

# Investigating Parents' Socio-Economic Background and Academic Performance of Business Studies Students in Secondary School in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State

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**Abstract-** *In this study the authors investigated Parents' Socio-Economic Background and Academic Performance of Business Studies Students in Secondary School in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State, Nigeria. Two null hypotheses were formulated. Ex-post facto research design was adopted and a sample of two hundred (200) students was selected for the study. The selection was done through stratified random sampling technique. A twenty (20) likert scale instrument "Parents' Socioeconomic Background Questionnaire (PSBQ)" was used for data collection. All hypotheses were subjected to testing at .05 level of significance, with relative degree of freedom, using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The result of the analysis showed that, parents' occupation and income status influence academic performance of secondary school business studies students in Calabar Municipality. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Parents should be encouraged to engage in more productive endeavours and could create entrepreneurial friendly atmosphere for the people to enhance their capacities and ensure increase in income and better jobs.*

**Indexed Terms-** *Academic performance, Government, Parents, Socio-economic background*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Academic performance of business studies students at the secondary school level is not only a pointer to the effectiveness or otherwise of schools but a major determinant of the future of the youths in particular and the nation in general (Aremu and Osonwa, as cited

in Ewumi, 2012). According to Udoye and Ndum (2013) business studies form a means of laying foundation for national, technological, economic advancement and for higher education. The aim of every society is to prepare every citizen to take their place functionally in the society. This implies that as there are ailing problems in the society threatening to annihilate the being of man, business studies education comes in to solve such problems by appeasing such forces (Okey, Ayang and Ndum, 2012). Unfortunately, the quality of secondary education in Nigeria is threatened because students are witnessing unprecedented mass failure in both internal and external examinations respectively. Ndum and Okey (2013) indicated that Education is a basic platform for the building of capacities of the human factor in any work environment.

According to Ajila and Olutola (2002), in the 2006 JSCE results, only 25% of the total number of students that sat for the examination had five credits and above including business studies, indicating that 75% of the total number of the candidates failed. A general review of the situation reveals that there is a growing gap and the question is, who is to be blamed for this poor academic performance in business studies?

Families in general and parents in particular, have often been the most important support system available to the child. The strongest factor in modelling a child's personality or behaviour is his relationship with his parents. Coleman, (1997) proposed that family influence can be separated into components such as economic, human and social capital. Hence, a family's socio-economic status

correlates with academic achievements of their children at secondary level. Ibalaoro (2012) indicated that socio-economic status of students is based on family income, parental educational level and parental occupation. Furthermore, Ramsey and Ramsey (1994) describing the relationship of family socio-economic status to children's readiness for school opined that across all socio-economic groups, parents face major challenges when it comes to providing optimal care and education for their children. Campbell and Wu (as cited in Kainuwa and Yusuf, 2013) stated that the home environment and family processes provides a network of physical, social and intellectual forces and factors which affects the students' learning. According to them, the family's level of encouragement, expectations and education activities in the home are related to socio-economic status.

From the foregoing, this study is structured to investigate the relationships among parents' occupation and income, and academic performance among secondary school business studies students in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River state.

## II. LITERATURE

Studies by Obanya and Ezelon (2002) revealed that more people from the high socio economic class aspire to highly rated professions such as medicine, engineering, law, etc. Children from such homes start school early from nursery school to university and are assisted by their parents. While some children from the lower class work all day in farms or hawk in the street due to poverty and ignorance. Children from the lower class are not encouraged by their parents to go for prestigious profession.

According to Dubbey and Edem (2000) parental occupation affects the achievement of a child in school. Douglas (2003) in his research showed that children from low income houses were more handicapped in terms of their performance, mentality activity and school achievement than children whose parents occupy high occupational status. A study conducted by Obanya and Ezelon (2002) showed that children from low working class homes are not as good as children from high working class as a result of poor exposure to information. They maintained that

children intelligent quotient bare a direct relationship to the occupational background of their parents.

Oladele (2000) observed that parental occupation influence their children academic performance .he maintained that children from high social class have opportunities to greater cognitive challenges while those from low social class have lesser opportunity to cognitive challenges.

Odok (2013) conducted a research using Calabar Municipality senior secondary school teachers as a study population of 2,540 and a sample of 250 in the study area. The aim of the investigation was to find out whether or not children from rich homes are better performers than those from a poor homes. Out of hundred teachers whose opinion were sought on the issue of 56% agreed that the children from rich family are better performer while 44% of the respondents disagree. Their point of view for the disagreement was in direction of the attitude of both parents to schooling. According to them, some rich parents may be careless about their children education even though they may have money. While some poor parents may show great determination to make them perform low-income family has a problem in children education in the country.

Beck (2011) examined students and their families' income in china. He studied almost 407 students in the early years. The study measures students' reading skills and observed families in their home, also it took parts in the families in home and in the student skill. Moreover, it was a well-organized study with chosen children and the process of measuring them and their families. The results with numbers were very clear and shows how can the families income affected their children learning (Zlang ,2012).

Another study that has been reviewed is by Davies, Gorison and Bluons (2011). In the study, the authors showed another example to the low-income families and children education who are suffering are having problems with education.

