



Influence of Parents' Socio-Economic Status on the Academic Performance of Senior Secondary Students in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of parents' socio-economic status on the academic performance of senior secondary students in Rivers State. To achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher developed 3 specific objectives, research questions and null hypotheses respectively guided the conduct of the study. The research design used for the study was a descriptive research design. The population of the study consists of all SS I and SS II students in all Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State with the total population size of Eighteen Thousand, Two Hundred and Seventy (18,270). The sampling technique used for the study was multistage random sampling technique, with a sample size of 800 students. The instrument used for the data collection was self structured questionnaire titled: Influence of Parents' Socio-economic Status on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students Questionnaire, which was patterned towards 4-point rating scale. The data gathered were analyzed using weighted mean and standard deviation for the research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significant. Based on the analysis of the data, the findings of the study revealed that parents' socio-economic status influence the students' academic performance. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that: Government, multinational companies and public spirited individuals should be able to identify and support intelligent indigent students from low-income parents with a view to boost their academic performance; In addition, parents should try as much as possible not to sacrifice the academic well being of their children on the altar of their occupations, among others.

INTRODUCTION

Education is viewed as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of a society. In this sense, it is equivalent to what social scientists term socialization or enculturation. Children are born into a culture. Education is designed to guide them in learning a culture, moulding their behaviour in the ways of adulthood, and directing them towards their eventual roles in society. In the most primitive cultures, there is often little formal learning, little of what one would ordinarily call school or classes or teachers. Instead, the entire environment and all activities are frequently viewed as schools and classes, and many or all adults act as teachers.

The family is a place where education is conducted beyond the school. As the basic unit of social system, a family with good education and tradition can be a stimulus for the development of the country and for social harmony. As family is regarded as "the first classroom" where parents serve as the first teachers to their children, how family education is progressed will be a lifelong issue for them. Coleman Report and Plowden's Report in the late 60s revealed a strong correlation between family environment and children's academic performance, which explained the differences of their

performance in class. However, some scholars like Dubey (2011) did not think that could be a factor and tried to look for a better reason. In contrast, academic performance can be used to check students' learning, which in turn can be used as reference for school and parents; and can also be used to decide whether students can enter a higher school or go on to further study, which influences the quality of the school. Thompson (2011) pointed out that it is easy and accurate to use the score of a standardized academic attainment test to evaluate the in-put-output effect of education resources. For one to be adjudged as educated means that the person must have performed well in academics. Hornby (2010) defines performance as "how well or badly something works". Performance is an act or process of performing a task. It also implies an act involving numerous efforts or trouble. Eze in Obinna (2010) opined that academic performance relates to the degree of performance students put towards academic success. Psychologists (Plomin, Ritchie & Bates, 2015), have carried out studies in various aspects of intelligence and have identified factors that can affect the performance of students in schools. Some of the factors identified are hereditary and nutrition. The hereditary factor includes genetic characteristics within an individual which inhibit his ability to learn.

According to Brown, Susser, William and Deborah (2018), nutrition also indirectly impacts in school performance. Poor nutrition can lead students susceptible to illness or lead to headaches and stomach aches, resulting in school absences. A study carried out by Chelled (2018) also has shown that nutrition can either lower or boost academic performance of students. Nutrition is bound to have an influence on the health of the child, and so directly or indirectly on his ability to learn. It has been shown by psychologist Burman, (2017) that a child's mental capabilities and emotional behaviour is a necessary ingredient for school education, which is greatly influenced by the family a child comes from. In a family where the mother during antenatal periods struggles to have a single meal a day which in most cases is deficient in appropriate vitamins and mineral content, she can hardly be expected to produce healthy children with good mental capabilities and stable behaviour. Research has also established a link between nutrition and behaviour. Studies have found that access to nutrition, particularly breakfast, can enhance a student's psychosocial well-being, reduce aggression and school suspensions, and decrease disciplinary problem (Brown et al, 2018). Total or partial lack of adequate and appropriate nourishment during pregnancy, leads to serious emotional depression and anxiety on the part of the mother, which no doubt affects the unborn child physically and mentally. This has come serious implications on parents' social status, which could affect the academic performance of their children. It is in this regard that this study wants to investigate the influence of parents' social status on the academic performance of students in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Students' academic performance remains a top priority for educators. It is meant for making a difference locally, regionally, nationally and globally. Educators, trainers, and researchers have long been interested in exploring variables contributing effectively to equal or unequal performance of learners. These variables are inside and outside the school and they affect students' quality of academic performance. The factors may be termed as student factors family factors, school factors and peer group factors (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2014). Besides other factors, socioeconomic status is one of the most researched and debated factor among educational professionals that contribute positively or negatively to the academic performance of students. The most prevalent argument is that socioeconomic status of learners affects the quality of their academic performance. Most of the experts argue that the low socioeconomic status has negative effect on the academic performance of students because the basic needs of students remain unfulfilled as a result they do not perform better academically (Adams, 2016). But in the other way around, scholars also maintained that students or children from rich home or well to do family are not always academically sound because of the over petting from their home or family.

