	1.073				

**Source: Researcher's fieldwork, 2013.**

Table 4.14 shows gender differences in students' self-concept in Borno State College of Education in Borno State. The analysis revealed a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 27.49 and Standard Deviation (SD) of .905 with degree of freedom (df) of 322 and N 188 for male students, a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 27.44 and Standard Deviation (SD) 1.073 with degree of freedom (df) of 322 and N 134 for female students respectively. The observed t- value of -3.45 compared with p- value of .1795. This implies that there was no significant difference between self-concept and gender in Colleges of Education in Borno State. Therefore; the null hypothesis was accepted.

### Discussions

The results of the hypothesis one, indicated that there was significant differences exist between gender and socio-economic status among the students of Collages of Education in Borno State, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The findings of this study agree with the findings (Neisser, 1996) who in his study revealed that sources of gender differences in educational outcomes have been the subject of considerable study and debate. One particularly contentious issue involves the possible role played by biological differences between males and females. Test of general intelligence suggests that there are no overall differences between males and females. However, there do appear to be large gender differences with respect to overall age scores on specific cognitive tasks. For example, males out-perform females at visual-spatial tasks which are thought to complement mathematical problem-solving, while females excel at certain verbal tasks

In testing hypothesis two, which stated that there is no significant gender difference in students' self-



concept and academic performance in Colleges of Education in Borno State, the null hypothesis was accepted. The result indicated that there was no significance difference between self-concept and Gender of students. The study disagreed with Morgan and Eluland (2006) who in their studies on effect of self-concept on girls and boys mathematics achievement found that significant higher Mathematics self-concept than boys.

### Recommendations

1. That there was significant differences exist between gender and socio-economic status among the students in Colleges of Education in Borno State. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. In view of that, state government need to increased student scholarship since the findings indicated that most of the students who attend Colleges of Education come from poor family.
2. There was no significant difference between gender and self-concept of students of Colleges of Education in Borno State. Since the differences is positive, the College authority should promote the social needs of the students through organizing parties and providing common rooms and cafeteria facilities in the Colleges and from time to time invite some comedians to display their talents for the students' recreation. Physiological needs of students were found not encouraging because it ranked one of the least. If physiological needs are not available there is going to be total failure of college programme. This is because, it is the most important needs of living organism that is why Maslow placed it as the lowest needs and if it is absent nothing can be achieved inform of learning and self-concept (hungry man is angry man) if hunger is not quench no other needs could emerge that is why even safety can be risked to quench hunger.

### Counselling Implications

1. That there was significant difference between socio-economic status and gender among the students in Colleges of Education in Borno State. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Considering that, counsellors should provide techniques to students to adjust to the new environment and perform better in academics.
2. There was no significant difference between self-concept and gender of students in Colleges of Education in Borno State, therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted, thus, there is the need for College counsellors to promote the social needs of the students through encouragement so that the students should improve their academic self-concept.

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