

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE GIRL CHILD IN SOKOTO STATE
(A CASE STUDY OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF WOMEN CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION SOKOTO).**

¹J. N. Njoku and ²V. N. Idoko

¹Department of Educational Foundations, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, SokotoN Nigeria

²Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Many people in the Northern part of Nigeria still exhibit ignorance to the need for the education of the girl-child. This has warranted a lot of discussions and sensitization. Among areas of interest are factors that affect the academic performance of the girl-child. To this effect the researchers centered on the relationship between socio-economic status of parents and the academic performance of the girl-child in Sokoto state. A case study of senior secondary school students of Women Centre for Continuing Education Sokoto. The objective was to find out if there is any relationship between socio-economic status of parents and academic performance of the girl child. Stratified random sampling was adopted to select 116 students out of a population of 580 senior secondary school students of Women Centre for Continuing Education. A correlational research design was adopted. Two instruments were used to obtain data, namely Parental Socio-Economic Status Questionnaire (PSESQ) and Academic Performance Test in English Language and Mathematics (APT). The PSESQ was designed by Adegoke in 1987 while the APT was design by the researchers. The PSESQ has 10 items, each of the items has 5 response options like in Likert scale. The responses are graded from 2 to 10 marks so that the maximum score will be 100. The students are expected to choose only one correct answer. From the scoring, students were graded as follows:

High socio-economic status 70-100

Average socio-economic status 40-60

Low socio-economic status 10-30

The APT has 20 items, 10 items from English language and Mathematics respectively. Each item has 5 response options with only one correct answer. Each correct answer scored 5 marks so the highest score obtainable is 100. Results obtained from the analysis of data shows that the number of students increased as socio-economic status increased which means that girls from high socio-economic status has better opportunity to go to school. It was also noted that performance of the girls improved as the socio-economic status improved. The researchers concluded that socio-economic status of parents is a major determinant of school enrollment and academic performance of the girl-child in Women Centre for Continuing Education and Sokoto State in general. It was therefore recommended that the government should intervene by creating more jobs for the unemployed parents to be employed and they should also increase their effort in providing facilities to schools so that girls from poor background will benefit from it and do better.

Key Words – Relationship, Socio-economic Status, Girl-child, Academic performance.

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INTRODUCTION

Education of the girl child particularly in the Northern part of Nigeria has become a subject of interest to many in the last decade. Many people are gaining awareness of how important it is to educate the girl child who is the mother of tomorrow; though this need is becoming obvious on daily bases, the girl child is still marginalized and performs averagely poor when compared with her male counterparts.

Some researchers like Mohammad (2005) have tried to identify some factors that contribute to the poor performance of the girl-child in schools. It has also been highlighted by Okonkwo (1995) that home environment is one of the determining factors for academic achievement. When we talk of home environment many factors come into play including the socio-economic status of parents. Socio-economic status simply refers to the socio class one belongs. How rich or poor a person can be classified to be. The researchers therefore tried to investigate on the influence of socio-economic status on academic performance of the girl child in Sokoto state with a case study of Women Centre for Continuing Education.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

The need for the education of the girl-child cannot be over emphasized yet many girls in Nigeria, particularly in the Northern part are denied this right. They roam about the streets hawking all types of items, baby sitting and doing all kinds of jobs. This has been mainly attributed to poverty and ignorance. Many of the girls who go to school look unkept and lack materials necessary for schooling. There is however a general lack of interest in education on the part of the girls and their parents. All these have resulted to poor performance of some students in major exams.

This research therefore focused on investigating the relationship between socio-economic status and the academic performance of the girl-child in Sokoto state with particular reference to senior secondary school students of Women Center for Continuing Education.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Are there any relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of the girl-child in Sokoto state?

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of this research is to find out if there is any relationship between socio economic status and academic performance of the girl child in Sokoto state.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will be useful to the parents, teachers and the government. The parents will know if their social class is part of the problems militating against the performance of the girl-child in school. The teacher will have a better understanding of what the students are passing through and note the way it is affecting them. It will help the government setup strategies to improve the living condition of the people which will in effect improve the academic performance of the students.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

There is no significance relationship between socio-economic status of parents and academic performance of their girl-child.

SCOPE AND DELIMITATION

The researchers are aware that education generally in Nigeria is passing through a critical phase now but the scope of this work is Sokoto state with particular reference to the girl-child in Women Centre for Continuing Education. Out of the various factors affecting the academic performance of the girl-child in this state the researchers concentrated on the relationship between socio-economic status of the parents and the academic performance of the girl-child.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Every child male and female is entitled to receive free and compulsory basic education and equal opportunity for higher education based on individual ability (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, 1989). The concept of female education is one of UNICEF popular initiatives. Van Dalen and Brittel (1959) defined female education as female participation in educational pursuit through planned activities so that they may acquire the richest learning possible from their experiences. According to Salawu, (1987) women are the custodians of cultural, social and fundamental values of the society, therefore no society can develop fully void of their understanding. He further stated that the holy prophet of Islam emphasized that acquisition of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim both male and female.

Abdulkareem, (1992) in his work titled "The Nigerian Education" observed that despite the Hadith and Qur'an doctrines which require both male and female Muslim to seek knowledge. The Nigerian girls and women are still lagging behind their male counterparts in both Islamic and western educational attainment.

The concern of the government and many well meaning Nigerians have been on how to break this negative attitude of some people to female education. Some researchers in trying to assess the factors that affect academic performance came up with the result that socio-economic status of parents can affect the academic performance of their children. Ajeh, (1991) found out that occupation and level of education of parents have significant relationship with English language achievement of students. Okonkwo, (1995) asserts that backward children academically were found in greater number in poor and over crowded areas. In the same line Yoav, (2000) saw the education of the parents and cognitive ability of the child as probably the most important determinant of educational performance. However researchers like Comapuzano, (2001) have emphasized motivation and self concept as major determinant of performance rather than socio-economic status. Harriet, (2003) emphasized that developmental factors like Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) affect academic performance more than other variables.

