

Influence of Family Background on the Academic Performance of Students in Economics in Port Harcourt Metropolis

Sunday Nsirimobi Ordu¹ PhD, Egbo Glad Ogechi²

^{1,2}Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling,
Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

A qualitative education produces enlighten and vibrant people. Family experiences are very significant in influencing children's performance in schools around the world. Research has shown that parental encouragement enhances, children's academic performance especially by people with whom they communicate in their first stages of life. Against this background that this study was undertaken to examine the influence of family background on the academic performance of students in Economics in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The study was guided by three objectives which are: to find out if there is a relationship between parental educational level and student's academic performance in Economics; determine the influence of parental income on students' academic performance in Economics and to find out if there is any significant relationship between the parental level of motivation and students' academic performance in Economics. This study is anchored on socialization theory. The study adopted a survey design to determine the influence of family background on students' academic performance. The population of that study is the entire secondary school in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The study randomly selected 80 students and 20 teachers in Port Harcourt Metropolitan. Descriptive statistics and simple percentages and tabulation were used for the data collected by way of a questionnaire. Chi-square was used when evaluating the null hypotheses. The study above showed that the family background of students and their academic success in economics subject is significantly positive. Based on the study findings the following recommendations were made: Social and economic policies should be introduced to give children with low-economic status equal opportunities to support their children's education. Parents should provide a home environment that supports and motivates children to achieve better education at school. This can be done by teaching your children at home to improve schoolwork and to provide the necessary learning material.

KEYWORDS: Family Background, Academic Performance, Economics

INTRODUCTION

The UN report (2010) highlighted education as a human right and necessity in achieving the Millennium Development Goal. Qualitative education produces enlighten and vibrant people. Family experiences are very significant in influencing children's success in schools around the world. Research has shown that encouragement enhances, children's academic success especially by people with whom they communicate in their first stages of life. Research by Rouse and Barrow (2006) showed that children that completed their education and years of schooling, varying from one family to the other.

Parents have the primary duty to raise a child. This argument supports the sociologist's general claim that education can be a medium of cultural change that is taught from home. It is therefore not inconceivable to think that the academic achievement of children in schools will theoretically have parental socio-economic background influence (Ogunshola and Adewale, 2012). In support of the argument, Lisa (2003) asserted that the environment has a significant impact on child psychological development.

Therefore, one of these factors is parental status. The welfare of young children also increases when a woman increases her nutritional status during pregnancy period. Parents in different occupational groups also have different childhood educational types, with different ambitions. This influences the kind of school their children attained. Such variations are not as predicted for each family; they affect the average family patterns in different occupational groups (Ogunshola & Adewale, 2012).

Therefore, the most important support network available to the child is the family in general and parents in particular. His relationship with his parents is the main factor that influences a child's personality and behavior. Coleman (2005) suggested that family power could be divided into three groups including economic, human and social capital. The socioeconomic status of a family is also linked to children's academic performance at the secondary school level. Ibalaoro(2012)notes that a student's socioeconomic status is based on family earnings, parental education and employment.

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Rouse and Barrow (2006) pointed out that the average test scores for students coming from poor families were higher than their colleagues from rich families. The few available pieces of literature failed to pinpoint out the relationship between family background and students' academic performance, especially in Port Harcourt Metropolis. This creates a gap this study seeks to fill. Thus, this study seeks to examine the impact of family backgrounds on the academic performance of students.

Hoyle (2003) argued that schools were set up to teach skills to those who will pass through them and that the idea of enhancing academic success is the crux of these issues. While the school is responsible for the experience of school life, parents play a significant role in developing the child's personality. The home has control over the psychological, physical, social and economic condition of the infant (Udida, Ukwayi & Ogodo, 2012). A child's family background also may influence his / her response to his / her life situation and academic level.

