

## INFLUENCE OF PARENTAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL IN ABUJA

**Ufuoma V. Oyinvwi Ph.D**

Department of Educational Foundations

Faculty of Education

Nasarawa State University, Keffi

&

**Aromiwura Temitope**

Nigerian Prison Service F.C.T Command

### **Abstract**

*The study investigated influence of parental socio-economic status on the academic performance of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory. (F.C.T). Ex-post-facto research design was adopted. A sample of 560 students was used for the study. Cluster random sampling technique was used to compose the sample. Three research questions were answered and four hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Two instruments were used to collect data about the students. They included the parental socio-economic status Questionnaire (PSESQ) and the Students Performance Record (SAPR). Parental occupation, parental education and parental social-class were used to determine the parental socio-economic status of the students while Mathematic and English scores of the students was used to determine their academic achievement. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answered research questions while non parametric statistic of Chi-square was used to test the hypotheses. The finding revealed that parental education, occupation and social class influences academic achievement of students to a very large extent. It was therefore recommended among, others, that Government, non-governmental organisations and as well as well to do individuals should assist schools in the provision of instructional materials and school facilities so as to enable indigent students to take advantage of them to improve their achievement like their counterpart from wealthy and notable homes.*

**Keywords:** Influence, Parental Socio-Economic Status and Academic Performance.

**Introduction** It is the desire of parents and indeed, all stakeholders in education, that students achieve good examination results at the end of

educational pursuit. Hence, a lot of human and material resources have been committed to helping students achieve better results in their academic pursuit. Regrettably however, in spite of all efforts, noticeable downward trend in academic achievement among students is still quite visible.

The trend of poor secondary school students' academic achievement has been confirmed by examinations bodies like the West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examinations Council (NECO) and Joint Admission and matriculation Board, (JAMB) among others as well as other individuals and non-governmental bodies too. Gary (2001) laments the disappearance of academic excellence from Nigeria in the last two decades especially as evident in the yearly below average performance of thousands of students in final examination for secondary school students conducted by the West African Examination Council and National examination council as well as the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination.

The rate of failure in the compulsory subjects of Mathematic and English is very high in Federal Capital Territory. It has been observed that academic achievement of students in secondary schools in FCT kept declining on annual basis as only 55.34% of students scored five credits and above including Mathematics and English in (2013/2014 WAEC) result and the situation declined in (2014/2015) with 26-45% of the students with five credits and above including Mathematics and English and also a regrettable 24-43% in 2015/2016.

According to Olubule (2012), the socio-economic status (SES) of parent is most commonly determined by combining parental educational level, occupational status, and income. Parental socio-economic status refers to all the conditions and circumstances in the family which influence the child physically, intellectually and emotionally. Social class and economic status of the parents determine the type of school and the standard of training they desire for their children. Children coming from different parents with different socio-economic status are affected differently by such family conditions and that is why some children achieve highly academically while others do not. The task of human development which start from the family as the first agent of socialization is charged with the responsibility moral, spiritual, social, psychological and academic training.

The occupation or profession of the parents and whether parents are working or not-working, place a family on an advantageous or disadvantageous position to effectively evaluate their children's academic work and monitor their progress. Poor academic achievement and sometimes drop out syndrome noticed among young school students are most times

attributed to parents' inability to complement teachers and counselors in guiding and counseling children.

Parental educational attainment is claimed to be the most positive influential socioeconomic factor on children's academic achievement. This is so, as highly educated parents have been proven to usually know the significance of educational attainment which they inculcate in their children and they tend to lay much emphasis on it by encouraging their children to study hard. They provide them with necessary learning aid materials which Bourdieu (2002) refers to as the "cultural goods" like books, study desk and chair, interactive video disc, computers and other educational items that will aid and enhance learning at home and school.

Parental occupation usually determines the level of resources which parents are able to invest in their children's education. Parental occupation thus, is considered to guarantee learning opportunities and resources that plays significant role in learning outcomes. Thus, from the claims of the previous studies on parental occupation, it is credible to state that the higher the occupational status of parents, the richer their income and the more they are able to supply the educational needs of the children. However, parents of low occupation status and low income level tend to lay little emphasis on the provision of facilities in the homes for children's learning and they tend to lay relatively less emphasis on organized learning activities (Laureau 2003).

According to Sule (2013) the traditional sociologists divided social classes into three levels; of upper class, middle class and lower class strata. He stressed that the lower class consists of labourers and unskilled workers whose jobs demand little or no educational qualification. Though these people may work harder in terms of energy expenditure, physical effort and hours spent on their job, their economic reward is not as great as that earned by middle class workers. Also because the lower class families tend to be large in size in the Nigerian society, they tend to be in constant struggle with poverty life. The lower income parents may be aware of the importance of education in the society, but at the same time, they are also aware of their limited resources to measure up with such educational demands.

It has been observed by the researchers that parental ability and involvement in their children school affair differ. Some parents are able to provide educational materials like textbooks, uniform etc while other students cannot be provided for by their parents. Therefore the problem of this study put in question form is 'what is influence of parental social-economic status on academic achievement' of senior secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory?

