

## PARENTS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AS CORRELATE OF FAMILY COHESION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ADOLESCENT STUDENTS IN IMO STATE

**Dr. (Mrs.) E.C. Nnadozie & Mgboji, Andrew Njikokanma**  
Department of Life Science Education (Educational Psychology),  
Faculty of Education,  
Imo State University, Owerri,

### **Abstract**

*The study examined parents' socio-economic status as correlate of family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students in Imo State. This study was conducted using correlation research design through linear method. The population of the study comprised 47,201 (SS2) senior secondary school students in the 268 public secondary schools in Imo State. The sample size of 472 SS2 students was involved in the study. Random sampling technique was used for the study. The study made use of "family cohesion rating scale" and "socio-economic status inventory" for data collection. Draft copies of the instruments were validated. Cronbach alpha statistic was used to determine the reliability of the rating scale with an index of 0.84. Point-Biserial Correlation Coefficient was used to answer research questions while the hypotheses were tested using t-test of significance of correlation at a  $p < 0.05$  level of significance. It was found among others that there is a very high positive relationship between parental level of income and education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students. The study also revealed that the relationship is significant. It was therefore recommended that parents should ensure that there is high cohesion in their families as well as boosting their socio-economic status through education and higher income earning.*

**Keywords:** Parents' Socio-Economic Status, Family Cohesion, Adolescent

### **Introduction**

Adolescence period is one of the most critical stages of each person's life that even has been considered more difficult than childhood years; while in this period, adolescent tries to acquire an identity for himself. Therefore one of the significant duties of adolescent is identification (Behzadi & Sarvghad, 2015). With regard to the different and unique styles, the adolescent can be able to distinguish between himself from others (Hashemi & Razavi, 2008).

One of the important and linkable elements with identification and its styles in adolescents is the family cohesion; undoubtedly the formation of identity and individuality of each adolescent is influenced by inheritance and one's environment. An experience that an adolescent has with his family and especially with parents in the early part of life is as the important and determining factor of regulation and compatibility process during their maturity period and future life (Sharma, 2012).

Family is the first and most proper place of imprinting and it is the main focus of training and it acts like a dynamic system that, its members are interacting with each other constantly and they influence on each other reciprocally. Family is the most important social institute through which the training of the persons, personality are formed in it. For family to perform its main functions well, it requires security and tranquility to penetrate in it (Elham, 2016).

Universally, the families exist in all human societies and it is described as a social institution responsible for procreation, child rearing, and emotional and economic support for its members. It is also considered as a means for proper functioning of the society. Family dynamics play an important role on student adaptability, how they work, and the attitude that parents have towards the school context and school is relevant. Because each family has different characteristics in terms of its structure and relationships, the members that conform the family have a different performance with respect to the contexts in which they operate (Martinez & Alvarez, 2005). Family personality are the traits that characterize a family as a group, and explains how they interact and how their members behave, family functioning in turn is divided into some dimensions, depending on the perspective. According to Sarmiento, Vargas and Diaz (2012), a harmonious coexistence and good communication within a family can be key for all its members, as it must be kept in mind that what happens to the family affects positively or negatively to its members.

Cohesion as one of the most pertinent structures of family is an important dimension for attempting for reciprocal understanding among family members, alliance feeling, emotional link and commitment that the members of a family have to each other. Two qualities related to the cohesion in family include commitment (tendency to spend time and energy in family activities and prevent from negative effect) and spending time with each other (Sharma & Joshi, 2015; Elham, 2016). Emotional link and commitment, warmth of relations and emotions governed on cohesive families create this feeling in their children that are accepted by parents and the parents are sensitive and responsible to their demands. Naturally an adolescent who is groomed in a cohesive family feels the warmth of relations, existing love and

interest and responsibility feeling and members commitment to each other and consequently feels committed to the demands of other members (Zare & Samani, 2008).

Molina, Messoulam, and Schmidt (2006) define family cohesion as: the perceived emotional union by family members. This dimension can occur at high or low levels, the lower the cohesion, the members of the family will tend to feel more disconnected, so when a family is less cohesive its members tend to be less sensitive to the needs of others. Family cohesion is described as the emotional togetherness or separateness of members of the family (Hossein khazadeh, Esapoor, Yeganeh & Mohammadi, 2012). Cohesion is an important dimension for trying to understand interactions among family members. According to LaRon (2004) families with low family cohesion have adolescents with difficulties in various social environments; one of them is school and more precisely, their academic performance. The argument here is, if socio-economic status of parents of senior secondary school students relate with their level of family cohesion.

