Influence of Parental Socio-Economic Status on academic achievement of Students in Selected Schools in Nigeria: A case Study of Enugu State.

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Abstract

This paper explores the issue of parental socio-economic status on students' academic achievement in secondary schools, the relationship between home-based environment factors and the academic performance of students in selected secondary schools within a local government area in Enugu State is investigated. Samples were obtained with one hundred and eighty (180) students randomly selected from three secondary schools. The four factors that were examined and statistically analyzed were: parental socio-economic background, parental educational background, parental educational qualification and students' health statuses. Diverse statistical tests were performed on the various data collected to establish statistical significance of the effects on students' academic performance. Parental socio-economic status and parental educational background did not have significant effect on the academic performance of the students. However, the parental educational qualification and health status of the students were identified to have statistical significant effect on the academic performance of the students. The two variables that indicated significant influence do reflect nature of the student home environment and played notable role in the academic achievement of the respondents. Government could intervene to raise level of academic achievement among students in rural area.

Introduction:

 Education not only provides knowledge and skills, but also inculcates values, training of instincts, fostering right attitude and habits. According to Muhammed and Muhammed (2010) they are of the opinion that, cultural heritage and values are transmitted from one generation to another through Education. The responsibility of training a child always lies in the hand of the parents. This is congruent with the common assertion by sociologist that education can be an instrument of cultural change which is being taught from home is relevant in this discuss. It is not out of place to imagine that parental socio-economic background can have possible effects on the academic achievement of children in school. Whatsoever affect the developmental stage of children would possibly affect their education or disposition to it. Parental status is one of such variables. When a woman's nutritional status improves, so too does the nutrition of her young children

"Parents of different occupational classes often have different styles of child rearing, different ways of disciplining their children and different ways of reacting to their children. These differences do not express themselves consistently as expected in the case of every families, rather they influence the average tendencies of families for different occupational classes." (Rothestein, 2004).

In line with the above assertion, Hill et al. (2004) had also argued that socio-economic status of parents do not only affect the academic performance, but also makes it possible for children from low background to compete with their counterparts from high socio-economic background under the same academic environment. Moreover, Smith, Fagan and Ulvund (2002) had asserted that significant predictor of intellectual performance at age of 8 years included parental socio-economic status (SES). In the same vein, other researchers had posited that parental SES could affect school children as to bring about flexibility to adjustment to the different school schedules (Guerin et al., 2001). The same view is shared by Machebe (2012), in her research, concluded that, parental socio-economic status could influence academic performance of their children at school. In a previous local finding in Nigeria, Oni (2007) and Omoegun (2007) had averred that there is significant difference between the rates of deviant behaviour among students from high and low socio-economic statuses.

The health status of the children which could also be traceable to parental socio-economic background can be another factor that can affect the academic performance of the students, Adewale (2002) had reported that in a

rural community where nutritional status is relatively low and health problems are prevalent, children academic performance is greatly hindered. This assertion is again hinged on nature of parental socio-economic background. Moreover, Eze (1996) had opined that when a child get proper nutrition, health care, stimulation during pre-school years, the ability to interact with and take optimal advantage of the full complement of resources offered by a formal learning environment is enhanced.

The foregoing discussion had established that socio-economic status and host of other factors relating to home environment of students, such as educational background of parents, health status of students, parental occupation and family size could have effects on children academic achievement.

It is against this background that this work is being undertaken to empirically investigate the possible effect of these factors on students' academic achievement in selected schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

This study is being undertaken with the following objectives.

   a.   To find out the effect of parental financial status on students' academic performance.
   b.   To determine the effect of educational status of the parent on academic performance.
   c.   To determine the impact of educational qualification on students' academic performance.
   d.   To find out if there is any link between statuses of students and the academic performance.

Significance Of This Study

It is envisaged that the findings of this study may expose some factors that might be responsible for poor performance of students' in school. The identified areas where government at different levels could come in to bridge the gap of educational attainment of children from low and high income earned backgrond in the society. The importance of achieving the objectives of education programmed among the general populace cannot be over emphasized. A researcher, Laosa, had posted as follows:

> "The educational achievement gap has deep root, it is evident very early in child's lives, even before they enter schools. Socio-economic differences – such as health and nutrition status, home environments that provide access to academically related experiences, mobility rates, and financial assets can certainly influence academic achievements" (Laosa, 2005:5).

Research Hypothesis.

   1   Parental socio-economic status does not have significant effect on the academic achievement of students.
   2   Parental educational background has no significant effect on students' academic achievements.
   3   Parental qualification has no significant effect on the academic achievement of students.
   4   Health status of students has no significant on the academic achievement of students.

Materials and Methods.

Population and Sampling Procedure.

