Effects of Socioeconomic Status of Parents on the Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Agricultural Science in Taraba State, Nigeria

Harrison Gideon Maghra, Anthony Galadima, Melaye Oni Rufus

Abstract— The study examined the effects of socioeconomic status of parents on the academic performance of students in government secondary schools in Taraba State. Survey research design was used for the study. Three objectives guided the study, which were translated into three research questions and then three hypotheses respectively. The population of the study was 246,785 students. A stratified random sampling technique using Taro Yamane formula was used to obtain a sample of 400 students. The study collected data using structured questionnaire tagged: Effects of Socioeconomic status of parents on students' achievement questionnaire (ESESPOSA Q). The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by four experts. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Chi - Square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results revealed that father and mother's educational level influence the academic performance of students and family income has influence on the academic performance of students. The study recommended that government should embark on economic empowerment programmes to enhance parents' income, government should establish skills acquisition centres so that parents may have adequate skills that will enable them to be self-reliant and poor students should be given scholarship.

Index Terms— Academic performance, Effects, Family income and socioeconomic status.

I. INTRODUCTION

The family is a basic unit of social structure and a locus of much of a person's social activities, family can be defined in various ways depending on the culture of the people. The responsibility of training a child always lies in the hand of the parents. This is congruent with the common assertion of sociologist that education can be an instrument of cultural change which is being taught from home (Ogunshola and Adewale, 2012).

The family is always the first point of contact for the child, it lays the foundation of education before the child goes to school and the personality that the child takes to school is determined by the home, therefore, it is not out of place to imagine that parents' socioeconomic background can have

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possible effects on the academic performance of children in school. Whatsoever affect the development environment of children would possibly affect their education. The home environment has a great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state hence his reaction to life situations and his level of performance. Enriching experiences in the home can contribute up to 1½ of the measured achievement in verbal skills, reading and mathematics (Akinsanya, Ajayi and Modupe, 2011).

It is a fact that families where the parents are privileged educationally, socially and economically, promote a higher level of achievement in their offspring's. 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 (Williams, Long, and Hayden, 1993). Education at the secondary level is considered a multidimensional process. The students of secondary schools generally fall in the age range of 12-16 years during which young boys and girls are entering adolescence. Personality starts taking a shape and course for life is gradually set which prepares the individual for various responsibilities. The students having better socioeconomic status easily adopt various channels to acquire knowledge and skills conducive to their trade and profession. Saifi and Mehmood (2011) stated that socioeconomic status is comprised of economic and social position of an individual or family relating to others on the basis of education, income and occupation. Socioeconomic status is a definite background variable that represents a feature of the social structure in the society (Oakes & Rossi, 2003). According to Parson, Stephenie and Deborah (2001) socioeconomic status is an expression which is used to differentiate between people's relative status in the community regarding family income, political power, educational background and occupational status. Hence, socioeconomic status is a social or professional position of an individual measured as a combination of education, income and occupation. A mete-analysis of studies investigating the relationship of socioeconomic status to academic achievement showed that different variables of socioeconomic status e.g. parental education, parental income and parental occupation have different effects on the educational attainment (Sirin 2005). Onocha (1985) found out that a child from a well learned family with high socioeconomic status is more likely to perform better than a child from an illiterate family. This is



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because the child from an educated family has a lot of support such as a decent and good environment for academic work, parental support and guidance, enough textual and academic materials and decent feeding. He or she is likely to be sent to a good school where well experienced teachers will handle his/her subjects. Campbell and Wu (1994) reported that the home environment and family processes provide a network of physical, social and intellectual forces and factors which affect the students' learning while Song and Hattie (2004) agreed that families from different socioeconomic groups create different learning environments that affect the child's academic achievement.

Family income, according to Escarce (2003) has a profound influence on the educational opportunities available to adolescents and their chances of educational success. He further adds that due to residential stratification and segregation, low income students usually attend schools with lower funding levels, have reduced achievement motivation and much higher risk of educational failure. When compared with their more affluent counter parts, low income adolescents receive lower grades, earn lower scores on standardized test and are much more likely to drop out of school. Escarce's (2003) submission is in agreement with Sentamu (2003) who argued that social class determines what school a child will attend and whether the child will pass the examinations or not.

Poverty is a crucial and destructive factor that affects student's academic performance negatively. Sum and Fogg (1991) conducted a study and found that poor students are graded in the 19th percentile on assessments while students from a mid-upper income family are ranked in the 66th percentile on assessments. In data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) measuring achievement of kindergarten students on the ECLS reading achievement assessment, low income students scored at about 45th percentile, and upper income students scored at about the 70th percentile (Rowan, Cohen, and Raudenbush, Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn and Duncan (1994) 2004). concluded that both mothers' education and family income were the main predictors of the physical atmosphere and learning experiences in the home but that mothers' education alone was predictive of parental warmth.