Something which affects the child's developmental environment can affect the child's education or readiness. One of these factors is family background. It is widely believed that the provision and availability of additional learning facilities would give children with high socio-economic backgrounds more opportunities to the learning environment at home. On the other hand, children of low socioeconomic status have no access to additional educational services; therefore, it may not be easy to get to the top. Besides, the school must adapt academically because it demonstrates that the student can face up to the problem of meeting the academic demands. Education is difficult for students who cannot transit to rich family background. These students are at greater risk of academic difficulties and comportment. They are more likely to be avoided. An ideal school environment should make students feel confident and effective, creating motivation and trust. Nonetheless, school is just a place for students who are failing academically to boost their already poor self-esteem. Such pupils may also seek to escape feelings of disappointment through the avoidance of schooling or inappropriate behaviour.

Against this backdrop, this study is undertaken to examine the influence of family background on the academic performance of students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this research is to examine the influence of family background on the academic performance of students in Economics in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The specific objectives are to:

1. Find out if there is a relationship between parental educational level and student's academic performance in Economics;
2. Determine the influence of parental income on students' academic performance in Economics.
3. Find out if there is any significant relationship between the parental level of motivation and students' academic performance in Economics.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the research:

HO1: There is no relationship between parental educational level and student's academic performance in Economics

HO2: There is no significant influence of parental income on students' academic performance in Economics

HO3: There is no significant relationship between the parental level of motivation and students' academic performance in Economics

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a survey design to determine the influence of family background on students' academic performance. The population of that study is the entire secondary school in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The study randomly selected 80 students and 20 teachers in Port Harcourt Metropolitan. The questionnaire was based on four Likert scales which measured the opinion of the respondents on the influence of family background on student's academic performance. Descriptive statistics and simple percentages and tabulation were used for the data collected by way of a questionnaire. Chi-square was used when evaluating the null hypotheses,

Theoretical Framework

Socialization Theory

This study is anchored on socialization theory. Socialization is the mechanism by which children begin to gain the skills they need to work in their community. It is one of the most critical learning experiences they will undergo to enable them to adapt to the societal norms. Whereas the cultural diversity is expressed in the behavior, practices and comportments of entire social classes; at the individual level, as the most basic form of culture is found. This concept is not possible until a person has been socialized by family, extended family and social networks. The cultural and social features of this reflecting cycle of learning and teaching achieve consistency (Chao, 2000). The socialization theory thus modified this principle. The theory of Socializing was developed in 1929 by Charles Cooley and applies to child development activities. Socialization is a lifelong process involving the acquisition and distribution of laws, practices and ideologies that offer a person the skills and habits needed to participate in society. Socialization is the mechanism by which individuals acquire skills that are required for their societies to work which is the most powerful learning process. While cultural diversity is reflected in the behavior, practices and conduct of all social classes, the most important expression of culture is typically at each point.

The family typical socialization is expanded with broader social networks by one's parents (Harkness, 1996). Chao (2000) emphasized that it is generally believed that cultural models identify ideal growth endpoints that inform socialization goals that shape parent's ideas in terms of ethno-parenting theories. Nevertheless, he went on to point out that the cultural paradigm is largely reflected by the family's loyalty, reciprocity and unity with the members of the family. Therefore, the research examines the impact of family background only on one aspect of a child's life; academic performance, which is the crux of the socialization theory.

Searching for Literature

Concept of Economics

"Economics" is derived from the Greek word "Oikonomiko" which is divided into two parts: (a) "Oikos" meaning "Home" and (b) "Nomos," meaning "Management." Economics thus means 'home management.' The family leader faces the dilemma of handling the family members' limitless wants within the family's restricted income. The same also applies to culture. When we see society as a whole or as a "gang," it still faces the question of coping with the limited resources available to society's member's unregulated wants. Therefore, economics means learning how people organize themselves to cope with the fundamental problems of scarcity (New Age Publishers, 2014).

Chudi (2013) states that Economics is concerned with the utilization of the limited available resources by individuals, businesses and government; which plays a key role in the potential development of the human race. The subject of management enables students to acquire awareness and make them successful members of the group for the practical solution to economic problems in society. The persistent poor performance of students in economic can impede such a hopeful desire (Yusuf, 2009).

