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EFFECTS OF PARENTAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN SOME SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL SUBJECTS IN OYO STATE

By

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Abstract

The study investigated the effects of parental socio-economic status on students' performance in some senior secondary school subject in Oyo State. Two hundred and four SS2 students were randomly selected from twelve secondary schools. The twelve secondary schools were randomly selected from three senatorial districts of Oyo State. A structured questionnaire was used to collect information on the students' parental Socio-Economic Status. Also, a structured Score Recording sheet was used to obtain the students' 2008/2009 academic scores in the first term results in English language, mathematics, biology and government. The data was analysed, using descriptive statistics, ANOVA and T-test. The findings from the study revealed that students from low socio-economic homes performed better than those students from high and middle socio-economic homes in school subject, such as English language, Mathematics, Biology and Government. There is also no significant difference in the performance of students from monogamous homes and those from polygamous homes. Furthermore, the finding also revealed that family size does not have significant effect on students' performance in the school subject involved. The study therefore concluded that students from high, middle or low economic background should not take things for granted but must student hard in order to excel in their academic. The study then called on parents and Government to make the issue of education in the country a priority (*African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 8(3), April, 2009: 82 - 89).

INTRODUCTION

Education is the best gift a parent can give his children. Akanni (2006), asserted that education is the imparting of knowledge and the inculcation of norm and value of a society into a new generation. As a result of this, school is of paramount importance to any society. But, Johnson (2007) lamented that many parents have become poor due to some socio-economic measures adopted by the Nigerian government such that they can no longer provide adequately for good education of their children. Also some parents can no longer provide shelter, clothing and special needs of their children in school, such as provision of textbooks, good feeding and good medical care. Akanni (2006), also asserted that academic aspiration of a school child is positively related to the socio-economic status of the parents. Thus, stating that the poor performance of a child is a function of economic factor like coming from socio-economic disadvantaged home. However, this might not necessarily follow because ordinarily, some students from poor homes are known to study hard and come out excellently in their academics.

Sounding a note of warning, Yoloye (1971) noted that if adequate guidance of the Nigerian school child is to be effected, a closer look at the socio-economic background

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must be taken more seriously than has been done. But sadly enough, parents and guardians have never accepted being responsible for their child's academic failures. Danesty (2002) said that students' academic performance in our society is decreasing in rate when compared with what we had in the past. Perhaps, this is due to lack of necessary materials, human resources and experiences needed by the students, coupled with learning atmosphere that is not conducive for teaching and learning.

Furthermore, Campbell (2000) said that parents can play a more direct role in fostering their children's cognitive development and academic achievement by becoming involved in their children's educational activities. Campbell stressed that, parents who directly participate in their children's education by helping them with homework, reading to them and playing educational games tend to have children who excel at academically relevant tasks. Certain peculiarities of home background could also enhance or hamper performance of students at school. Such peculiarities include the kind of marriage, whether monogamous or polygamous condition of marriage, whether divorced, separated or intact marriage. In addition, Drake (2000) maintains that, schools and parent must cooperate and work collaboratively to improve the learning experience of all children. He stressed that the rationale behind parent involvement in education follows the reasoning that learning is most effective when there is congruence among school, home and community Carter (2002) strongly described the relationship between school and the home as being worlds apart, and that the gap must be bridged. Deutcher (2004) also stressed that the motivational factors of the home are parts of what children require in order to excel in their academic performance.

In his own opinion, Offaway (2007) noted that employment and occupational status determine the social class a person belongs. Children of parents who are professionals and senior civil servants are regarded as children from high socio-economic background, while children of parents who are craftsmen, artisans, farmers and illiterates are referred to as children from the low socio-economic background. One obvious influence of the socio-economic status of parents on the education of their children is noticed in the choice of schools their children attend. In Nigeria today, there are fee-paying schools, which are open to only parent who can afford it. Facilities in some of the fee paying schools as well as the quality of teaching staff tend to be of superior standard compared with what is available in some public schools attended by majority of children of parents in low socio-economic strata. Douglas (2004) shows that there is a correlation between family size and measure of intelligence.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

In Nigeria educational system today, students' poor academic performance is generating heated argument. Even, several studies have been carried out to find out the causes of students' poor academic performance. Despite all these researches and findings, problem of students' poor academic performance still persist. It is on this basis that this study sought to investigate the effects of parental socio-economic status on students' academic performance in some senior secondary school subjects in Oyo State. The study strictly sought to investigate the effects of parental socio-economic status on students' performance in four senior secondary subjects, namely, English Language, Mathematics, Government and Biology.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study seeks to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the general academic performance of students from high, middle and low socio-economic status in senior secondary school subjects in Oyo-State?
2. Is there any significant difference in the academic performance of students from high, middle and low socio-economic status in senior secondary school subjects?
3. Is there any significant difference in the academic performance of students from monogamous home and those from polygamous home in senior secondary school subjects?
4. Is there any significant effect of family size on students' academic performance in senior secondary school subjects?

