# Influence of Socio-Economic Status of Parents on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Okigwe Education Zone

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**ABSTRACT**
This study examined influence of socio-economic status of parents on academic performance of public senior secondary school students in Imo State. A descriptive survey design guided the study. A sample of 394 students (HSES = 65; MSES = 91 and LSES = 238) in Okigwe Educational zone was used for the study. Two research questions were answered with corresponding hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire that was patterned after Likert-4-point rating scale of agreement. A Reliability Coefficient of 0.85 was established for the instrument using Cronbach Alpha coefficient reliability method. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer research questions. Hypotheses were tested with Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). It was found among others that parent from both high and middle socio-economic status (SES) provides facilities at high extent while low socio-economic parents provides facilities at low extent for the academic performance of their wards in senior secondary schools in Okigwe Educational zone of Imo State. The study found that parents with high socio-economic status voluntarily involve in extra curricula activities of their children at high extent while those of middle status involve at very high extent and the low socio-economic status at low extent. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that teachers should try and also keep contact with parents with low socio-economic status as this will give a sense of belonging in and outside the school, parents should try as much as possible to attend and participate in school extra curricula activities irrespective of the socio-economic status.
**Keywords:** Parents, Socio-Economic Status, Academic Performance, Okigwe Education Zone

**INTRODUCTION**
Education is the best legacy a nation can give to its youth. This would suggest that the development of any nation or community depends largely on the quality of education of such a nation. Education has become highly competitive and commercial in many countries. It is on the basis of high academic performance that students get selected to good secondary schools, better courses of study and eventually better jobs. Academic performance has become a yardstick of self-worth and success since the outcome of education determines the quality of life, progress and status of people living anywhere in the world (Devi & Mayuri, 2013). Education is the right of all citizens irrespective of the social status or class of the individuals or parents. In other words, education brings and unites every social stratum together; hence it becomes the responsibility of the government to provide quality education for all.
This enables all citizens to have say in the affairs of the state. One way responsible governments tackle this malady of the widening gap between the rich and the poor is through education. Public schools and their states of up keep, both of personnel, equipment and enabling policies are governments' true positions in the issue of bridging the gap between the rich and the poor. One of such demonstrations on how government bridges the gaps among the social strata was the Government of Imo State, Nigeria, in the regime of Governor Rochas Owelle Okorocha. Very

early on his taking up the mantle of leadership of the state, he declared Free Education For All (FEFA) citizens of the state from primary to the university. No matter the efforts of the government in providing free education for all, nature holds it that all fingers are not equal and hence everybody cannot be equal in terms of achievement. It is an experience of life that all are not equal in all societies. Some people are very rich; some are averagely rich while some are poor. Some have different levels of education while some are uneducated. Consequently, a whole society can be sub-divided into strata or classes of people each being referred to as a social class (Okoye, 2012). In most societies, there are basically three classes: These are the upper class, made up of the wealthy and aristocrats, the middle class, made up of the educated elites and the professionals and the third class is the lower class, made up of the masses who are mostly unskilled (Ayeni & Adu, 2003).

The upper class in modern capitalist societies is often characterized by the possession of large amounts of inherited wealth (Okoye, 2012). The ownership of large amount of property and income derived from it confer many advantages upon the members. They are able to develop distinctive life styles based on extensive cultural pursuits and leisure activities. They exert a considerable influence on economic policies and political decisions. They also procure superior education and economic opportunities for their children that help to perpetuate family wealth. The middle class consists of professionals such as engineers, accountants, lawyers, medical doctors, the academia and even directors of public and private organizations. They usually have high income and command resources. They are well educated with life style peculiar to the upper class. No wonder, therefore their children are expected to do well in school. Children from middle class backgrounds are more often exposed to high achievements, given their academically rich environments. The lower class is made up of persons who hold low paying and low skilled jobs. Lower class is generally characterized by poverty and dependence on wages. Associated with these conditions are relatively low living standards and restricted access to quality education.

Socio-Economic Status (SES) is commonly conceptualized as the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation. It is a measure of an individual's or family's economic and social position based on education, income and occupation. Socio-economic background and socio-economic position can therefore be said to be synonymous and thus can be used interchangeably (Gary, Julie, Frank & John 2010). Low socio-economic status and its correlates, such as lower education, poverty and poor health, ultimately affect our societies as a whole. Research indicates that children from low social economic status (SES) households and communities develop academic skills more slowly compare to children from higher socio-economic status group. Aiken and Barbarin (2008) noted that, the school system in low social economic status communities are often under resource and have negatively affected student's academic progress. Families from low social economic status communities are less likely to have the financial resource or time available to provide children with academic support.