It was against this background that the core problem for this research emanates. The problem is to investigate how parents' social economic status affects the performance of the students academically in Rivers State. This researcher therefore examined the influence of parents' socio-economic status on academic performance of senior secondary students in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of parents' socio-economic status on the academic performance of senior secondary students in Rivers State. In specific terms the study focussed on the following objectives:

- 1 To find out the extent to which income level of parents influences the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- 2 To investigate the extent to which the occupation of the parents influences the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
- 3 To examine the extent to which parents' level of education influences the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does the income level of parents influence the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does the occupation of parents influence the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does parents' level of education influence the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following null hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of Senior Secondary 1 (SS1) and Senior Secondary 2 (SS2) students on the extent of influence of income level of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of SS1 and SS2 students on the extent of influence of occupation of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of SS1 and SS2 students on the extent of influence of parents' level of education on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of Parents

Parenting or child rearing is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting refers to the intricacies of raising a child and not exclusively for a biological relationship (Jane & Brooks, 2012). The most common caretakers in parenting is the child in question, although a surrogate may be an older sibling, a step parent, a grandparent, a legal guardian, aunt, uncle or other family members, or a family friend (Bernstein & Robert, 2018). Governments and society may also have a role in child rearing. In many cases, orphaned or abandoned children receive parental care from non-parent or non-blood relations. Others may be adopted, raised in foster care, or placed in an orphanage. Parenting skills vary and a parent or surrogate with good parenting skills may be referred to as a good parent (Johnri, 2014).

In psychology, the parental investment theory suggests that basic differences between male and females in parental investment have great adaptive significance and lead to gender differences in making propensities and preferences (Weiten & Mclann, 2007). A family's social class plays a large role in the opportunities and resources that will be available to a child. Working class children often grow up at a disadvantage with the schooling, communities, and level of parental attention available compared to those from the middle-class or upper-class. Also, lower working class families do not get the kind of networking that the middle and upper classes do through helpful family members, friends and community individuals or groups as well as various professionals or experts (Doob & Christopher, 2013). A parent's social status is indicative of the overall emotional climate in the home. Developmental Psychologist Diana Baumrind identified three main parenting styles in early child development; authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. These parenting styles were later expanded to four, to include an uninvolved style. On the one hand, these four styles involve

combinations of acceptance and responsiveness, and in turn, involves demand and control. Rubin (2015) has found that parenting style is significantly related to a child's subsequently mental health and satisfaction with life, and authoritarian parenting is negatively related to these variables.

a. Authoritarian Parenting Styles: Authoritarian parents are very rigid and strict. High demands are placed on the child, but there is little responsiveness to them. Parents who practice authoritarian style parenting have a non-negotiable set of rules and expectations that are strictly enforced and require rigid obedience. When the rules are not followed, punishment is often used to promote and ensure future obedience. There are usually no explanations for punishment except that the child is in trouble for breaking a rule (Fletcher, Walls & Cook, 2018). This parenting style is strongly associated with corporal punishment, such as spanking and "Because I said So" is a typical response to a child's question of authority. This type of parenting is seen more often in working class families than in the middle class. In 1983 Diana Baumrind found that children raised in authoritarian homes were less cheerful, more moody and more vulnerable to stress. In many cases these children also demonstrated passive hostility.

b. Authoritative Parenting: Authoritative parenting described by Baumrind as the "Just right style", it combines a medium level demands on the child and a medium level responsiveness from the parents. Authoritative parents rely on positive reinforcement and frequent use of punishment. Parents are not aware of a child's feelings and capabilities, and support the development of a child's autonomy within reasonable limits. There is a give-and-take atmosphere involved in parent-child communication and both control and support are balanced.