Socio-economic status is a definite background variable that represents a feature of the social structure in society. It is a fact that families where the parents are privileged educationally, socially and economically, promote a higher level of achievement in their offspring. They also give higher levels of psychological support for their children through enriched atmosphere that promote and encourage the development of skills required for success at school. The socio-economic status of a child is usually determined by parental educational level, parental occupational status and income level. It is understood that low socioeconomic status negatively and depressingly affects students' family cohesion and academic achievement because due to low socio-economic status, a student does not access to important resources and generates additional stress and tension at home (Eamon, 2005). According to Parson, Stephanie and Deborah (2001), socio-economic status is an expression which is used to link people's relative status in the community regarding family income, political power, educational background and occupational status. Saifi and Mehmood (2011), state that socioeconomic status is a combined measure of economic and social position of an individual or family relative to others on the basis of income, education and occupation. The researchers therefore ask: is there be any relationship between parents' socio-economic status and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students in Imo State?

The general purpose of this study was to examine parents' socio-economic status as correlate of family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students in Imo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain the relationship between parental level of income and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students,
2. determine the relationship between parental level of education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students.

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

- 1) What is the relationship between parental level of income and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students?
- 2) What is the relationship between parental level of education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students?

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** The relationship between parental level of income and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students is not significant.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Parental level of education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students has no significant relationship.

### **Method**

This study was conducted using the correlation research design through linear method. The population of the study comprise 47,201 (SS2) senior secondary school students in the 268 public secondary schools in Imo State. The sample size of 472 SS2 students was involved in the study. The researcher used simple random sampling technique for the study. For the purpose of data collection, the study made use of a family cohesion rating scale and socio-economic status inventory. Draft copies of the instruments were validated. Cronbach alpha statistic was used to determine the reliability of the rating scale which yielded an index of 0.84. The researchers visited the schools involved and administered the instrument to the respondents and patiently waited for them to fill their responses. At the end of the administration and collection, 461 was found to be usable while 11 copies were discarded because they were not properly filled, giving a 97.7 % return rate. Point-Biserial Correlation Coefficient was used to answer research questions while the hypotheses were tested using t-test of significance of correlation at a  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

## Results

**Table 1:** Summary table for Point-Biserial and t-test significance of correlation analysis for the relationship between parental level of income and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students

<b>n</b>	<b>r</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>df</b>	<b>t<sub>cal</sub></b>	<b>t<sub>tab</sub></b>	<b>Decision</b>
461	0.89	0.05	459	43.42	1.96	Do Not Retain H <sub>0</sub>

Table 1 shows the summary table for Point-Biserial and t-test significance of correlation analysis for the relationship between parental level of income and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students. The result of the analysis indicated that the correlation coefficient is 0.89 which means that there is a very high positive relationship between parental level of income and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students. The table was also used to test the hypothesis which indicated that the calculated t-cal of 43.42 is greater than the tabulated t-tab of 1.96 implying that the null hypothesis is not retained, concluding that the relationship between parental level of income and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students is significant.

**Table 2:** Summary table for Point-Biserial and t-test significance of correlation analysis for the relationship between parental level of education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students

<b>n</b>	<b>r</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>df</b>	<b>t<sub>cal</sub></b>	<b>t<sub>tab</sub></b>	<b>Decision</b>
461	0.90	0.05	459	45.40	1.96	Do Not Retain H <sub>0</sub>

Table 2 shows the summary table for Point-Biserial and t-test significance of correlation analysis for the relationship between parental level of education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students. The result of the analysis indicated that the correlation coefficient is 0.90 which means that there is a very high positive relationship between parental level of education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students. The table was also used to test the hypothesis which indicated that the calculated t-cal of 45.40 is greater than the tabulated t-tab of 1.96 implying that the null hypothesis is not retained, concluding that the relationship between parental level of education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students is significant.