King and Bello (1989) used parents' occupation as a proxy for income to examine the relationship between income and achievement and found that children of farmers had fewer years of schooling than children of parents with white collar jobs. The rationale for this study is the current poor academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Senior Secondary School Examinations conducted by WAEC and NECO.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Empirical studies have found out that socioeconomic status play notable role in the academic performance of secondary school students because students from high socioeconomic status backgrounds are well exposed to scholastic materials which aid their intelligence. On the other hand, observations and reports by Anonymous (2010) also indicates that students from poor background perform better academically than

those students from high socioeconomic status background in the classroom situation because students from poor families consider education as the meal ticket and the only way to success. Observations by Anonymous (2010) have also revealed that most students from high socioeconomic status are way-ward in school thinking that with or without education, they have enough to survive with. This study is motivated by some of these factors and misconception in the society. The study seek to investigate the effect of parents' socioeconomic status on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Taraba State, Nigeria.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to determine the effects of socioeconomic status of parents' on the academic performance of senior secondary school students offering agricultural science in Taraba state. Specifically, the study is being undertaken to determine:

- (i) The effect of father's educational level on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science in Taraba State.
- (ii)The effect of mother's educational level on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science in Taraba State.
- (iii) The effect of parents' family income on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science in Taraba state.

(iv)

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Three research questions in accordance with the purposes guided the study as follows:

- 1. What is the effect of father's educational level on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science in Taraba state?
- 2. What is the effect of mother's educational level on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science in Taraba state?
- 3. What is the effect of parents' family income on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science in Taraba state?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses in line with the research questions were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the study:

Ho₁: Father's educational level has no significant effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science.

Ho₂: Mother's educational level has no significant effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science.

Ho₃: There is no significant effect of parents' family income on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Agricultural science.



V. METHODOLOGY

The design for the study was survey research design. The area of the study was Taraba State. Taraba State was created out of the former Gongola State on 27th August, 1991, by the then military government of General Ibrahim BadamasiBabangida. The State is located within the North-East geo-political zone and lies roughly between latitude 6⁰ 30' and 9⁰ 36' North of the equator and Longitude 90 30' and 110 45' East of the equator. The State was named after the Taraba River which traverses the southern part of the State (Taraba State Diary, 2014). The State is bounded in the west by Plateau and Benue States and on the East by the Cameroon. It is bounded by Bauchi and Gombe States on the Northern part, Plateau and Nassarawa on the Western part and Adamawa on the Eastern part. The population of the study was all the senior secondary two (SS2) students in public secondary schools in Taraba State. There are a total of two hundred and sixty six (266) public senior secondary schools spread across Taraba State, Taraba State Ministry of Education, (TSMOE, 2014). The population of students in the 266 secondary schools was two hundred and forty six thousand seven hundred and eighty five (246 785) while the population of the SS2 students offering Agricultural Science in the schools was seventeen thousand one hundred and thirty seven

(TSMOE,2014). The sample for the study consists of a total of 400 students statistically determined using Taro Yamane's formula for a finite population. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 5 schools from each education zone. The instrument used to collect the data was structured questionnaire tagged: effect of socioeconomic status of

students' achievement parents on questionnaire (ESESPOSAQ). The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by four professionals from Vocational Education and Technology Educational Departments of ModibboAdama University of Technology Yola. The analysis of the data was done in two phases: Analysis of the research questions and analysis of the hypotheses. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Chi- square was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance using statistics Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 16.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected was analysed and presented in tables in order in which the research questions and the hypotheses were raised as follows:

Research Question 1:

What is the effect of father's educational level on the academic performance of senior secondary school students offering Agricultural science in Taraba state?

Table 1 reveals that five items were accepted and two rejected. By implication, father's educational level influence the academic performance of a student to a great extent by helping the students in doing assignment at home, he encourages the student to do homework, motivates the student, provides student with necessary textbooks for learning and pays the child school fee promptly. The table further showed that students in Taraba State do not have access to computers at home and their parents do not hire teachers to teach them after school.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Ratings of Students on the Effect of Father's Educational Level on the Academic Performance of Senior Secondary school Students Offering Agricultural Science in Taraba State

No Item	Mean	SD	Remark
1. My father helps me in doing assignment at home	2.90	1.18	Agree
2. My father encourages me to do my homework	3.33	0.90	Agree
3. My father motivates me always	3.20	1.02	Agree
4. He provides me with textbooks for learning	3.04	1.12	Agree
5. He pays my school fee promptly	3.07	1.28	Agree
6. I have access to computers at home	1.70	1.34	Disagree
7. He hires teacher to teach me after school	1.82	1.41	Disagree

Research Question 2

What is the effect of mother's educational level on the academic performance of senior secondary school students offering Agricultural science in Taraba state?