c. Permissive Parenting: Permissive, or indulgent, parenting is more popular in middle-class than in working-class families. In these settings, a child's freedom and autonomy are highly valued, and parents tend to rely mostly on reasoning and explanation. Parents are undemanding, so there tends to be little if any punishment or explicit rules in this style of parenting. These parents say that their children are free from external constraints and tend to be highly responsive to whatever the child wants at the time. Children of permissive parents are generally happy but sometimes show low level of self-control and self-reliance because they lack structure at home (Garcia & Gracia, 2019).

d. Uninvolved Parenting: An uninvolved or neglected parental style is when parents are often emotionally or physically absent. They have little or no expectation of the child and regularly have no communication. They are not responsive to a child's needs and have little or no behavioral expectations. If present, they may provide what the child needs for survival with little or no engagement. There is often a large gap between parents and with this parenting style. Children with little or no communication with their own parents tended to be victimized by other children and may themselves exhibit deviant behaviour (Finkeihor, Turner and Ormrod, 2019). Children of uninvolved parents may suffer in social competence, academic performance, psychological development and problem behaviour. There is no definitive model of parents with authoritarian and permissive parenting on opposite sides of the spectrum. Most conventional and modern models of parenting fall somewhere in-between. Parenting strategies, as well as behaviours and ideas of what parents expect, (whether communicated verbally and non-verbally) can also play a significant role in a child's development.

Concept of Academic Performance

Academic performance implies the extent to which a student teacher or institutions has attained their short or long term educational goals. Completion of educational benchmarks such as secondary school diplomas and bachelor degree represent academic performance. Academic performance is commonly measured through examination or continuous assessments but there is no general agreement on how it is best evaluated or which aspects are most important, procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts (Annie, Ward, Howard, and Mildred, 2016).

Students' Performance and Parental Social Status

Everybody seems to achieve the desired goals and the gains of self-actualization. This makes education the concern of all people of the world. This is inline with the view of Okeke (2010) who asserted that, everything requires knowledge and skills. The new system of education will help the child to know exactly where he/she would help to make the person a specialist in the field where he/she is best fitted into. This is achievable if the individual can afford the payment of the school

fees and other basic requirements of the school systems. The parents/guardian of the child will help to upgrade their child's performance or if they are less privileged, they could help to pull the child's performance down by failing to provide for the child. According to Ofoegbu (2010), "What I am is assessed by what people say I am or what one appears to represent". Parental status entails that social position of the child's parents with regards to whether they are poor, average in affluence, or very rich. This is measured by the achievement of the parents in their areas of existence like the economic, educational and religious impact they have created. Though they may not be clearly sure, people's position is inferred by their physical outlook, and what they do for a living. According to Okeke (2010) everybody wants his /her name to be respected; the place of honour given to him at every occasion both in families and public places. Thus in any fund raising activity, everybody wants his/her name to be announced as well as the amount donated. But in situation where the children have poor parental background, the reverse is always recorded as the outcome. Failure to be recognized in the society is the most direct betrayal of lack of self-esteem Children from this class lacks the basic facilities. Even where they have the higher cognitive ability, the fact remains that they may end up not showing their academic ingenuity because payment of the school fees and purchasing of the needed textbooks may not be possible.

Impact of Family on Learning and Students Academic Performance

The evidence produced so far has shown that the family and parental status provide the first learning opportunity for the child. Thus, apart from the financial aspect of the human social significance, the social stratum and educational level of the parents are very important for the academic progress of the children. Thus, the role of the parental position and level of wealthiest cannot be over emphasized. According to Ibe (2013), from the preschool age the child had already begun learning from the older people in the family, and seeing in them the gap which exists between childhood and realities of adulthood which I think that every child would consciously chose to work in order to grow significantly.

i. Parents Income and Students' Academic Performance

The home learning setting is formative in a child social development and is an essential contributing factor to educational outcomes at all stages of the learning trajectory. Bull (2018) observed that family characteristics are a major source of disparity in students' outcomes. Omraka (2011) noted that children, whose parents are rich, have certain needs, physical, and sociological, which when met contributed positively to their academic performance. These needs may include a conducive reading atmosphere, good food, play ground, provision of books, and other essential materials. According to Ogulu (2014), the high socio-economic status parents are able to provide their children with books to encourage them in their various learning optimal care and education for their children However, the challenges are more devastating among the poor income families that struggle to provide the basic needs to sustain their family. Dubey (2011), believes that in terms of material circumstances, or environment, parents of the relatively high class are able to supply children with more opportunities to learn things which will aid their learning in school. Bernistuern (2018) stated that high income enables parents to give their children the advantages of what money can buy. A high income parents provides, good schools which can equip them in academic performance.