### **Discussion of Findings**

It was found in this study that the relationship between parental level of income and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students is significant. This explains that parental level of income could influence the family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students. This implies that the relationship is certainly remarkable. This can be inferred that when there is high level of parental income, there is tendency that the family cohesion will be high as well, but if otherwise it may reduce. In consonance with this finding, Parson, Stephanie and Deborah (2001), revealed that socio-economic status is an expression which is used to link people's relative status in the community regarding family income, political power, educational background and occupational status. The similarities in the findings could be explained by the fact that both studies made use of similar statistical model.

The study also revealed that the relationship between parental level of education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students is significant. It was further concluded that the relationship established was significant. This is a confirmatory assertion of the influence of parental level of education on family cohesion. This explains that high education attainment could be used to bring family together. A harmonious coexistence and good communication within a family can be key for all its members, as it must be kept in mind that what happens to the family affects positively or negatively to its members, as the family is an integral system (Zare & Samani, 2008). Naturally an adolescent who is groomed in a cohesive family feels the warmth of relations, existing love and interest and responsibility feeling and members commitment to each other and consequently he also feels commitment for the demands of other members.

### **Conclusion**

Having studied the variables of parents' socio-economic status as correlate of family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students in Imo State, it is concluded in this study that there is a very high positive relationship between parental level of income and education and family cohesion of secondary school adolescent students. The study also revealed that the relationship is significant.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made in this study;

1. Parents should ensure that there is high cohesion in their families as well as boosting their socio-economic status through education and higher income earning.

2. In taking decision regarding family cohesion, socio-economic status of parents should be considered.

### References

- Behzadi, B., & Sarvghad, S. (2015). The relation of family cohesion and flexibility and identity styles with mediator role of metacognitive state in girl students. *Journal of New Psychological Researches*, 38(10), 49-74.
- Eamon, M.K. (2005). Social-demographic, school, neighborhood, and parenting influences on academic achievement of Latino young adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 34(2), 163-175.
- Elham, K. (2016). The relation between identity styles and family cohesion with tendency to the aggressive behaviors in students of boys high school in Qazvin City. *Biomedical & Pharmacology Journal*, 9(2), 799-808
- Hashemi, N. & Razavi, A. (2008). Studying and comparing the identity styles and the factors related to it in adolescent students who are martyrs, children. *Psychological-Educational Journal*, 4(13), 45-69.
- Hossein khazadeh, A.A., Esapoor, M., Yeganeh, T., & Mohammadi, R. (2012). A study of the family cohesion in families with mentally disable children. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 84(1), 749 – 753
- LaRon, K. (2004). *The influence of family cohesion, academic performance, and deviant peer involvement on adolescent delinquent behavior: A social psychological examination* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3120812).
- Martinez, R., & Alvarez, L. (2005). Fracaso y abandono escolar en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria: Implicación de la familia y los centros escolares. *Revista Aula Abierta*, 85(1), 127-146.
- Molina, M. F., Messoulam, N., & Schmidt, V. (2006). La familia como fuente de apoyo para un adecuado desempeño académico, *XIII Jornadas de Investigación y Segundo Encuentro de Investigadores en Psicología del Mercosur*, 1(1), 22-29.
- Parson, R. D., Stephanie, L. H. & Deborah, S. (2001). *Educational Psychology: A Practitioner- Researcher Model of Teaching*. Singapore: Thomson Learning Inc
- Saifi, S. & Mehmood, T. (2011). Effects of socio-economic status on students achievement. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Education*, 1(2), 119-128

- Sarmiento, C., Vargas, M., & Daíz, R. (2012). Diferencias en el rendimiento escolar por género asociadas al funcionamiento familiar de estudiantes de bachillerato. *Quaderns de Psicologia, 14*(2), 17-23.
- Sharma, A. (2015). Aggressive Behavior in University Students: The Role of Family Environment. *Advances in Asian Social Science, 3*(1), 622-628.
- Torres, L. E., & Rodriguez, N. Y. (2006). Rendimiento académico y contexto familiar en estudiantes universitarios. *Enseñanza e Investigación en Psicología, 11*(2) 255-270.
- Zare, M. & Samani, S. (2008). Studying the role of family flexibility and cohesion in goal-orientation of children. *Family-Researching, 4*(1), 17-36.