The population of the students under the study was made up of both males and females in three senior secondary schools. Sixty students were randomly selected from each of the schools, thus one hundred and eighty (180) students came under the study. Random sampling was used for convenience in the selection of schools and respondents using table of random number. In the selected schools, three consecutive ends of term examination results were obtained for twenty students from each of senior classes, 1, III and III. Information relating to parental background and students. Questionnaire to elicit relevant information about the demographic data of the students (age, gender), parental financial status, parental educational background and qualification as well as the health statuses of the respondents was used.

Statistical Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using frequency count, percentage for variables such as age and sex. The hypotheses generated from the beginning were tested using t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and pair – wise turkey test comparison at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Data Analysis

The data collected is presented in tabular format for the purpose of analyzing them to expose the major finding in conformity with the null hypothesis earlier formulated. The data obtained were statistically analyzed using the t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), pair – wise comparison using turkey test at 0.05 level of significance. The demographic data were presented using frequency and parentage.

Demographic Data

The demographic data of the respondents are shown in table 1 below. This reveals that female were 99 (55%), while male were 81 (45%). The age range of the respondents were divided into three group for convenience. The respondents that fall within the age range of 11-14 years 32 with 17.8%, respondents that are from 15 – 18 years were 108 with 60% while other respondents falls between 19 and above were 40 and 22%.

TABLE 1. Demographic data of the respondents.

	SEX		AGE		RANGE
	Male	Female	11 – 14	15 – 18	19 & above
Frequency	81	99	32	108	40
Percentage	45	55	17.8	60	22.2

The Results Of The Analyzed Data On The Four Hypotheses

The results of the analyzed data on the hypothesis are given below.

1.   Parental socio-Economic Status: Parental socio-economic status has no significant effect on the academic performance of students as shown in the table II.

TABLE II. The mean scores of students in academic performance and parental socio-economic status.

Source of Variation	N	X	S.D	MD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision (0.05)
High	67	53.4	12.06					
Low	113	52.3	11.13					

NOTE: N.S means not significant at 0.05 levels.

The mean score of student's performance of high and low parental socio-economic statuses as shown in Table II reveals that parents economic statuses had no significant impact in student's ability to perform well academic study. This is because the calculated t-value in 1.96. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant influence is retained. Though the mean secure of students of high parental socio-economic status. The mean difference of 1.10 was however not statistically significant. It can therefore be interfered that parental socio-economic status might still be a factor that can influence student academic performance.

2.   **Parental Educational Background:** Parental educational background has no significant effect on students' academic performance. The result of t-test calculated in this respect is given in table III.

Table III. Parental educational background and mean scores of students' academic performance.

Score of variation	N	X	S.D	MD	DF	T-CAL	T-CRIT	DECISION (O.05)
Educated	108	59.8	13.11	1	178	1.22	1.96	N.S
Not educated	72	45.2	11.61					

Result of the analyzed data as shown in the table above reveals that the calculated t-value of 1.22 is less than the t-tabulated of 1.96. This implies that parental background has no significant influence on students academic performance in the study area, therefore the null hypotheses of no significant difference is retained. However, the mean scores of students from educated parents were higher than scores of students from not-scores of students from not-educated parents. This is an indication that parental educational background still play minimal role in student's ability to perform academically.

3.   **Parental Qualification:**   Parental qualification has no significant effect on academic performance of students under the study. The results of the one – way ANOVA are given in Table iv below.

TABLE IV. The parental academic qualification and academic performance of students.

Source variation	SS	DF	MS	F-RATIO	F-CRIT	CONCLUSION (0.05)
Treatment	445.00	2	222.5			
Residual	5127.27	177	28.95			
Total	5570.27	199				

Significant at 0.05 level, F = 3.00

Since the calculated F-value (7.68) is greater than the critical value (3.00), the null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level at 2,177 degree of freedom. This means that parental qualification has significant effect on students' academic performance in school. The post – ANOVA pair-wise comparison was carried out to identify the specific pair(s) that was significantly different the Table V is result of this analysis.

TABLE V. The pair-wise t-test comparison of academic performance in school by groups.

Group being compared	Mean Difference	Group means	Table value of Studentised range (g)
Tertiary vs., primary	62,4-51,2	T(62.4a)	**3.32**
Tertiary vs., secondary	62,4-53,2	S(52,2b)	
Secondary vs., primary	52,2-51,2	P(51,1b)	

Significant at 0.05 levels, df of 197, critical value of 3.32. Figures of parenthesis within the same column followed same letters are not significantly different.

From table v, it could be observed that all the pairs are significantly different except secondary versus primary versus primary where the mean difference score of 2.00 is not greater than they value of studentised range (3.32). This implies that academic performance of students from parent with post-secondary school qualification was better than that of students from parents with either secondary or primary qualification however, performances of the students. The result of the one-way ANOVA test of various categories of health statuses in relationship to the academic performance of the students is given in tables VI.

TABLE VI. Academic mean scores of students in relationship to the health statuses.