Keeves and Saha (2000) opined that in most countries of the world, educational achievements are related to social backgrounds of the students. These include the class of the family, ethnicity and language characteristics of the students. It has been demonstrated that socio-economic status indirectly influenced students' performance. While the direct effect on students' performance are associated with other variables such as teaching methods, teaching aids and students' interest in the subjects and parents' level of education; social class still made a significant contribution to students' academic performance especially in public senior secondary schools in Imo State and Nigeria at large.

Academic performance is defined or regarded as participants' examination grades (grade point average at the end of a particular semester or programme or term). It refers to the score attained by an examinee (students) in an administered standardized test. It could also be seen as the level of performance in a particular field of study. Higher scores indicate better academic performance while low scores represent poor academic performances which are always dependent on social

economic status of parents (Egbule 2004). Factors which are present in the family contributed greatly to the performance of the students. Among these are parental educational backgrounds, income, exposure, parental relationship with each other, strength of the family/population, religion, occupation etc. determine to a greater extent the readiness of the child to learn.

Many rural and sub-urban dwellers can no longer pay the school fees of their children. Children are made to engage in subsistence farming and become housemaids or engage in other menial jobs to support their academic pursuit. The health status of the children which could also be traceable to parental socio-economic background can be another factor that can affect the academic performance of the student. Adewale (2002) had reported that in a rural community where nutritional status is relatively low and heath problem are prevalent, children academic performance is greatly hindered. This assertion is again hinged on nature of parental socio-economic background. Home background according to Program International Studies Assessment (PISA) (2015) influences academic and educational success of student. Status reinforces the activities and functioning of the teacher and students. Family financial resources, which are associated with parents' occupation and educational attainment, often imply increased learning opportunities both at home and in school. Better-educated parents can contribute to their children's learning through their day-to-day interactions with their children and involving themselves in their children's school work. In Nigeria particularly in Imo State, most families are poor and cannot adequately afford three square meals, let alone meeting the educational needs of their children. This indeed has serious implications on the learning and performance of less privileged students in school, as such; students from such families are forced to miss classes, unable to do their assignments and most seriously are driven from school due to non-payment of school fees (Nnadi, Dimnwobi, Nwokoye, Osigwe & Ekesiobi, 2016). From the above, it is imperative to find out how social status of parents and family background of the students influences academic performance of the students in schools.

**Statement of the Problem**

It is generally believed that there is a close relationship between students' school performance and their family background (Okoye 2012). In Imo State, Nigeria, for instance, Government made education free for all students from primary to the University level but yet there is deviation in the academic performance of students. The aim, no doubt is to bridge the gap between the poor and the rich and to make education affordable by children of lower class families. This scenario is may be interpreted by parents from high and middle classes as poor quality education and unacceptable by their social class. There is a suspicion that many parents have withdrawn their children from public schools especially the upper class families while parents of the lower class still enroll their children into government schools (Onwukwe, Anyanwu & Agommuoh, 2017).

Also, it has been observed that many students do not pass well in external examinations such as West African School Certificate (WASC), National Examination Council (NECO) and Junior Secondary School Certificate (JSSC) and Obanya (2014), Ebenuwa-Okoh (2010) and Atanda and Jaiyeoba (2011) noted that some of the factors responsible for the low performance of students in schools are low socio-economic status of parents and lack of seriousness of students. Observation and report form examination bodies like West Africa Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO) , and Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB) revealed that a high percentage of secondary school student continue to do poorly in external examination . This poor performance are caused by social economic background of the family as some student were motivated by their parent through provision of educational materials like text books, exercise books, computer etc. and other were not. Other students came to school properly feed other do not.

There is also a strong belief that students from high socio-economic status will have facilities that satisfy the learning needs of students and that will translate to high academic performance. It is assumed that high socio-economic homes will provide supports to enhance students' learning

needs, have parents who volunteer as aids to their children, provision and organization of home lessons, create platforms to monitor students' academic and non academic progress, tutor students at home to reinforce class work among others. It is doubtful if these characteristics are prevalent in the various socio-economic status homes. This study therefore intends to examine how far these facilities are available in different socio-economic status homes and how these relate to academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State of Nigeria.

**Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to examine the influence of socio-economic status of parents on academic performance of public senior secondary school students in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State. Objectively, this study seeks to:

1. Determine the extent to which different socio-economic homes provide facilities that enhance the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State.
2. Examine how parents from high, middle and low socio-economic status volunteer in extra curricula activities of their Senior Secondary School Wards in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State.

**Research Questions**

The following questions were answered to guide the study

1. To what extent do different socio-economic homes provide facilities that enhance the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State?
2. To what extent do parents from different socio-economic status volunteer in extra curricula activities of their Senior Secondary School Wards in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State?

**Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significant.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of parents of high and middle and low socio-economic status on how provision of facilities influences academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students among different socio-economic homes in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean score of high, middle and low parents' socio-economic status on how they volunteer in extra curricula activities of their Senior Secondary School Wards in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State.

**METHODOLOGY**

The design of the study is a descriptive survey research and was carried out in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Okigwe Educational zone in Imo State. The population of the study consists of 26583 senior secondary school students from Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State. Okigwe Educational zone is divided in to two zones namely: Okigwe Zone 1 and 2. Okigwe Educational Zone 1 comprises of Okigwe, Isiala Mbano and Onuimo Local Government Areas while Okigwe Educational Zone has its territories in Ehime Mbano, Obowo and Ihitte Uboma Local Government Areas of Imo State. The sample size for the study was 394 senior secondary school students selected from Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State. Taro Yamen method was used in determining the sample size. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used in selecting students from different socio-economic status such that 65 students from High Socio-Economic Status (HSES), 91 students from Middle Socio-Economic Status (MSES) and 238 students from Low Socio-Economic Status (LSES) respectively.

The instrument for data collection was a self-constructed structured questionnaire titled "Parents' Socio-Economic Status on Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (PSESSAPQ)" which was design after Likert-4 point rating scale. The instrument was tested for reliability using

Cronbach Alpha which yields a reliability coefficient of 0.85. Data collected were analyse using mean and standard deviation for research questions and hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

**RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** *To what extent do different socio-economic homes provide facilities that enhance the academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State?*

**Table 1: Mean Response of Parents on Provision of Facilities for Academic Performance**

| S/No | Item Statement | High SES | | Middle SES | | Low SES | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | $X_1$ | Rmk | $X_2$ | Rmk | $X_3$ | Rmk |
| 1 | Your parents always provide home teacher for you | 3.67 | VHE | 3.22 | HE | 2.66 | HE |
| 2 | My parents takes me to other educational centres | 3.21 | HE | 3.76 | VHE | 1.83 | LE |
| 3 | Your parents registered you for evening classes | 3.89 | VHE | 3.90 | VHE | 1.09 | VLE |
| 4 | My parents bought all my textbooks | 3.92 | VHE | 3.52 | VHE | 2.70 | HE |
| 5 | My parents provides me internet service | 2.04 | LE | 3.01 | HE | 1.07 | VLE |
| 6 | My parents always buy required exercise books | 3.49 | HE | 3.22 | HE | 2.33 | LE |
| 7 | My parents bought me phone that can access internet | 2.33 | LE | 2.56 | HE | 1.01 | VLE |
| 8 | My house has a conducive room for my reading | 1.52 | VLE | 2.09 | LE | 1.96 | LE |
| 9 | Your parents provide me a personal computer | 2.33 | LE | 1.02 | VLE | 2.01 | LE |
| 10 | I am provided with educational tapes | 1.32 | VLE | 1.89 | LE | 1.06 | VLE |
| 11 | My parents always assist me in doing my assignment | 2.13 | LE | 3.65 | VHE | 3.71 | VHE |
| 12 | My parents ensure that I eat before going to school | 3.45 | HE | 3.21 | HE | 2.98 | HE |
| 13 | They always provide transport no matter distance | 3.88 | VHE | 2.76 | HE | 1.83 | LE |
| 14 | My parents use to give me extra money for my launch | 3.90 | VHE | 3.08 | HE | 2.84 | HE |
| 15 | My parents ensures that I go to school early | 3.21 | HE | 3.97 | VHE | 3.70 | VHE |
| | **Average Mean/SD** | **2.95** | **HE** | **2.99** | **HE** | **2.19** | **LE** |

Source: *Researcher' Result, 2018*

The result of Table 1 shows that parents with high socio-economic status (HSES) has an average mean of 2.95 while those parents of middle socio-economic status (MSES) has a mean average of 2.99 and low socio-economic parents (LSES) has a mean of 2.19 respectively.