METHOD

Purposive sampling technique was used to select four senior secondary schools (SS2) from each of the three senatorial districts in Oyo State. In all, twelve secondary schools [public and private] were selected. Seventeen SS2 students were randomly selected from each school, making a total number of two hundred and four students from the three senatorial distinct in Oyo State. The researcher developed two instruments which were a questionnaire and scores recording sheet. The questionnaire, titled "Effects of Parental Socio-Economic Status Questionnaire" (EPSESQ) was used for gathering information from the students. The questionnaire has two sections; sections A and B, and it contains 32 item. Section A is on the personal information about the respondents, and it has 12 items. Section B sought for information on the parental socio-economic status of the respondents, and it comprises 20 items. The instrument had reliability co-efficient of 0.74. The scores recording sheet is titled "Students Examination Scores Recording Sheet" [SESRS]. The scores recording sheet was used to collect students' first term examination scores in four subjects [Mathematics, English Language, Biology and Government]. Data collected were analyzed, using descriptive statistic of frequency and percentage with respect to the research question one. Analysis of variance [ANOVA] and t-test were used to test this study for significant differences and effects between the groups with respect to research questions two, three and four.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1

What is the general academic performance of students from high, middle and low socio-economic status home in senior secondary school subjects Oyo state?

Table 1: Description statistics showing Students Socio-Economic Status and Academic Performance in Mathematics, English Language, Biology and Government

1. High Socio-Economic Status

	Above Average	Percent	Average	Percent	Below Average	Percent
MATHS	5	9%	20	35%	32	56%
ENG	5	9%	32	56%	20	35%
BIO	6	10%	30	54%	21	36%
GOVT	14	25%	33	59%	09	16%

2. Middles Socio-Economic Status

	Above Average	Percent	Average	Percent	Below Average	Percent
MATHS	1	2%	22%	42%	29	56%
ENG	2	4%	22%	42%	28	54%
BIO	0	0%	31	60%	21	40%
GOVT	10	19%	25	48%	17	33%

3. Low Socio-Economic Status

	Above Average	Percent	Average	Percent	Below Average	Percent
MATHS	3	3%	29	31%	63%	66%
ENG	7	7%	30	32%	58%	61%
BIO	10	10%	33	35%	52%	55%
GOVT	22	23%	48	51%	25%	26%

ABOVE AVERAGE [70-100], AVERAGE [50-69], BELOW AVERAGE [0-49]

The table above reveals that in Mathematics, out of the 57 respondents from high socio-economic homes, 9% are above average, 35% are average, while 56% of the respondents are below average. Also, there are 52 respondents from middle socio-economic homes on Mathematics, out of which 2% is above average, 42% are within average, while 56% of the respondents are below average. The table also revealed in Mathematics that there are 95 respondents low socio-economic status homes, out of which 3% are above average. 31% are within average, while 63 [66]% are below average.

In English Language, out of 57 respondents from high socio-economic homes, 9% are above average, 56% of the respondents are within average, while 35% are below average. Still on the same table, and on English Language, there are 52 respondents from middle socio-economic homes, out of which 4% are above average, 42% are within average, while 54% of the respondents are below average. The table also shows that there are 95 respondents from low socio-economic homes of which 7% are above average while 32% are within average, and 61% are below average.

Accordingly, in Biology, there are 57 respondents from high socio-economic homes, of which 10% of the respondents are above average, 54% are within average, while 36% are below average. As for the middle socio-economic homes, there are 52 respondents, of which none 0% is above average but 60% of the respondents are within average, while 40% are below average. The table further reveals that, in Biology, there are 95 respondents from low socio-economic homes out of which 10% are above average, 35% are within average, while 55% are below average.

In Government, out of 57 respondents from high socio-economic homes, as displayed in the above table, 25% of the respondents are above average, 58% are within average, while 16% are below average. In the same vein, there are 52 respondents from middle socio-economic homes on Government, according to the table above, of which 19% are above average, while 48% are within average, and 33% are below average. Also, there are 95 respondents from low socio-economic homes on Government, of which 23% are above average, 51% are within average, while 26% are below average.

The finding shows that there is difference in the academic performance of students from high, middle and low socio-economic homes in senior secondary school subjects. It was discovered that the percentages of students in the three school subjects, English Language, Biology and Government, who are above average from low socio-economic homes, is more than that of students from high and middle socio-economic homes. While in Mathematics, the percentage of students from high socio-economic status homes who are above average is more than that of students from middle and low socio-economic status homes. This finding agrees with Akanni [2006] who asserted that academic aspiration of a school child is positively related to socio-economic status of the parents.

Consequently, students from low socio-economic status home tend to be more serious in their academics than those from high and middle socio-economic status homes. This may be as a result of their determination to succeed in life and to change their socio-economic status. On the other hand, students from high and middle socio-economic homes tend not to be serious with their academics because they have parents who are rich and will always provide for their needs.

Although it is argued that the poor performance of a child is a function of economic factor like coming from socio-economic disadvantaged home. However, this might not necessarily follow because some students from poor homes sometimes struggle to study hard so that they can succeed in their future endeavours.

