

# Influence of Family Background on Academic Achievement of Students in Delta State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined family background and academic achievement of secondary school students in Delta State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the investigation. The study employed *x-post-facto* research design of correlation method. The population of this study consisted of 117196 which is broken down as 116719 senior secondary school (SS1-SS111) students and 477 principals in all the public secondary schools across the 25 local government area of Delta State during the 2021/2022 academic session. The sample for the study comprised 384 senior secondary school students. Stratified sampling technique and simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. Questionnaire and Academic Achievement Checklist (AAC) were the two instruments used for data collection for the study. The questionnaire was administered to respondent by the researcher with the help of two research assistants. Data analysis in answer to the first research questions were conducted using mean and standard deviation, The two research question was answered using Pearson coefficient of determination ( $r^2$ ). The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from the study showed that parents' level of education, and socio-economic status predicts students' academic achievement. There is a significant relationship between socio-economic status and students' academic achievement in Delta State public secondary schools. The study recommends that parents should continue to support their child academically so that they can be good and excellent academically.

## INTRODUCTION

The secondary level of education is well acknowledged as the foundation for higher knowledge in tertiary education. In Nigeria, the secondary level of education is the second phase of formal education after the compulsory six years of primary school. As a result, every parent and educator desires better academic achievement at this level of education. Academic achievement plays a significant role in both education and the learning process. In today's fiercely competitive environment, it has evolved into a predictor of a child's future.

Academic achievement is the amount of knowledge attained by a student in achieving their short- or long-term educational goals. Academic achievement is the knowledge of or competence attained in school tasks as measured by standardized tests and expressed in a grade. Bhat and Khandai (2015) defined academic achievement as the knowledge that students obtain in school subjects, usually determined by test scores assigned by the teacher. The importance of better academic achievement cannot be overemphasized. Academic achievement is important for the successful development of young people in society.

Studies (Alordiah, Akpadaka & Oviogbodun, 2015; Thomson, 2018; Ogbavwudu, 2022) have shown that

different variables do interact to influence students' academic achievement. These variables, among others, include parenting style, socio-economic status, and student's environment among others. However, academic achievement has been found to be influenced by several factors among which are family background and environment.

Educational level of parents is an indicator of socio-economic status which has direct influence on child's values and academic achievement in the school. The children from illiterate families may learn little or nothing from home that can help them develop interest in academics. This is in contrast to what is obtainable from children from literate families where parents provide conducive atmosphere for the formation of good study habits (Neulings and Brim 2020). Socio-economic status of parents could affect the academic achievement of students, prevalent in Nigeria is the condition of poor socio-economic status; this clearly defines the educational attainment of students, especially those from poor homes. Poverty has become a major feature in the economic life of most families; this is characterized by parents' inability to provide children/students with basic needs and even qualitative education. Antai as cited by James, Iwabe and Francis (2019) remarked that children with low background are often forced to drop out of school and join the army of street traders to provide whatever income they can for the family. What then would one expect in the academic achievement of such a child.

The researchers further iterated that children from high socio-economic status happen to be more creative than those of low socioeconomic status. This is because the children from high socio-economic status are brought up under democratic parenting methods, while those from the low socio-economic status are most likely to experience authoritarian parenting. Democratic control encourages creativity, by giving children more opportunities to press their individuality and pursue interest and activities of their own choice (James, Iwabe & Francis, 2019).

Adeniyi (2019) noted that parental level of income, socio-economic status of parents, family size and parental attitude is a prevailing problem among the students of secondary schools in both urban and rural areas, with likely negative effects on academic achievement.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The widespread recognition that the secondary level of education is the foundation for advanced knowledge in tertiary education has made high-quality secondary education more important than ever before. In secondary education, students' academic achievement is usually expressed in terms of a grade. A number of new findings stress the value of academic achievement, as it is associated with meeting the prerequisite requirement for admission into tertiary institutions as well as job placement. A number of studies have also indicated that students' academic achievement over the years is not very impressive. The problem of poor academic achievement is evidenced by the number of students who fail to obtain at least credit passes in core subjects like English Language and Mathematics in WAEC year in and year out (Ogbavwudu, 2022).

Poor academic achievement among students is indeed a thing of great concern to parents, teachers, school management, the government, curriculum designers, and, in fact, the general public. To this effect, a lot of research has in the past years investigated factors that affect students' academic achievement, ranging from social to psychological factors such as gender, socio-economic status, and the poor attitude of teachers. However, little research has been done to uncover the influence of parental education, parental level of income, socio-economic status of parents, family size and parental attitude and principals' administrative skills on academic achievement among public secondary school students, in Delta State. The problem of the study is: how do parental education, socio-economic status of parents, family size and parental attitude and principals' administrative skills predict academic achievement among secondary school students in the Delta State, Nigeria?

## Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. How does parental education affect academic achievement of secondary school students in Delta State?
2. How does socio-economic status of parents affect the academic achievement of secondary school students in Delta State?

## Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha levels

1. There is no significant relationship between parental education and academic achievement of secondary school students in Delta State public secondary schools.
2. There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status of parents and academic achievement of secondary school students in Delta State public secondary schools.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Parental education is a vital factor in dealing with root cause of poverty and under-development of children for effective living (Radhika, 2018). Grant (2017) stated that there is a direct link between parents' education and development. The study of grant revealed that the developed country show a high level of participation in education by parents. UNICEF (2012) opined that educated parents provide better nutrition for their families and their children survived the early year's health challenge through maternity, pre-natal and post -natal care. According to UNESCO (2014) poor and uneducated parents lack the information needed to provide proper care for their offspring, thereby increasing the risk of childhood illness and mortality. Educated parents always want their children to acquire better and rich education than they have achieved. Hence it is evident that an adequately educated parent will guide their children better than an uneducated parents.

Ahmad and Najeema (2013) suggested that children from families where parents have less education tends to perform systematically worse in school than pupils whose parents have more education. To him, educated parents provide intellectual, economical, psychological and emotional support to their children who in turn make them to be more comfortable and adjusted to their learning development, and this result in high academic performance. students from parents deducted a lot of time, energy, and money to help their children to perform well in academic activities. From the research finding, educated parents assist their children to do homework given to them by the school and even to prepare timetable for the children to follow in relation to their school works at home, and make sure they abide by it. They also provide more activities related to an academic development of their children to utilize the time available at home. In fact, by virtue of their educational background, they involve fully in their children' learning development. They also keep in touch with the school authority about progress or otherwise of their children education. These advantages mentioned made possible for these children to perform academically well than their counterpart from uneducated parents. The more supportive and conducive environment a child gets a more academic achievement would be attained.

James, Iwabe and Francis (2019) remarked that children with low background are often forced to drop out of school and join the army of street traders to provide whatever income they can for the family. What then would one expected in the academic achievement of such a child? of course, something relatively low. The researchers further iterated that children from high socio-economic status happen to be more creative than

those of low socioeconomic status. This is because the children from high socio-economic status are brought up under democratic training methods, while those from the low socio-economic status are most likely to experience authoritarian training. Democratic control encourages creativity, by giving children more opportunities to press their individuality and pursue interest and activities of their own choice (James, Iwabe & Francis, 2019). According to Shinali, Githui, & Thinguri (2014), almost 65% of Kenya children do not attend pre- primary school due to low economic status of parents. She observed that children from low income families are vulnerable to malnutrition and hence concentrating and remaining in school is hard.

Gemechu (2018) carried out a study on family socio-economic status effect on students' academic achievement at college of education and behavioral sciences, Haramaya University, Eastern Ethiopia. The results showed us that first, family income did not bring anything new to students' academic achievement. Adamu and Dikko (2017) study the investigation of the influence of family socioeconomic status, on the academic achievement of secondary school students in computer studies at Bauchi Metropolis. The study identified parental occupation as the main predictive variable, influencing student's academic achievement. However, increase in parental salaries in line with the current economic situation, as well as the provision of adequate books and facilities in schools, to breach the gap between the high and the low socio-economic status, are recommended in order to improve the academic achievement of students. The result of the data analysis shows that, socioeconomic background significantly influences self-concept and academic achievement of students.

Ouma (2018) carried out a study to find out the influence of parents' level of education on children's enrolment and participation trend in pre-primary schools. The study used descriptive survey research design. The study population was 53 pre- primary schools, 53 head teachers, 159 teachers and 3890 parents. The study sample was 277 respondents including 195 parents, 20 head teachers, 60 teachers and 2 sub-county ECDE coordinators. The study used interviews and questionnaires to collect data. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences and presented using tables, figures and test. The study established that there were 52.6% of the children enrolled. It was also confirmed that the majority of children not enrolled were girls (47.2%) compared to boys (41.3%). The level of education of parents was found to influence children's enrolment such that literate parents had a higher probability of enrolling children to school than illiterate parents. The study findings may enable parents to re-focus on their socio-economic activities by diversifying their sources of income and prioritize their expenditure to improve their children's education.

Socio-economic status (SES) is the way people are divided into groups in a society such that they have certain economic or/and social characteristics in common. Many families in Nigeria are poor; they often struggle with providing academic support for their children. Studies have reported that SES affects students' academic achievement (Udida, Ukwai & Ogodo, 2012; Barry, 2005; & Eamon, 2005). Likewise, studies have also found that SES does not significantly influence students' academic performance (Ogunshola & Adewale, 2012; & Abosede, 2008).