It is therefore imperative to conduct this research on relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of the girl-child in Sokoto state to see how far it agrees with the earlier researches.

RESEARCH METHODS

RESEARCH DESIGN

The design adopted for this research is co-relational research design.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of study for this research is all senior secondary school students of Women Centre for Continuing Education. A total of five hundred and eighty (580) students, comprising of 200 SS I, 300 SS II and 80 SS III students were used.

SAMPLE/SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The stratified random sampling was adopted to get the sample for the research. Random sampling is preferred because it gives every student opportunity of being selected. The stratification was considered relevant because numerical strength of all the classes were not the same so to have a good representation of every class stratified random sampling is used. Twenty percent (20%) of each class was sampled since many researchers like Nnamdi, (1991) believed that 20% gives a good representation of the population. To this effect one hundred and sixteen (116) students were selected for the research out of a population of five hundred and eighty (580).

INSTRUMENTATION

Two instruments were used for this research namely:

- i) Parental Socio-Economic Status Questionnaire (PSESQ). This was developed by Adegoke in 1987 so it was adopted for this research.
- ii) Academic Performance Test (APT) in English language and Mathematics developed by the researchers.

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The PSESQ was designed specifically to be responded to by the students. The questionnaire is divided into 2 sections. Section A deals with personal data and background information about the respondents. While Section B measures facts about fathers and mothers occupation, educational background, dwelling place, means of transportation to school, school fees etc.

The APT developed by the researcher was for English language and Mathematics, it also has two sections. Section 'A' gathered personal information or data while Section 'B' has twenty questions, 10 questions for English language and 10 questions for mathematics. This was constructed for each class since the ability level of the students are not the same.

ADMINISTRATION AND SCORING OF THE INSTRUMENTS

APT – The Academic Performance Test was administered by the researchers to each of the classes. This is because their questions were drawn from their syllabus and textbooks so every class had their questions according to their ability. Each of the questionnaires has 20 items. Every question has only one correct answer which was scored 5marks. The total score obtainable is 100%. The students were scored according to their ability.

PSESQ – The Parental Socio-Economic Status Questionnaire has 10 items, each of the item has 5 response options like in Likert scale. The students are expected to choose only one correct answer. The responses are graded from 2 to 10marks so that the maximum score will be 100. e.g. what is the educational qualification of your father?

- | | | |
|----|----------------|----|
| a) | FSLC | 2 |
| b) | SSCE | 4 |
| c) | NCE/HND | 6 |
| d) | B.Sc, BA, B.Ed | 8 |
| e) | M.A, M.Ed, PhD | 10 |

From this scoring students were graded as follows:

High socio-economic status	70 – 100
Average socio-economic status	40 – 60
Low socio-economic status	10 – 30

DATA ANALYSIS

Simple descriptive statistics of Mean and Percentages were used to analyze the data.

Table 1 – Classification of students according to the socio-economic status of their parents.

PSES	Scores	Number of students
High socio-economic status	70-100	53
Average socio-economic status	40-60	37
Low socio-economic status	10-30	26
TOTAL		116

Table 2 – Mean scores in English and Mathematics according to Parental Socio-Economic Status of students.

PSES	X score for Eng.	X score of Maths.	X Eng/Maths
High	71	68	69.5
Average	53	51	52.0
Low	44	37	40.5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this research showed that the higher the socio-economic status of parents the higher the number of students in the school. Students from high socio-economic families are more in number followed by the students from average families while the least number of students come from low socio-economic

families. The reason for this variation is not far fetched, it is the elites in this part of the country that have realized the importance of education generally and that of the girl-child in particular. Most of the poor people have no business with sending their girl-child to school. Western education in this part of the country is almost an exclusive reserve for the rich who get richer with their families and continue to rule over the poor. The role this people are playing to get the poor masses in their locality to embrace this education is still not visible.

This research has also indicated that parental socio-economic status play significant role in the academic achievement of students. The higher the socio-economic status, the higher the academic performance of students. This is in line with the finding of Salawu, (1997) who saw significant relationship between the performance of students in school and the socio-economic status of their parents. In the same line Ajeh, (1991) believed that level of education of parents has significant relationship with the performance of their children in English language. Socio-economic status of parents remains one of the important predictors of children's academic performance. This finding can be supported by the fact that the ability of a student to procure necessary materials needed for her studies makes her more relaxed and ready to work. Education without assisting facilities is boring and sometimes fruitless. Adedeji, (1997) emphasized that economic condition of parents are among the factors responsible for low participation of women in vocational education. However, Ezechi (1996) saw no significant difference in the academic performance of students, irrespective of their socio-economic status. Some students from poor background have been challenged and they work extra hard to overcome that challenge, they make sure they change the condition of their family. The debate for the influence of socio-economic status on academic performance of students can go on and on but this research strongly believe that the performance of students improve as their socio-economic status improves.

CONCLUSION

The education of the girl-child is a necessity if we are hoping for a better tomorrow. Parental socio-economic status has been noted by this research to be one of the factors that affect the academic performance of the girl-child in Women Centre for Continuing Education, Sokoto. The higher the socio-economic status of students the higher their academic performance. It is also noted that girls from high socio-economic status have greater chances of going to school hence the number of students that belong to that class was more than those from lower social class.

RECOMMENDATION

Having considered the results of this research, the researchers came up with the following recommendation.

- i) The government should facilitate job creation to enable the unemployed parents to secure employment.
- ii) There should be provision of learning facilities in schools so that both the poor and the rich students can benefit from them.

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