Three research questions and three hypotheses were constructed and formulated to guide the study and they include

1. What is the influence of parental education on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory?
2. To what extent does parental occupation influence academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory?
3. What is the influence of parental social class on academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory?

1. There is no significant influence of parental education on students' academic achievement.
2. The influence of parental occupation on students' academic achievement is not significant.
3. There is no significant influence of social class on students' academic achievement.

### **Method**

The research design adopted is Ex-post-facto research design. According to Nwankwo (2016), Ex-post-facto is a research design that involves collecting and analyzing data about some variables which are already in place without manipulating them, in order to find out how some of them influence, or are related to other variables. It is suitable for this work because it will help to establish facts on how socio-economic status of parents influence academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory.

The population of this study is 8,760 which consists of all SS 1 students from the 49 secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory as revealed by the FCT Secondary School Board, Abuja (2017). The sample size is 560. Cluster and simple random sampling was used to compose the sample. The six Council Areas namely Abaji, Bwari, Gwagwalada Kwali and Kuje with the exception of Abuja Municipal were treated as cluster. Using simple random sampling technique of lucky dip method, 4 secondary schools each from the five Council Areas were randomly selected which gave a total of 20 schools.

Two instruments were used for this study. The first instrument was a self-developed questionnaire by the researcher and it is named parental socio-economic status inventory (PSESI). The instrument consist of 23 items which is group into two sections A and B. Section "A" is made of bio-data of the respondents such as parental education level, occupation, income and Section "B" is divided into four section capture with the indices of parental socio-

economic status. The Likert scale format questionnaire is structured into Strongly Agreed (SA) Agreed (A) (UD) Undecided, Disagree (D) and Strong Disagree (SD). The (PSESI) was administered to the students after which the sampling was done to enable the researcher identified student from high and low social economic status as captured in the sample. The second is the records of students' academic performance in Mathematics and English. To determine the reliability coefficients of the instruments, Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficients were used and result was 0.71.

The data generated from the study was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS v.20). This was done with the use of mean and standard deviation to answer research questions while non parametric statistic of Chi- square was used to test the proposed null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results**

Table 1: Cross-tabulation of parents' education background against students' academic performance

Parent Education Background	Academic Achievement									
	A		B		C		D		F	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Post Graduate	26	15.6	94	56.3	32	19.2	14	8.4	1	0.6
Graduate	58	31.2	35	18.8	58	31.2	30	16.1	5	2.7
ND/NCE	0	0.0	45	72.6	9	14.5	6	9.7	2	3.2
Post Primary	0	0.0	68	46.9	55	37.9	14	9.7	8	5.5
Primary	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 1 above shows that majority of the students from parents with post graduate educational background 56.3%, have academic performance of B while the minority of the students from parents with postgraduate educational background, 0.6% have academic performance of F. Majority of the students from parents with Graduate background 31.2% have academic performance of A and C while the minority of the students from parents with Graduate background, 2.7% have academic performance of F. Majority of the students from parents with ND/NCE educational background 72.6% have academic performance of B while the minority of the students from parents with ND/NCE educational background have 3.2% academic performance of F. Similarly, majority of the students from parents with post-primary educational background, 46.9% have academic performance of B while the minority of the students from parents with post primary educational background, 5.5% have academic performance of F. None of the students come from a background of

parents with primary educational status. The results on table 1 above suggests that parental education background reasonably influences academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory.

Table 2: Cross-tabulation of parents' occupation against students' academic achievement

Parent's occupation	Academic Achievement									
	A		B		C		D		F	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Teacher	62	29.1	52	24.4	59	27.7	35	16.4	5	2.3
Businessman	12	8.0	89	59.3	20	13.3	24	16.0	5	3.3
Civil Servant	11	7.0	73	46.2	67	42.4	5	3.2	2	1.3
Farmer	0	0.0	23	59.0	9	23.1	3	7.7	4	10.3

Table 2 above presents the cross tabulation result of parents' occupation against the academic achievement. The result shows that majority of the students who have teacher as parents 29.1%, have academic achievement of A as indicated by a percentage rating while the minority of the students from parents who work as teachers, 2.3% have academic performance of F. Majority of the students from parents who are into business 59.3%, have academic performance of B as indicated by percentage ratings while the minority of the students from parents who are into business, 3.3% have academic performance of F. Majority of the students from parents who work as civil servants, 46.2% have academic performance of B while the minority of the students from civil servant parents, 1.3% have academic performance of F. Similarly, majority of the students from parents who are into farming, 59.0% have academic performance of B but the minority of the students from parents who work as farmers, 7.7% have academic performance of D. The results on table 2 above suggests that parental occupation influences academic performance of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory.

Table 3: Cross-tabulation of parents' social class against students' academic performance

Parent's social class	Academic Performance									
	A		B		C		D		F	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Lower Class	0	0.0	72	45.9	60	38.2	17	10.8	8	5.1
Middle Class	72	21.2	164	48.4	70	20.6	26	7.7	7	2.1
Upper Class	12	18.8	0	0.0	45	70.3	6	9.4	1	1.6

From table 3 above it can be observed that majority of the students who have lower class social status parents 45.9%, have academic performance of B as indicated by a percentage rating while the minority of the students from parents with lower class social status, 5.1% have academic performance of F. Similarly, majority, 48.4% of the students from parents with middle class social status have academic performance of B, while the minority, 2.1% have academic performance of F. Majority, 70.3% of the students from parents with upper class social status have academic performance of C, while the minority, 1.6% have academic performance of F. The results on table 3 above suggests that parental social class also influence the academic performance of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory.