Source of Variation	SS	df	Ms	f-ratio	f-crit	Conclusion
Treatment	583.06	2	291,53	10,34	3.00	S
Residual	4987.21	177	28.17			
Total	5570.27					

Significant at 0.05 level: F=3.00, since the calculated F – value (10.34) is greater than the critical F – value (3.00). The null hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 level of significant. This implies that health status of students as a significant effect on academic performance of the students. Main impact of health status on students' academic performance in school. The post ANOVA pair-wise comparison was conducted to isolate the specific pair (s) that was significantly different. The statistical analysis that reveals this assertions is given in Table VII.

Table VII. Pair-wise t-test compassion of academic performance of students and various categories of health status.

Group being compared	Mean differential	Group means	Table of value of studentised range (g)
Never Vs, Often	Differential	Means	3.33
NEVER Vs Occasional	61.0-51.1	Nev. (51.1b)	
Often Vs, Occasional	61.0-509	Oft. (50.9b)	

Note occ.= occasionally sick: oft= significant at 0.05 level df at 177: critical value of 3.32. Figures in parenthesis within the same column follow by same latter are not significantly different.

The table VII above shows the pair-wise t-test method comparison of the mean scores of the treatment groups, i.e. the health statuses of students and the academic performance. Statistically there is significant difference between occasionally sick and each of the remaining two treatments in favor of occasionally however, there was a significant difference between never and often sick for achievement of standard performance.

Summary of Findings.

The first two hypothesis i.e. academic performance of students in relationship to the parental socio-economic background and education background were not statistically significant. However, the students' mean score was observed to be higher with educated parents and high socio-economic status compared with students from parents of low socio-economic status than the students from not educated parents and low economic status.

The last two hypothesis i.e. performance of students relationship to parental qualification and student health statuses revealed statistical significant factors that affect the students' academic performance. These two variables nonetheless indicate nature of home environment of students which necessarily affect academic performance.

Discussion.

The result of the two hypotheses which examined the parental socio-economic statuse and educational background and the effects on students' academic performance indicated that there was significant relationship. This finding differs from what was obtained by other researchers. Eze (2002), Craig Ronald (2003), Hill et al (2004) and Rothstein (2004), had asserted that status of parents does not only affect the academic performance of students but also make it impossible for children from low socio-economic background to compete well with their counterpart from high socio-economic background under the same academic environment.

They had also posited further that illiterate and semi-illiterate parent with feeling of inadequacy may not be able to their children out of different academic problems. Thus the academic performance of such children is greatly or significantly hindered.   There are two possible explanations that could be proffered to account for the variation from the previous findings. Firstly, this research setting which is purely rural, there is very marginal different in the socio-economic of the various parents. Secondly, it could be that the parents that were with low socio-economic background might be sufficient enlightened about the needed success of their children education in such a case, they assist and encourage their children to be adequately involved in their academic activities and hence provide them with basic needs that might enhance their performance in the same community both categories know each other and educating the children becomes competitive to close gap of disparity among the children in the same community.

It could generally be inferred that in spite of the none significance of the effect of the two factors being considered in the ongoing discussion, it is apparent that the variables still play slight role in the students' academic performance. This is because they still play slight role in the students' academic performance. This is because the mean scores of students from non-educated and educated on one hand and low socio-economic status and high status are sill relatively different, (see tables II and III).

The results of the third hypothesis as shown in tables IV and V indicate significant influence of parental qualification on students' performance. This finding substantiate the earlier assertion of Rothestein (2004) and Hill et. al. (2004) who had opined that children who raised by parents with higher qualification are more inquisitive toward learning toward learning compared to those children from low educational qualification. Moreover, according to Craig and Ronald (2004) "parental cognitive ability was substantially associated and parental education and parental occupation only trivially associated with offspring.

With regard to the finding on students' health status where there is significant impact on academic performance, this finding does not differ from the works of some previous researchers. Adewale (2002) had observed that where nutritional status and health problems are prevalent, children academic achievement are hindered. Moreover, Levinger (Quoted by Eze, 1996) had noted that when a child gets proper nutrition and health care, the ability to interact with and take optimal advantage of the full complement of resources offered by any formal or information learning environment is enhanced.

Conclusion.

It can be reasonably inferred that socio-economic and education background of parents in this research setting is not significant factors in students' academic performance. However, educational qualification of parent and health status of students' are significant factors that affect the academic performance of students.

Recommendations.

In view of the finding of this study, the following recommendations are here presented:

1. Social and economic policies should be put in place to enable children from parents of low economic status to have equal opportunity of advancing the cause of education their children.
2. Health acre services for lower class children should be made to narrow the gap of inequality in Nigerians and hence the attendant effects on the coming generation.
3. Parents who are not educated or has low educational qualification should Endeavour to allow their children to attend remedial summer coaching provided by non-governmental organization during holidays to supplement the regular school programmed.
4. The need for the intake of balanced diet should be emphasized. The government can do a lot in this regard by providing mid-day fortified meal for the school – age children.

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