According to Jenks (2018), many students from low income homes are kept away or sent out from school or excluded from certain activity or lack money to provide the prescribed equipment or materials. They suffer from stigma of being isolated during break meats because of poverty. Dubey (2011) alleged that educational opportunities of the children are clearly related to the socio-economic backgrounds of their parents. Children of the elite have better educational opportunities than the children of non-elite parents. Bliss (2014) is of the view that many students from low socio-economic homes respond incomprehensively to classroom teaching because their home environment has not exposed them to the kinds of materials used in school. Bernistuern (2018) asserts that life in single parents' family or broken home can be stressful for both the child and the parent, such families are faced with challenges of inadequate financial resources.

According to Jenks (2018), parents from low socio-economic status families may be unable to afford resources such as books, computers and school fees for their children. Families with low economic status often lack financial, social and educational support that characterize families with high socio-

economic status due to their poverty levels. In addition, Dubey (2011) hold that they have more appropriate knowledge about academic needs of their children. Thus children coming from to do homes well have an advantage in learning due to prior experience, resulting from the opportunities provided in their privileged circumstances.

ii. Parents' Level of Education and Students' Academic Performance

Generally, traditional research has revealed that more highly educated parents and especially mothers have greater success in providing their children with cognitive and language skills that contribute to success in school. Parents' level of education is important to schooling as parents want their children to maintain the status quo. It's also believed that parents with higher educational levels have stronger confidence in their children's academic abilities and they also have higher expectations of their children. They expect that their children will earn good grades behave well in school and attend college. These expectations and confidence in their children motivate them to do well at school. The confidence parents have in their children also helped them to build their own confidence and self-concept which is important in their education. However, parents' over expectations might also cause stress to their children which translates to poor educational attainments.

iii. Parents' Occupation and Students' Academic Performance

Parents are the primary persons in raising children in any society that is why the family is regarded as the primary agent of socialization. It is through parents' occupation and efforts that children are socialized to become productive citizens in education and general life. Jenks (2018) conducted a study on "The impact of Parents' occupation on academic performance of secondary school students in Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia." The result showed that students from parents with formal education perform well than those from parents with informal education. However, the researchers did not give any details on how the time parents spent in their occupations (whether formal or informal) affects students' academic performance. Gratz (2016) opined that parents in inferior occupations earn lower incomes and often have to work longer hours to earn more for their families. Therefore they are often left with less time to spend with their family members and getting more involved in their children's educational activities. However it's also important to note that not all parents in inferior occupation work for long hours.

iv. Parental Involvement in Education and Students' Academic Performance

Generally, parental involvement in education takes many forms including the provision of secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulations, parent to child discussion, good models of constructive social and educational values and high aspirations relating to personal fulfilment, contact with school to share information, participation in school events and school work and governance. Epstein (2012) established that parental involvement in education: checking homework, attending school meetings and events, discussing school activities at home has a very powerful influence on students' academic performance. While parental involvement positively affects students' academic performance, low socio economic parents are least likely to be involved in their children's education (Gratz, 2016). Low socio -economic parents are often working most of the time to take care of their families and they have no or limited time to participate in their children's education. However, scholars noted that the low socioeconomic parents are also willing and eager to help their children succeed in their education as their counterparts in high socio- economic status but they are limited by their low level of education, income and occupation.