Table 4: Chi-square of Parents' Education and Students' Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	136.425 <sup>a</sup>	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	163.992	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	21.246	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	560		

a. 3 cells (15.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.77.

Table 4 above shows the result of the chi-square test whereby the;  $\chi^2=136.425, df=12$  and the  $p=.000$ . The  $p$  value .000 which was less than 0.05 level of significance indicated that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Hence, parents' education has significant influence on the academic performance of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory. From this finding, it is clear that the higher the education of parents, the higher the students' academic performance. This is because educated parents have the ability to assist their children with homework and above all they ensure that they have the required reading materials.

Table 5: Chi-square of Parents' Occupation and Students' Academic Performance

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	124.217 <sup>a</sup>	12	.000
Likelihood Ratio	130.744	12	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.234	1	.135
N of Valid Cases	560		
a. 4 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.11.			

Table 5 above also showed Pearson chi-square test whereby the;  $\chi^2 = 124.217, df = 12$  and the  $p = .000$ . The p value was .000 which was less than 0.05 levels of significance. This also indicated that the null hypothesis two will be rejected while the alternative is accepted. Hence, parents' occupation has significant influence on the students' academic performance at secondary school in the study area. This is because some occupations give room for the parents to assist their children with school work and pay them high enough to provide basic materials required by the students.

Table 6: Chi-square of Parents' Occupation and Students' Academic Performance

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	114.568 <sup>a</sup>	8	.000
Likelihood Ratio	156.710	8	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.120	1	.024
N of Valid Cases	560		
a. 2 cells (13.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.83.			

From Table 6, the Pearson chi-square test  $\chi^2 = 114.568, df = 8$  and the  $p = .000$ . The p-value .000 which was less than 0.05 levels of significance also indicate that the null hypothesis three is rejected while the alternative is

accepted. Hence, parents' social class had a positive influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in FCT Abuja.

### **Discussion**

The result of this study pointed to the fact that parental educational background influences academic achievement of students' evidence in the study as an increase in educational qualification of the parents' results in improvement in students' academic achievement in providing answer to research question and proposed null hypothesis one. This view was confirmed by Kainuwa and Yusuf (2003) that there is a consistent direct influence of educational qualification of parents on the children's cognitive and behavioural outcomes. Children from literate families where parents provide atmosphere conducive for the formation of good study habit are in better chance of performing well in schools. Again the result also agrees with Izundu (2005) who asserted that there is significant relationship between the level of parents' education and the academic achievement of the students. Again, Gary (2001) said that the importance of parental level of education to academic achievement of students cannot be over emphasized. According to him, students from professional and to a less extent managerial occupational backgrounds exhibit higher academic achievement in all subjects than their counter-part from less literate home.

Findings from this study also showed that occupation of parents equally influences academic achievement of students as demonstrated in achievement of the students in their examination which provide answer to research question two and hypothesis two as well and was eventually supported by Ezeji (2001) who noted that parents like their children to take to their occupations. Such parents include lawyers, doctors and musicians among others. Uwoma (2006) in her study was also of the opinion that most vocational students were children whose parents were farmers or craftsmen. This is because of the fact that most parents at times prefer their children to take over their establishment to avoid wastage of their wealth and ensure continuity and sustenance of their fame.

The study also indicated that parents' social class influences academic achievement of secondary school students to a large extent as revealed in the achievement of the students to provide answer to research question three and hypothesis three accordingly. Krueger (2004) evaluated various contributions on parents' background supports the view that financial constraints significantly affect educational attainment. Positive attitude to school will probably be encouraged by those parents who themselves attained a high level of western education and recognition. While the father is away, it is expected

that the mother takes care of the children at home and as such, the children are closer with their mother (Chevalier, Harmon, Sullivan & Walker, 2005). The educated mother, knowing the importance of education should as much as possible generate in the child interest and curiosity for education at an early age. With this, it is therefore necessary to agree with William (2005) view that children whose parents have more societal recognition and economic prowess score higher than children from less recognized personality parents on the intellectual curiosity which is positively associated with grades.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that parental occupation, education and social class of parents influence academic achievement of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended the following according to the research objectives of the study:

1. The Government (F.C.T Administration and the school should put in place appropriate system to enhance parental involvement in education by organizing seminars, giving talks during Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A) to enlighten parents about the importance of education and their involvement in the academic pursuit of their children because the study established that parents with low level of education frustrate their involvement in the student academic performance.
2. The government should boost the economic status of households in the Federal Capital Territory through investing in more income generating projects to assist farmers and low income earners.
3. School counselors should at all times counsel the students from lower income homes not to be discouraged to see their home as a limitation to their performance but to always strive to attain success irrespective of their family background.

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