Concept of Family Background

The definition of background or socioeconomic status (SES) (Bornstein & Bradley, 2003) does not have a clear consensus. Sociologists typically refer to the relative role, based on their access or influence over money, reputation, and power, of a person or family within a social hierarchy (Mueller & Parcel, 1981). The family background or socioeconomic status (SES) is an economic and sociological variable based on employment, education and occupation, an individual's work experience and his/her social role concerning others. During an examination of the background of a family; the household income, the education and jobs of the workers, it was found out that the educational performance of a student is a reflection of these variables. The background of the family is more widely used to represent the economic disparity of a person in society as a whole. To explain a family or individual's three roles, the family background is generally divided into three levels (high, middle, and low) to explain if one or more of the three (income, education and occupation) variables are included in one group (Mueller & Parcel, 1981). The family background is the social status or class of a person or community, as described by the American Psychological Association (2015). Sometimes it is measured as a combination of employment, income and work. The family background is described as a measure of the economic and social status of individuals and is usually related to improved health among others.

Concept of Academic Performance

Reporter from the University of Cambridge (2003) asserted that academic performance is measured by test performance which described the way student's educational ambitions have been accomplished. Quality metrics may be passed or failed classes as well as credits earned during exams and competitions. Osonwa et al (2013) also indicated academic performance is determined by variables such as family, schools, society and motivational (Eweniyi, in Udida, Ukwaiyi and Ogodo, 2012). The child's internal state (smartness, fitness, motive, anxiety, and so on) and environment (accessibility of an adequate learning environment,

adequacy of education infrastructures such as textbooks and well-equipped laboratories) are the major factors affecting a student's academic performance.

In many main fields, academic performance is the most important, including student performance factors, educational factors and family factors. The performance of students seeks to measure the extent to which the students achieve the learning outcome within a given period (Ghazi, Nawaz, Shatzad, Shahzada and Rukhar 2013).

Relationship between Family Background and Academic Performance of Students in Economics

As described by Coleman (2008), family background is divided into three separate components; financial (family income or wealth), human capital (parent level of education) and social capital (parent's relationship). Kim (2002) maintained that the relationship between parental wealth and human capital and their children's positive learning experiences is paramount towards their success in school. Concerning the educational achievements of children, he emphasized that all of these factors are essential determinants of childhood education performance

Kim (2002) described social capital as the disparity in the relationship between financial and human capital of their parents on the one hand, and the growth of their children's human capital on the other. Research-based on a small-income minority family sample showed that high-school mothers have greater expectations of the academic achievement of their child and that these expectations have an impact on the performance of their child's mathematical and reading achievement (Kim, 2002). Researchers in African family systems, especially in single-mother households, paid tremendous attention to the prospect of economic privation (Kim, 2011). The advocates of the economic deprivation argued that children from low-income background experience academic difficulties. Therefore, whether the income is statistically regulated or families align at income level, the impact of marital status on child welfare is displayed through parental rejection and feeling of hopelessness

The Relationship between School Environment and Student's Academic Performance

In the achievement of quality education, a good school atmosphere is important. Leading learning environment increases the success of students in class and exams. The school environment is described by Ukit (2003) as the aggregate of external conditions or factors affecting educational institutions' activities. Also, economic, legal, political, socio-cultural, technical, and physical factors are involved. Uwadia (2001) identified schools (natural and artificial), including the environment, building and structural structures of the schools, the teaching and learning facilities/equipment, library resources, recreational facilities, school management style and the level of academic planning and engagement. A good school atmosphere is very critical for achieving quality education and could affect the academic performance of students. A good atmosphere can lift you up and promote all-round growth and poor environments can make you live a miserable life.

Mark (2002) has confirmed that clean, calm, secure, relaxed and balanced environments are an essential factor in good

education and learning. A bad environment causes illness and prevents students from doing well in school. . Also, Sucharita (2004) carried out an analysis of the social intelligence impact of the school atmosphere and found that school environment qualities interfere with students ' general intellectual capacity and their social understanding. He used the use of 2 by 2 factories in his study, in which the two intelligence levels interacted with the two school environments. The study showed that, in privileged schools, elite students scored significantly higher in social intelligence assessments than poorer students.