Data in table 2 indicates that the respondents for the study agreed that mother with high and average level of education helps the student in doing assignments at home, encourages

students to do homework, motivates students, provides students

with necessary textbooks for learning and pays their children school fee promptly and disagreed with item statements number 13 and 14 with means rating ranging from 1.81 and 1.93 respectively.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Ratings of Students on the Effect of Mother's Educational Level on the School Students Offering Agricultural Science in Taraba State **Academic Performance of Senior Secondary**

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No Item	Mean	SD	Remark	
8. My mother helps me in doing assignment	2.62	1.30	Agree	
9. My mother encourages me to do my homework	3.11	1.03	Agree	
10. My mother motivates me always	3.09	1.08	Agree	
11. She provides me with textbooks for learning	2.59	1.24	Agree	
12. She pays my school fee promptly	2.58	1.30	Agree	
13. I have access to computers at home	1.81	1.40	Disagree	
14. She hires teacher to teach me after school	1.93	1.48	Disagree	



Research Question 3

What is the effect of family income on the academic performance of senior secondary school students offering agricultural science in Taraba state?

The mean ratings by the respondents on effect of family income on the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students offering Agricultural Science in Taraba State in table 3 indicates that out of 5 sources of income identified for this study, only the first source was rated above the cut-off point of 2.5. This implies that the source of income in the families of the respondents is through farming and somehow through business/trading and white collar job.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Rating of Students' on the Effect of Family **Income on the Academic** Performance of Senior Secondary School Students Offering Agricultural Science in Taraba State.

No Item	Mean	SD	Remark
15. My parents' source of income is farming	2.56	1.42	Agree
16. My parents' source of income is business	2.34	1.36	Disagree
17. My parents' source of income is politics	1.78	1.42	Disagree
18. My parents' source of income is white collar job	2.23	1.52	Disagree
19. My parents' source of income is blue collar job	1.88	1.40	Disagree
Research Hypotheses 1		Hypothe	esis 2

Research Hypotheses 1

H₀₁: Father's Educational Level has no Significant Effect on the Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students Offering Agricultural Science.

The result of the Chi-square test of significance on effect of father's educational level in table 4 indicated that there is significant influence of father's educational level on the academic performance of students. This means that we have good reason to reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis. From our decision rule, we conclude that there is significant effect of father's educational level on the academic performance of senior secondary school students offering agricultural science in Taraba state.

 \mathbf{H}_{02} : Mother's Educational Level has no Significant Effect on the Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students Offering Agricultural Science.

Table 5 shows that the computed value of the Chi-square (X_2) is 120.0 and the p-Value is 0.000 at 0.05 level of significant and 18 degree of freedom. Invariably, the null hypothesis H₀₂ was rejected at p<0.05 showing that the alternative hypothesis is upheld. This means that mother's educational level has significant effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students offering agricultural science in Taraba state.

Table 5: Chi-squire Table of Significant Effect of Mother's Educational Level on the Academic Performance of Students'

X ² -Value	D. f	alpha-Level	P-Value	Decision	
369.0	18	0.05	0.000	Significant	

Research Hypothesis 3

 \mathbf{H}_{03} : There is no Significant Effect of Parents' Family Income on the Academic Performance of senior Secondary School Students Offering Agricultural Science in Taraba State.

The result of table 6 indicates that significant influence exist at p<0.05. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis. We conclude that, parents' family income significantly influences academic performance of senior secondary school students offering agricultural science in the study area.

Table 6: Chi-square Table of Significant Influence of Family Income on Students Academic Performance in **Agricultural Science.**

X ² -value	D.f	alpha-level	p-value	Decision	
102.1	16	0.05	0.000	Significant	

VII. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

After the analysis and testing of the hypotheses, the major findings of the study were:

- 1. Father educational qualification has significant effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students offering agricultural science in Taraba State.
- 2. Mother's educational level has significant effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students offering agricultural science in Taraba State.
- 3. There is significant influence of student's family income on students' academic performance in Taraba State.
- 4. Most of the parents in Taraba state do not have computers at home as evident in item 7 and 15 in the research questions analysis

- 5. Most of the parents do not hire teachers to teach their children after school as can be seen in test item 8 and 16 in the research questions analysis
- 6. Majority of parents in Taraba state depends on government for survival.
- 7. Men in Taraba state further their education more than women.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this study were discussed in relation to the issue raised in the research questions and hypotheses of the study. The findings of the study on hypothesis one revealed that father's educational level has significant influence on the academic performance of senior secondary school students' offering agricultural science in Taraba state. The findings is in line with Olufemi, (2013) Henrietta and Odozi (2013); Ogunshola and Adewale (2012); who in their independent studies on effect of parental socioeconomic status on academic performance found out that father's educational



level has a significant influence on the academic performance of students.