### **Socio-Economic Status and Academic Achievement**

Socio-economic status of parents could affect the academic achievement of students. Prevalent in Nigeria is the condition of poor socio-economic status; this clearly defines the educational attainment of students, especially those from poor homes. Poverty has become a major feature in the economic life of most families; this is characterized by parents' inability to provide children/students with basic needs and even qualitative education. Antai as cited by James, Iwabe and Francis (2019) remarked that children with low background are often forced to drop out of school and join the army of street traders to provide whatever income they can for the family. What then would one expect in the academic achievement of such a child? of course, something relatively low. The researchers further iterated that children from high socio-economic status happen to be more creative than those of low socioeconomic status. This is because the

children from high socio-economic status are brought up under democratic training methods, while those from the low socio-economic status are most likely to experience authoritarian training. Democratic control encourages creativity, by giving children more opportunities to press their individuality and pursue interest and activities of their own choice (James, Iwabe & Francis, 2019). According to Shinali, Githui, & Thinguri (2014), almost 65% of Kenya children do not attend pre-primary school due to low economic status of parents. She observed that children from low income families are vulnerable to malnutrition and hence concentrating and remaining in school is hard.

## METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study adopted *ex-post-facto* research design using correlation method. In the *ex-post facto*, the researcher had no control over the variables of interest and therefore cannot be manipulated. Okagbare et al (2023) opined that in *ex-post facto*, the researcher only finds out what have taken place aforementioned to observation on the field. The population of this study consisted of 117,196 senior secondary school (SS1-SS111) students and principals in all the 447 public secondary schools across the 25 local government area of Delta State during the 2021/2022 academic session. The population was obtained from the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (Exams and Standard).

The sample size of the study comprised 384 senior secondary school students. The sample size is in accordance with Krejcie and Morgan as cited in Dikoru (2021). In Krejcie and Morgan statistical table the sample size of a population above 100000 is 384 (See Appendix B). This is adequate for .05 confidence level. This statistical table was used to make sure that a controllable sample size from the population of the study.

Stratified sampling technique and simple random sampling technique was used to obtain the sample for the study. Using the stratification, the schools were stratified based on senatorial districts (Delta North, Delta Central and Delta South). Firstly, 10% of the entire schools in each of the senatorial districts will be selected. In other words, 17 secondary schools from Delta North, 19 secondary schools from Delta central and 12 secondary schools from Delta South summing up to make 48 public secondary schools in Delta state that was used. The simple random sampling techniques was employ to select 8 students from each of the sampled schools in the three senatorial districts of Delta State making up 384 sampled size.

The two instruments used for data collection were a questionnaire and an academic achievement checklist. The questionnaire was subdivided into three sections. Section A was designed to collect data on indicators of home background such as parent education (highest education level of father: primary school leaving certificate, SSCE, NCE, B.Sc. and above), socio-economic status (high, middle, and low). The validity of the instruments was established by three (3) experts in the department of Educational Management and Foundation, including the researcher's supervisor. They read through the items of the instrument and supplied comments and suggestions that were used to modify the instrument. The Cronbach Alpha was applied for the computation of the reliability coefficient of the four subscales of the instrument. The internal consistency reliability coefficient for the two subscales was 0.78 and 0.72.

**Research Question 2:** How does parental educational level affect academic achievement of secondary school students in Delta State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Parents' Level of Education on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Delta State.

Parent Education	N	Mean of Acad. Achievement	SD
FSLC	83	39.34	13.58

SSCE	129	40.05	12.28
NCE	80	45.58	15.50
B.SC/B.Ed.	92	51.88	11.36
Total	384		

Table 2 revealed that students whose parents have FSLC (First School Leaving Certificate) have a mean score and standard deviation of 39.34 and 13.59, respectively; students whose parents have SSCE (Senior Secondary Certificate Examination) have a mean score and standard deviation of 40.05 and 12.28, respectively. Students whose parents have an NCE (National Certificate of Education) have a mean score and standard deviation of 45.58 and 15.50, respectively. Students whose parents have a B.Sc or B.Ed. (Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Education) or other degree have a mean score and standard deviation of 51.89 and 11.36, respectively. In conclusion, based on the data, level of parents' education appears to affect students' academic achievement. Students with parents who have higher levels of education, such as B.Sc. or NCE, tend to have better academic achievement compared to those with parents who have lower levels of education, such as SSCE or FSLC.