Besides, it was found that indoor air quality was influenced by temperature and humidity and this influenced the academic performance of students. In particular, schools require high ventilation, as children respire more air in proportion to their weight than adults (MacGovern,1998 &Moore (1998). The deposition of carbon dioxide due to human breath is one of the first signs of inadequate ventilation in an institution. Once the carbon dioxide level reaches 1000 parts per million, headaches and somnolence occur. Myhrroid et al. (1996) also shown in support of this that higher levels of carbon dioxide also decreased students' test performance in classrooms, and students' health problems have arisen concerning classrooms where carbon dioxide levels have been reduced.

Factors Responsible for Poor Academic Performance of Students in Economics

Various studies have identified various factors that lead to students' persistent poor performance in the economic subject. Economic students lack the knowledge and quantitative skills of economic. These problems are attributed to a shortage of economic teachers, poor educational content, social factors as well as school environment (Adu, 2004, Chudi, 2013, Yusuf, 2009). The role of economics in the growth of businesses and economic and human growth will primarily promote strong support from educators and teachers in pursuit of a consistent educational evaluation method that can diagnose and remedy the underperformance of the economy (Kallie, 2015). The main goal is to direct, and track learning and progress in the pursuance of course goals through assessments and other assessment methods in the course of the learning cycle (Alonge, 2004; Colawole, 2010).

In this context, diagnostic tests are divided into smaller units of skill in the teaching and learning process; aims are set for each skill; the design and administration of a valid diagnostic test are administered. Group-based restoration is provided in particular capacities where students are deficient beforethey move to different skills. The division of the subject or course into specific skills means that students are adequately prepared for the exam. Besides, these routine assessments allow the student to participate in and improve its success with the teaching and teaching-learning process (Revera, 2007). Alderson (2005) said that the diagnostic evaluation is useful for both the student and for the instructor (to identify learning difficulties of students and to recommend appropriate disciplinary actions) (to locate the particular challenges encountered by students within a learning capacity and to predict the effects of the summative assessment). The diagnostic assessment is also a method for recognizing learner problems to enhance the performance of the majority of students to provide remediation.

In this process, the academic performance of students plays a significant role. The issue of low academic performance has been addressed extensively and some factors in understanding academic achievements have been identified. To understand academic performance achievement, the other variables studied included demographic status, intelligence, behavioral features and psychological influences, including attitudes, self-esteem, credibility and self-conception. In addition to skill disparities that are not easily managed, students do have different styles of learning which can influence their academic performance (Boateng, 2003).

The performance of the students is also influenced by socioeconomic factors such as attendance in school, family income and parental level of education, teacher-student relationships, presence of eligible teachers at school, the gender of the student and distance from the school. (Sen, & Majumder 2010). Kernan, Bogart & Wheat (2011) shared the same opinion that a healthy school environment enhances students' performance. The relationship between university lending and stress is negative, but between GPA (grade point average) and stress is high (Lynch, Espenshade &Zajacova, 2005).

Stringing, et al (2010) asserted that several studies were carried out to evaluate certain factors that influence the academic performance of the student. They pointed out that the academic performance of the students depends on a variety of socio-economic factors, such as student enrolment, family income, parental education, the teacher-student relationship, the school teacher's involvement, the student's sex and the location of the school. Okyerefo, Fiaveh, & Lamptey (2011) noted that home plays several roles in promoting students' academic success. The parents play the main major roles in the success of students in school. Various parenting styles result in different ways in which children communicate. Each of them forms an essential factor in forming the worldviews of children. For other research, for instance, children between the ages of six and ten spend less time with parents as they are usually at school all the time. The mixture of parental schooling, employment and income (Jeynes, 2002, McMillan & Western 2000), is one of the key aspects of a family, socioeconomic status. Boateng (2003) has noted that the teacher determined the success or failure of the programme. Teachers are the centre of the educational system, as they implement and break up educational programmes to meet the aims of education. They are the driver of all that is planned and carried out in school. The pivots around which the wheel of education travel is human resources (teachers, administrators, heads and deputy's heads).

Data Presentation Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses earlier stated will be tested using chi-square.