Bawa (2010) reported a parental involvement in education project as part of a wide learning and educational achievement in nursery, primary and special school in Newham. Evaluation over the years indicated considerable enthusiasm for working together on the part of the parents and even the teachers. Teachers felt that parents' attitude had become very positive and had also raised their expectations. However, there was no evidence reported which related the initiative to impact on pupils achievement and also the researcher only focused on the nursery school, primary school and Special school but this study will focus on public secondary school students in Rivers State. Hafiz & Waqas (2013) carried out a research aimed to explore the effect of parental involvement in education on their children's academic performance in Allama Iqbal Town, Pakistan. It was found that parental involvement has significant effect on better academic performance of their children. However their research was conducted within a city /urban area.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: In carrying out this research, the researcher employed descriptive survey design. It attempts to describe or document current conditions or attitudes, that is, to explain what exists at the moment. According to Ezinwa and Okoye (2015), descriptive survey design is a research method which focuses on a representative sample derived from the entire population. This design was adopted because of its ability to ensure a representative outlook and provide a sample approach to the study of opinion, attitudes and values of individuals.

Population of the Study: The population of the study consists of all Senior Secondary 1 (SS1) and Senior Secondary 2 (SS2) students in all public senior secondary schools in Rivers State with a total population of 18,270 students made up of 8,900 SS1 students and 9,370 SS2 students (Rivers State Ministry of Education, 2020).

Sample and Sampling Techniques: The sample size of this study is 800 students (400 SS1 and 400 SS2 students) fixed using the Taro Yamene sample size formula given as $S = N/1+N(e)^2$, where S = sample size, N = population of the study, and e = significance level of the study. To obtain 400 students each for SS1 and SS2 students, the Taro Yamene formula was applied to the sub-populations of SS1 and SS2.

The sampling technique used was the multistage sampling technique. Wimmer & Dominick (2011) explained that multistage involves dividing the population into groups or clusters. The first stage is using simple random sampling technique to select one (1) local government areas from each of the senatorial district. The second stage involves using simple random sampling technique in selecting two (2) schools from each of the selected local government areas. Finally, purposive sampling techniques was used to select the SS I and SS 2 students for the study.

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument that was used for data collection in the study was a self-structured questionnaire, "Influence of Parents' Socio-economic Status on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students Questionnaire", which was sub-divided into two parts. The first part is the demographic information about the respondents, while the second part consists of respondents' responses on the subject matter. It was patterned on a modified 4 – point likert scale of Very High Extent (VHE) – 4 points, High Extent (HE) – 3 points, Low Extent (LE) – 2 points, and Very Low Extent (VLE) – 1 point.

Data Analysis Technique

The data collected was analysed using weighted mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The criterion decision rule is that any mean score that was from 2.50 and above was accepted, while the mean score that was less than 2.50 was rejected. The null hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 23.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent does the income level of parents influence the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Influence of Income Level of Parents on Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

S/No.	Statement	Students of Senior Secondary 1 (SS1) n ₁ = 400			Students of Senior Secondary 2 (SS2) n ₂ = 400		
		\bar{X}	SD	D	\bar{X}	SD	D
1	Some parents determine their children career because of their financial status in the society.	3.12	1.01	HE	3.08	0.93	HE
2	Parental income is a driving factor that compels students to choose a career	3.04	0.81	HE	3.11	1.04	HE
3	Children from high income homes are inspired (sometimes coerced) to study professional courses.	2.96	0.73	HE	3.10	0.91	HE
4	Parents of children from well-to-do homes readily provide needed funding for professional courses.	3.25	0.67	HE	3.17	0.73	HE
5	Some students doing professional courses sometimes drop out because of lack of adequate sponsorship.	2.89	1.12	HE	2.90	0.82	HE
Grand Mean/ Standard Deviation		3.05	0.87	HE	3.07	0.89	HE

Table 1 presents that items 1 to 5 have means of 3.12, 3.04, 2.96, 3.25, 2.89 for SS1 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.67 to 1.12; and means of 3.08, 3.11, 3.10, 3.17, 2.90 for SS2 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.73 to 1.04 which indicate “High Extent” influence of income level of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Also, the grand means for SS1 and SS2 students are 3.05 and 3.07 respectively, further confirming a “High Extent” influence of income level of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Thus, it is found that income level of parents influences the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State to a “High Extent”.