Research Question 2

Is there any significant difference in the academic performance of students from high, middle and low socio-economic status in senior secondary school subjects?

Table 2: ANOVA showing academic performance of students from high, middle and low socio-economic homes

Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. P	Remarks
Between Groups	16707.864	2	8353.932	3.074	0.043	S
Within Groups	546227.7	201	2717.551			
Total	552935.5	203				

Sig. at $P < 0.05$

NS. at $P > 0.05$

Result from table 2 shows that F = ratio is 3.074, while P value is 0.043. Since P is less than 0.05 alpha level of Sig, therefore, the difference observed is statistically significant. The finding in Table 1, reveals that the percentage of students in the school subjects, namely, English Language, Biology and Government, who are above average from low socio-economic homes is more than that of students from high and middle socio-economic homes. While in Mathematics, the percentage of students from high socio-economic homes who are above average, is more than that of students from middle and low socio-economic homes. From the finding in table 2, it is observed that there is significant difference in the academic performance of students from high, middle and low socio-economic homes in senior secondary school subjects. This agrees with Adedeji [2008] who found that there is significant difference in the academic

performance of students from high, middle and low socio-economic homes. This is because certain peculiarities of the home background could also enhance or hamper performance of the students at school.

Research Question 3

Is there any significant different in the academics performance of student from monogamous home and those from polygamous home in senior secondary school subjects?

Table 3: T-test on family type and students' academic performance in senior secondary school subjects

Family type	N	Mean	S.D	Tcri	Df	Tcal	P	Remarks
Monogamous	146	23.25	7.838	2.57	201	10.0	0.05	S
Polygamous	57	26.16	5.40					

Result from Table 3 reveals that students from monogamous home have a mean score of 23.25 and standard deviations of 7.838, while the students from polygamous home have a mean score of 26.16 and standard deviation of 5.460, [t. cri=2.57, df = 201, t.cal =10.00]. Since t critical is far less than the t calculated [t.cri= 2.06 <t.cal =10.00], this means that there is significantly different from the mean score of students from monogamous homes. From the finding in Table 3, it is observed that the mean score of students from polygamous home is greater than that of students from monogamous home. This indicates that the students from polygamous home perform better than those from monogamous home. The finding disagrees with Ononuga (2005), who claimed that children from monogamous home are better in school and in their class work, while children from polygamous home often perform poorly in class. He buttresses his point by saying that children from monogamous home are well equipped with all necessary things required for learning in school. According to Ononuga, such students are able to feel love, warmth and attention from both parents and other siblings from their parents. It is however argued that a child from monogamous home may not necessary perform better than a child from a polygamous home. Therefore, a child's academic performance and achievements in school also depends on his or her attitude and determination to succeed, and not necessary on the type of home or family he or she comes from.

Research Question 4

Is there any significant effect of family size on students' academic performance in senior secondary school subjects?

Table 4: ANOVA showing family size and students performance in senior secondary school subjects.

Model	Sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sig.P	Remarks
Between Groups	319.473	3	106.491	1.998	0.116	Ns
WITHIN Groups	10604.695	199	53.290			
TOTAL	10924.167	202				

Sig. at P>0.05

NS. T p>0.05

Result from the table 4. $F =$ ratio is 1.998, P value is 0.116. Since $Sig. P$ is greater than 0.05 alpha level of $Sig.$, therefore, the effect observed is not statistically significant. From the finding in table 4, it is observed that family size does not have significant effect students' academic performance in Mathematics, English Language, Biology and Government. This result does not agree with Douglass (2004), who found that there is correlation between family size and measure of intelligence. Children from large families may suffer educational handicap as well as children from small size homes. This is because, some small size families may not necessarily provide facilities that could help their children make the best of academic.

However, Ononuga (2005), submitted that it is most likely that children who come out of a family that has more than five children tend to do badly in their academic performance. This is because the parents may not cope with going through each child's academic work. He further explained that parents with large number of children cannot even afford to pay the school fees of all the children at once, thus pay for some, while some stay at home till they have enough money to pay for the rest. By so doing, the children are denied so many educational activities like excursions, since the parents cannot afford the cost. In this way they miss a vast amount of what ought to go into their academic formation. But, based on this finding, it is observed that family size is not strong enough to determine students' performance. Whatever the family size of a child is, he can still perform well academically if such a child develop positive attitude toward study and he is naturally determined to success in life.

CONCLUSION

The study, by implication has revealed that parents may be highly educated, but may not directly reflect on student's academic performance if such student's attitude is negative towards learning. Again, one of the parents may be highly educated, but may not directly reflect on the student's performance if the other parent is not brilliant because some hereditary factors from such a parent may not allow the student perform well academically. Also, parental occupation may not be directly related to the academic performance of students, if the attitude of such student toward learning is not positive. Moreover, parents may be earning much money and have enough to spend on the child's education, but may not have enough time to monitor what such a child does in school. Also student may come from a monogamous home and not perform well in school if the parents do not give such a child necessary support and motivation at home. Finally small size family members may not necessarily impact on a student's positive academic performance if such student is not determined personally to excel academically.

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