Hypothesis one: There is no relationship between parental educational level and student's academic performance in Economics.

| O | E | O-E | (O-E) ² | $\frac{\sum (O-E)^2}{E}$ |
|----|----|-----|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 10 | 20 | -10 | 100 | 5 |
| 7 | 20 | -13 | 169 | 8.45 |
| | | | | $X^2 = 13.45$ |

Source: Field Survey, 2018

$$\text{Chi-square } (X^2) = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where

O = Observed frequency,

E = Expected Frequency

X² = Chi-square

The critical value of 3.84 was obtained from a table of 0.05 and 5% in alpha and the measured value at 13.45 was obtained. The value calculated is more than the critical value and the researcher, therefore, dismissed the null hypothesis that parental and academic output of a university student was unrelated to the parental education level and was accepted in economics

Hypothesis two: There is no significant influence of parental income on students' academic performance in Economics

| O | E | O-E | (O - E) ² | $\frac{\sum (O - E)^2}{E}$ |
|----|----|-----|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 10 | 20 | -10 | 100 | 5 |
| 2 | 20 | -18 | 324 | 16.1 |
| | | | | X ² = 21.2 |

Source: Field Survey, 2017

$$\text{Chi-square } (X^2) = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where

O = Observed frequency,

E = Expected Frequency

X² = Chi-square

The critical value of 3.84 was derived from a chi-square table at alpha levels of 0.05 or 5 percent and the measured value is at 21.2, the calculated value exceeds the critical value and the researchers, therefore, dismissed the null hypothesis that parental income has no significant effect on academic student success in economics and have adopted the former.

Discussion of Findings

The study above showed that the family history of students and their academic success in economics is substantially positive. It is also evident that educated parents provide their children with the requisite learning resources that lead to school academic success for their children. The study found that high-income parents can easily give their children the necessities required for successful learning. It ensures that students from trained families receive learning aids and instructional resources that in turn have a positive impact or influence on their academic success. The study also found that the climate of the learning community is favorable to children of qualified parents.

Providing a positive environment for effective learning at all levels will boost their academic performance for children in low-income families. One of the students interviewed said that "we do better in school if our parents provide us with basic learning aids". Some of the students seem to take my academic activities more seriously as my parents also question my progress report.

The findings in this study conclude that the educational level of parents had a positive relationship with the academic

performance of students, as seen by Ozurumba, Briggs, Ebuara and Emanhe (2007); Hawkes (1995); Kapinga (2014) and Egunsola (2014). It also agrees with the findings of Gustafsson, Jubish and Khurran, (2010) and Ogunsola and Adewale, (2012), Egunsola (2014); Abdulraheem, (2015) that parental background has strong influences on student's academic performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on this observation, the study concluded that the family history and academic performance of secondary school students in economics have good relationships. It makes students of educated parents more likely than students from lower-educated parents do higher in academics. The report also suggests that the amount of parental income has a favorable relationship with the academic success of high school students. The higher the amount of parental income, the greater the chance of investing in learning-friendly services for the children. Nevertheless, while there is a clear association between family background and educational success, there is also an exceptional case in which these children with disadvantaged families have higher academic results than those with good family background. The study findings have concluded that the academic performance of students in schools is affected by the family background. Parental education, income and motivation are the main influences in the family context. The educational status of the academic success of parents and students has a strong relationship. It is because parents themselves understood the value of education at home.

The following recommendations are stated based on the study findings:

1. Social and economic policies should be introduced to give children with low-economic status equal opportunities to support their children's education;
2. Parents should provide a home environment that supports and motivates children to achieve better education at school. This can be done by teaching your children at home to improve schoolwork and to provide the necessary learning material;
3. Parent's education and their value are role models for their children. Parents should try to demonstrate a positive attitude towards the education of their children by actively involving and supporting them. This will enable them to succeed in academics and improve academic adaptation;
4. Pupils are more likely to succeed if their parents actively support their learning. Therefore, parents should monitor the progress of their children in school and contact staff at school.
5. School authorities should allow undergraduate students or families to participate in various activities to compensate for the inferiority of students with schooling or extra-curricula;
6. Schools partnering with PTAs can offer facilities for long-stay holiday coaching classes to supplement regular school programs for pupils with low background in education and employment.

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