Research Question 2: *To what extent does the occupation of parents influence the academic performance of students of senior secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Influence of Occupation of Parents on Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

S/No.	Statement	Students of Senior Secondary 1 (SS1) n ₁ = 400			Students of Senior Secondary 2 (SS2) n ₂ = 400		
		\bar{X}	SD	D	\bar{X}	SD	D
6	Through parental occupation children are socialized which enhance their academic performance.	2.97	0.77	HE	3.03	1.00	HE
7	Parents that are not working in one way or the other affect the students' or children's academic performance.	2.87	0.85	HE	2.71	1.13	HE
8	Students from parents with formal education perform well than those from parents with informal education.	3.02	1.21	HE	2.94	0.70	HE
9	Parents' profession has no positive impact on the academic performance of their children.	3.06	0.71	HE	2.88	0.81	HE
10	Parental occupation has no influence on students' academic performance	2.89	0.97	HE	3.01	0.75	HE
Grand Mean/ Standard Deviation		2.96	0.91	HE	2.91	0.88	HE

The information in table 2 shows that items 6 to 10 have means of 2.97, 2.87, 3.02, 3.06, 2.89 for SS1 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.71 to 1.21; and means of 3.03, 2.71, 2.94, 2.88, 3.01 for SS2 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.70 to 1.13 indicating a "High Extent" influence of occupation of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The grand means for SS1 and SS2I students are, respectively, 3.15 and 3.12, which is a confirmation of high extent influence of occupation of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The above results imply that occupation of parents influences the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State to a "High Extent".

Research Question 3: *To what extend does parents' level of education influence the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State?*

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Influence of Parents' Level of Education on Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

S/No.	Statement	Students of Senior Secondary 1 (SS1) n ₁ = 400			Students of Senior Secondary 2 (SS2) n ₂ = 400		
		\bar{X}	SD	D	\bar{X}	SD	D
11	Highly educated parents have greater success in impact in their children academic performance.	3.21	0.97	HE	3.19	0.79	HE
12	Parents with higher educational levels have stronger confidence in their children's academic abilities.	3.29	0.88	HE	3.28	1.10	HE
13	Educated mothers helped their children to build their own confidence and self-concept which is important in their education.	3.12	0.85	HE	3.10	0.91	HE
14	Illiterate parents find it very easy to guide or teach their children academically which affect the students' academic performance	3.27	0.93	HE	3.25	0.71	HE
15	Some educated parents pay less attention to their children home work or school activities.	3.00	1.10	HE	2.94	0.82	HE
Grand Mean/ Standard Deviation		3.18	0.95	HE	3.15	0.87	HE

Table 3 presents that items 11 to 15 have means of 3.21, 3.29, 3.12, 3.27, 3.00 for SS1 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.85 to 1.10; and means of 3.19, 3.28, 3.10, 3.25, 2.94 for SS2 students with standard deviations ranging from 0.71 to 1.10 which indicate “High Extent” influence of parents’ level of education on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Also, the grand means for SS1 and SS2 students are 3.18 and 3.15 respectively, further confirming a “High Extent” influence of parents’ level of education on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Thus, it is found that parents’ level of education influences the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State to a “High Extent”.

Test of Hypotheses

In this section the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23 was used for the test of hypotheses. The t-test (rather than the z-test) statistic was employed in the analysis despite the large sample size. This was so for three major reasons: 1. When the sample is sufficiently large, the t-value and the z-value coincide. 2. The SPSS does not contain the z-test as both z-test and t-test are treated as the same for sufficiently large samples. 3. Very importantly, the t-value is computed when the population mean and standard deviation are not known, but for z-value computation, the population mean and standard deviation must be known.

The symbols used here were as specified below:

- F = Ratio of homogeneity between group variance to within group variance (Levene's Test for Equality of Variances)
- t = Value of t-statistic obtained from the SPSS analysis
- df = Degrees of freedom
- p-value = Sig. (2-tailed) obtained from the SPSS analysis to be compared with the α -value
- α -value = Level of significance (0.050) fixed by Rivers State University

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of SS1 and SS2 students on the extent of influence of the income level of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Extent Income Level of Parents Influences the Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary School in Rivers State

	F	Sig.	T	Df	p-value	α -value	Decision
Equal variances assumed	70.709	.110	-2.577	798	.072	.050	H ₀
Equal variances not assumed			-2.577	728.206	.072	.050	Not Rejected

Table 4 presents that equal variances assumed has $t = -2.577$, $df = 798$, and 2-tailed $p = 0.072$. This implies that the null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the mean rating of SS1 and SS2 students on the extent of influence of income level of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State” is not rejected as $t(798) = -2.577$, 2-tailed $p = 0.072 > \alpha = 0.05$. Thus, SSI and SSII students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State are in accordance that parents’ income level influences, to a high extent, the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of SS1 and SS2 students on the extent of influence of occupation of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5: t-test Analysis of the Extent Occupation of Parents Influences the Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary School in Rivers State