The result of the findings with regards to hypothesis two also indicated that mother's educational level has significant effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students' offering Agricultural science in Taraba State. This finding conforms to the findings made by Rather (2013); Suleiman, Aslam, Hussain, Shakir, &Zaib-un-Nisa (2012), Atieno, Enose and Ayode (2012) and Eamon (2005) who in their studies on influence of socioeconomic status of parents' on the academic performance of senior secondary school students found out that mother's education has a very significant influence on the academic performance of students. Memonet al (2010) also found out in his study on impact of parental socioeconomic status on students' educational achievement at senior secondary school level that mother's educational level had a 20% higher effect than the father's education level on the academic achievement of adolescents.

The findings regarding the effect of family income on students' academic performance in Agricultural science in table 3 above revealed that family income significantly influence the academic performance of students in agricultural science. The findings is in agreement with the findings by Osonwa (2013), Saifi and Mehmood (2011), Li-Grining (2007) and Maurin (2002) who in their independent studies showed that parental income is potentially a very important determinant of the performance of children at school. The main reason may be that rich parents' can purchase more of all the basic goods and services that can support children's development and assist them to perform well at school and may be better exposed to learning environment at home because of provision and availability of extra learning facilities. The explanation for the poor performance from the low socioeconomic status family background may be that parents have so much work and family responsibilities that requires time, attention and money which he/she cannot meet with the consequence of paying less attention to the education of his/her children. Family income according to Escarce (2003) has a profound influence on the educational opportunities available to adolescents and their chances of educational success. He further added that due to residential stratification and segregation, low income students usually attend schools with lower funding levels when compared with their more affluent counterparts. Data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) measuring academic achievement of kindergarten students on the ECLS reading achievement test, low income students scored at about 45th percentile and upper income students scored at about 70th percentile (Rowan, Cohen and Raudenbush, 2004) Escarce (2003) is also in agreement with Sentamu (2003) who argued that family income determines which school a child will attend.

It can be seen in table 2 that most parents in Taraba state do not have access to computers at home. This means that most students in Taraba state do not enjoy physical facilities at home. This finding is not in agreement with Memonet al (2010) who in his study on impact of parental socioeconomic status on students' educational attainment found out that students who enjoyed more physical and electronics facilities at home performed better in matriculation exam than those who availed less physical facilities at home.

It was similarly revealed that most of the parents do not hire teachers to teach their children after school. The findings of the study is not in concord with the investigation of Memon*et al* (2010) who in his study on impact of parents' socioeconomic status on students' educational achievements at secondary schools of Malir, Karachi found out that students whose parents' incurred high expenditure on the education of their children perform better than those students whose parents' spent less expenditure on them.

The result of the findings also revealed that parents' major source of income in Taraba State is farming and government work. Harighurst (2002) in his study on society and education observed in his study that the existence of socioeconomic class of parents affect the development of a child. He further said that children whose parents are from skilled, intermediate and professional class will develop physically and intellectually as there are resources for the provision of their needed materials that will assist in learning, whereas, children from unskilled and partly skilled parents will not develop physically and intellectually as there is no financial assistance thereby making them to start poorly in the formative stage in the primary school.

IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The following conclusions are made based on the findings of the study:

- High and middle socioeconomic status background students perform better academically in school than students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds.
- Among all the three factors examined as an indicator of socioeconomic status, father and mother educational qualification indicated significant effect and played notable role in the academic performance of the respondents.
- Taraba state populace should learn handwork in order to be self-reliant and employer of labour instead of depending on government for everything.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been proffered:

- 1. Government should embark on economic empowerment programmes to enhance parents' income.
- 2. Government should establish skills acquisition centres so that parents may have adequate skills that will enable them to be self-reliant.
- Poor students should be given scholarship, free books and other stationaries.
- Social amenities, learning materials as well as qualified teachers should be extended to rural areas so as to raise the level of academic performance among students.
- 5. Workers salary should be increased to raise socioeconomic status of people.

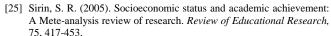
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