**Research Question 2:** *To what extent do parents from high, middle and low socio-economic status volunteer in extra curricula activities of their Senior Secondary School Wards in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State?*

**Table 2: Mean Response of Parents on Voluntary Involvement in School Extra Curricula Activities in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State**

| S/NO | Item Statement | High SES | | Middle SES | | Low SES | |
|------|----------------|----------|-----|------------|-----|---------|-----|
| | | $X_1$ | RMK | $X_2$ | RMK | $X_3$ | RMK |
| 16 | My parents attends my school party | 3.87 | VHE | 3.60 | VHE | 3.02 | HE |
| 17 | My parents attended PTAs meeting | 3.66 | HE | 3.82 | VHE | 1.33 | VLE |
| 18 | My parents always buy gifts for my teachers | 3.04 | HE | 3.94 | VHE | 2.90 | HE |
| 19 | Your parents always attended my school social gatherings | 3.76 | VHE | 3.77 | VHE | 3.52 | VHE |
| 20 | My parents have donated items for my schools | 2.22 | LE | 3.90 | VHE | 1.34 | LE |
| 21 | My parents are always concern of staff welfare | 2.49 | HE | 3.77 | VHE | 2.72 | HE |
| | **Average Mean/SD** | **3.17** | **HE** | **3.80** | **VHE** | **2.47** | **LE** |

Source: *Researcher' Result, 2018*

The result of Table 2 shows that parents with high socio-economic status (HSES) has an average mean of 3.17 while those parents of middle socio-economic status (MSES) has a mean of 3.80 and low socio-economic status (LSES) has a mean average of 2.47 respectively.

**Test of Hypotheses**

**HO₁:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of parents of high, middle and low socio-economic status on how provision of facilities influences academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students among different socio-economic homes in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State.

**Table 3: Summary of ANOVA**

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | Degree of Freedom (df) | Mean of Sum of Squares (MSS) | F-ratio |
|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| Between Groups | 3693.7 | 2 | 1846.9 | |
| Within Groups | 201386.32 | 2655 | 758.52 | 2.43 |
| Total | 2017555.7 | 2657 | | |

Source: *Researcher' Result, 2018*

From the F-distribution table, it is observe that the critical value of F with 2 and 2655 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 3.00. Since the computed F-value of 2.43 is less than the critical value of F (3.00), the null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted and concludes that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of parents of high, middle and low socio-economic status on how provision of facilities influences academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students among different socio-economic homes in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State.

**HO₂:** There is no significant difference in the mean score of high, middle and low parents' socio-economic status on how they volunteer in extra curricula activities of their Senior Secondary School Wards in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State.

**Table 4: Summary of ANOVA**

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | Degree of Freedom (df) | Mean of Sum of Squares (MSS) | F-ratio |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 4781.9 | 2 | 2390.95 | |
| Within Groups | 330358.42 | 2655 | 124.4288 | 19.21 |
| Total | 335140.32 | 2657 | | |

Source: *Researcher' Result, 2018*

From the F-distribution table, it is observe that the critical value of F with 2 and 2655 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance is 3.00. Since the computed F-value of 19.21 is greater than the critical value of F (3.00), the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected and concludes that there is a significant difference in the mean score of high, middle and low parents' socio-economic status on how they volunteer in extra curricula activities of their Senior Secondary School Wards in Okigwe Educational Zone of Imo State.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The study shows parents' provision of facilities for their children academic performance in Okigwe Educational zone of Imo State. The result revealed that parents provide home teacher, provision of good reading environment (bedroom) registered their child for evening classes, and provides the required textbooks and exercise books, assisting in doing home works and assignments for their children in secondary schools. These findings are in line with Laosa (2005) states that "the different among the students exists due to the family backgrounds, such as nutrition and health status, environment at home, income of parents, their educational level and experiences, means of recreation in the family are the main factors that affect the educational and social achievement of students". The child of middle class lives in a home in which he has his own bedroom, his own clothes, he is never without food, light, shelter while the child of the low-class share room, bed, cloth and has known what it is to be hungry and cold. The ability of parents to provide or sponsor their children academically and the condition under which these children study go a long way toward their educational success.

The study also shows parents' voluntary involvement in extra curricula activities of their wards in senior secondary schools in Okigwe Educational zone of Imo State. The result revealed that high socio-economic status parents always involve in school activities like Parents' teachers' Association (PTA) meeting, social gatherings while those from low socio-economic status do not participate in these extra curricula activities. This findings is in agreement with Ushie, Emeka, Ononga and Owolabi (2012) and Osunloye (2008) who stressed that in Nigeria particularly, most families are poor and cannot adequately afford three square meals, let alone meeting the educational needs of their children including school party, school excursion etc.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the study, it was deduced that parent's socio-economic status influences students' academic performance. Parents with low socio-economic status are unable to provide educational requirements for their children while those with high and middle socio-economic status adequately provides for their wards, hence academic performance of the students from different socio-economic background are influenced.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings the following recommendations were made;
1.  Teachers should try and also keep contact with parents with low socio-economic status as this will give a sense of belonging in and outside the school.

2.  Parents should try as much as possible to attend and participate in school extra curricula activities irrespective of the socio-economic status.

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