	F	Sig.	T	Df	p-value	α -value	Decision
Equal variances assumed	67.311	.258	7.038	798	.071	.050	H ₀ Not Rejected
Equal variances not assumed			7.038	675.913	.071	.050	

The information in table 5 shows that equal variances assumed has $t = 7.038$, $df = 798$, and 2-tailed $p = 0.71$. Thus, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the mean rating of SS1 and SS2 students on the extent of influence of occupation of parents on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State” is not rejected as $t(798) = 7.038$, 2-tailed $p = 0.71 > \alpha = 0.05$. This implies that SSI and SSII students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State are in a consensus that parent’ occupation influences, to a high extent, the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of SS1 and SS2 students on the extent of influence of parents’ level of education on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: t-test Analysis of the Extent Parents’ Level of Education Influences the Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary School in Rivers State

	F	Sig.	T	df	p-value	α -value	Decision
Equal variances assumed	7.858	.286	3.194	798	.124	.050	H_0 Not Rejected
Equal variances not assumed			3.194	783.467	.124	.050	

Table 6 presents that equal variances assumed has $t = 3.194$, $df = 798$, and 2-tailed $p = 0.124$. Therefore, the null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the mean rating of SS1 and SS2 students on the extent of influence of parents’ level of education on academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State” is not rejected as $t(798) = 3.194$, 2-tailed $p = 0.124 > \alpha = 0.05$. Thus, SSI and SSII students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State are in accordance that parents’ level of education influences, to a high extent, the academic performance of students of public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Extent Income Level of Parents Influence the Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

The finding of the study in research question one revealed that the respondents accepted the point that some parents determined their children career because of their financial status in the society. The study still showed that the responsiveness agreed on the view that parental income is a driving factor that compels some students to choose a career. It was also observed from the analysis that the respondents accepted the fact that children from high income homes or family are inspired to study professional courses. This finding is in collaboration with Winner (2016) who observed that children or students from well-to-do homes or family are gingered to take up professional courses hence their parents are ready to provide the needed educational materials. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted the fact that some students doing professional courses are sometimes drop out because of lack of sponsor.

Extent Occupation of Parents influence the Academic Performance of Students of Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

In research question four, the findings of this study still revealed that the respondents accepted the view that through parental occupation, children are socialized which enhance their academic performance. This study is in the same view with (Rana, 2015) who agreed on the point that parents that are not working in one way or the other affect the students’ or children’s academic performance. It was also noticed from the analysis that the respondents accepted the fact that students from parents with formal education perform well than those from parents with informal education. However, the study showed that the respondents rejected the points that parents, profession has no positive impact on the academic performance of their children and that parental occupation has positive influence on the students’ academic performance.

Extent Parents’ Level of Education Influence the Academic Performance of Students of Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State

In research question five, the findings indicated that the respondents found that highly educated parents have greater success in impact in their children academic performance. The respondents

also agreed on the point that parents with higher educational levels have stronger confidence in their children's academic abilities. This finding is in collaboration with (Asuka, 2019), who observed that educated mothers helped their children to build their own confidence and self-concept which is important in the education. However, the study showed that the respondents rejected the point that illiterate parents find it very easy to guide or teach their children academically which affect the students' academic performance. The respondents still agreed on the view that some educated parents pay less attention to their children homework or school activities because of their schedule.

CONCLUSION

The influence of parents' socio-economic status on the academic performance of senior secondary school students cannot be over emphasized. Based on the analysis, the study concludes that: family characteristics are major source of disparity in students' outcomes. And that, children, whose parents are rich, have certain needs, physical, and sociological, which when met contributed positively to their academic performance. The study still deduced that parental income level. Parental interest, family size, parental occupation and parental level of education influence the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are hereby put forward to ensure that this study achieve its objectives.

1. Government, multinational companies and public spirited individuals should be able to identify and support intelligent indigent students from low-income parents with a view to boosting their academic performance.
2. Parents should try as much as possible not sacrifice the academic well being of their children on the altar of their jobs or occupation.
3. Parents should try to improve as much as possible in their level of education because it has significance influence on their children's academic performance in senior secondary schools.

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