**Research Question Two:** How does socio-economic status of parents influence the academic achievement of public secondary school students in Delta State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation State of Parents' Socio-economic Status on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Delta State

Parent SES	N	Mean of Acad. Achievement	SD
High	136	50.75	13.85
Middle	119	41.84	13.55
Low	129	39.15	18.45
Total	384		
Total	384		

Table 3 revealed that students whose parents have high SES have a mean score and standard deviation of 50.75 and 13.85, respectively; students whose parents are in middle SES have a mean score and standard deviation of 41.84 and 13.55, respectively. Students whose parents are in low SES have a mean score and standard deviation of 39.15 and 18.45, respectively. In conclusion, based on the data, socio-economic status of parents appears to affect students' academic achievement. Students with high socio-economic status parents tend to have better academic achievement compared to those with middle and low socio-economic status parents.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between parental education and academic achievement of secondary school students in Delta State public secondary schools.

Table 7: Pearson r on relationship between parents' education and students' academic achievement

		Parental Education	Students' Academic Achievement
Parental Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.248
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.043
	N	384	384

Students' Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.248	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.043	
	N	384	384

Table 7 shows Pearson r on relationship between parental education and students' academic achievement. The result revealed r- value of .246 which is greater than .043. This shows that the null hypothesis of there is no significant relationship between parental education and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State was rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship between parental education and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a significant relationship between parental socio-economic status and students' academic achievement in Delta State public secondary schools.

Table 8: Pearson r on relationship between Socio-economic Status of parents and Students' Academic Achievement

		Parents' SES	Students' Academic Achievement
Parents' SES	Pearson Correlation	1	0.462
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.132
	N	384	384
Students' Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	0.462	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.132	
	N	384	384

Table 8 shows Pearson r on relationship between parents' SES and students' academic achievement. The result revealed r- value of .0462 which is greater than .132. This shows that the null hypothesis of there is no significant relationship between parents' SES and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State is not accepted. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between parents' SES and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State.

**Parent Level of Education and Students Academic Achievement**

The finding shown in Table 2 revealed that students whose parents have First School Leaving Certificate (FSLC) have a mean score and standard deviation of 39.34 and 13.59, respectively; students whose parents have Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) have a mean score and standard deviation of 40.05 and 12.28, respectively. Students whose parents have an National Certificate of Education (NCE) have a mean score and standard deviation of 45.58 and 15.50, respectively. Students whose parents have a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Education (B.Sc. or B.Ed) degree have a mean score and standard deviation of 51.89 and 11.36, respectively. Therefore, the level of education of parents appears to affect students' academic achievement. Students with parents who have higher levels of education, such as B.Sc. B.Ed or NCE, tend to have better academic achievement compared to those with parents who have lower levels of education, such as SSCE or FSLC. This finding is in agreement with Ifelumi (2014) who found that parental level of education positively influenced children academic attainment and progress. Also that the finding agreed with Musarat (2013) who reported that mother education has significant influence in students' GPAs and Students whose mothers are highly educated have scored high GPAs. In addition, this finding on parent education and students academic achievement is supported by Ahmad and Najeema (2013) who found that educated parents provides more parental motivation that influences the students' academic performance through meeting the educational needs of their children and giving them children gifts whenever they perform well academically. In addition, the finding is in line with Norsuhaily, Mamat, and Ibrahim (2017)

who found that students whose parents are of high educational quality performed better than those whose parents are of low educational quality. The hypothesis tested showed that there is a significant relationship between parental education level and students' academic achievement in Delta State public secondary schools.

### **Socio-Economic Status of Parents and Students Academic Achievement**

The finding showed that students whose parents have high SES have a mean score and standard deviation of 50.75 and 13.85, respectively; students whose parents are in middle SES have a mean score and standard deviation of 41.84 and 13.55, respectively. Students whose parents are in low SES have a mean score and standard deviation of 39.15 and 18.45, respectively. In conclusion, based on the data, socio-economic status of parents appears to affect students' academic achievement. Students with high socio-economic status parents tend to have better academic achievement compared to those with low socio-economic status parents. The reasons adduced for this could be because students whose parents are high income earners have enough basic educational needs and conducive home environment for study and they are adequately supported in their learning by their parents. Such students their parents provide them with home lesson teachers and also assist them in doing their assignment. In addition, their parents provide them with nutritious diets which help to boost their health and reasoning. The hypothesis tested showed that there is a negative but significant relationship between socio-economic status of parents and students' academic achievement in Delta State public secondary schools. This study agreed with the study Adamu and Dikko (2017) who found that socio-economic background significantly influenced self-concept and academic achievement of students. The finding of this study contradicts those of Machebe and Odozi (2014) who found no significant influence of socio economic status of parents on academic performance of students.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study established a link between parental education level and students' academic achievement. Students' academic achievement increased with parents additional degrees. Similarly, the study proved that parents' socio-economic status significantly influenced academic achievement of students.

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