The author asserts that students' absence affects their education and how their families are having problems with medical care. The author did not show method or result but it showed facts about children from

childhood. The students are behind others from different family background is suffering from asthma too. The family income can affect the children education in their early years (Davies, Gordon and Blurns, 2011). Abraham, Davies and Vermon, Feagorns (2013) reviewed the third study of low income family and their children education. The language differences are result of the mothers, this study took months from variety of children and home. The results are very clear and show how students can learn from their mother. The percentage represents how students learning are connected to their homes. The language that mothers used with their children can affect their educational skill. In the study, mothers with low income are using simple sentence and vocabularies with their children. On the other hand, complex or more advanced vocabularies are prominent amidst mothers and children with high income.

Jensen (2013) represents in his study how students from families with high income perform better in business studies. His studies took place in United States for several years. He reveals how timing is important for the family income. The impact of the income can be shown in the early of the students learning. This may show better results to the student academic achievement. Moreover, students from high income family, have the opportunity to get into any colleges or university than others.

### III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In many climes, including Nigeria, socioeconomic status is often assessed on the basis of income, family size, parents' education level, parent attitude and parent occupation; but this study is limited to family income and occupational status. Families with high socioeconomic status often have more success in preparing their young children for school because the practically have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development. They are able to provide their children with high quality child care, books and toys to encourage children in various activities at home. Also, they have easy access to information regarding their children's health as well as social, emotional and cognitive development. In addition, families with high

socioeconomic status often seek out information to help them better prepare the young children for school.

According to Udida, Ukwayi and Ogodo (2012), the home has influence on the child psychological, emotional, social and economic state. In addition, the family background and context of a child can affect his/ her reaction to life situation and level of academic performance. Hence, whatever affects the developmental environment of a child would possibly affect his/her education or disposition to it. Parental socio-economic status is one of such variables. It is disheartening to note that there is a growing level of poor academic performance of students today. A more careful examination indicates that in the Nigerian society, many of the students who fail in their terminal or sessional examinations are traceable to parents with very low income status as well as those whose parents are engaged in menial jobs with meagre salary. This is ugly, this is unacceptable and unbearable in a society that advocates equality, equity, fair play and universal basic education. Worst of all it is expected that the same students compete in the same labour market with others who had holistic learning advantages as a result of the robust socioeconomic status of their parents.

The above scenario ignited this study, focused on investigating the relationship between parents' income as well as occupation and academic performance of secondary school business studies students in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River State.

### IV. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between parent socio-economic background and the academic performance of secondary school business education students in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Specifically, this research is aimed at:

- i. Examining how parents' occupation relates to the academic performance of secondary school business studies students.
- ii. Ascertaining how Parents' income level relates to the academic performance of secondary school business studies students.

V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were raised:

- i. To what extent does parents’ occupation affect the academic performance of senior secondary school business studies students?
- ii. To what extent does parents’ income affect the academic performance of senior secondary school government students?

VI. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated:

- i. There is no significant relationship between parents’ occupation and the academic performance of secondary school business studies students in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between parents’ income level and academic performance of business studies students in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area.

VII. METHOD

The study adopted ex-post facto design. Population of study was two thousand (2000) secondary school students. Stratified random sampling technique was used to collect data. The sample used for this study was two hundred (200) students drawn from ten selected secondary schools in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area.

The instrument used for data collection was the Parents Socio-economic Background Questionnaire (PSEBQ), which was designed to focus on the parental occupation and income level of senior secondary school government students in the area.

The reliability of the instrument was established through test-retest reliability estimate which yielded co-efficient value of 0.71 making the instrument suitable for the use in this study.

Data obtained was statistically analysed with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis at .05 level of significance.

*Hypotheses 1*

There is no significant relationship between parents’ occupation and students’ academic performance.

To test the hypotheses, Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical analysis was employed and the result is presented in table 1 below.

Table 1.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis to compare the relationship between parents’ occupation and students’ academic performance N=200

Variables	$\Sigma X$	$\Sigma X^2$
$\Sigma Y$ $\Sigma Y^2$ $\Sigma XY$	r. cal	
Parents’ attitude	6213	72345
297286      0.70		
Academic performance	25521	1300514

Significant at .05, df = 198, critical r=0.139

Data on Table 1 revealed a calculated r- value of 0.70, which is greater than the tabulated r- value of 0.139 at .05 level of significance and 198 degree of freedom. Since the calculated r- value was greater than the table value, the null hypotheses of no significant relationship between the parents’ occupations and the students’ academic performance was rejected. The implication of this result is that the kind of occupation of parents of a student, have significant effects on the academic performance of the students.

*Hypotheses 2*

There is no significant relationship between parents’ income level and academic performance of government students in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area.

The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2:

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis to ascertain the relationship between parents’ income level and students’ academic performance N=200

Variables		$\Sigma X$	$\Sigma X^2$
$\Sigma Y$	$\Sigma Y^2$	$\Sigma XY$	r.cal
Parents' income level		6623	85047
332997	0.99		
Academic performance		26523	1300413

Significant at .05; df= 198, critical r=0.139

Data on Table 2 revealed a calculated r- value of 0.99, which was greater than the tabulated r- value of 0.139 at .05 level of significance and 198 degree of freedom. Since the calculated- value was greater than the table value, the null hypotheses of no significant relationship between parents' income level and students' academic performance was rejected. The implication of this result is that the level of income of parents affects the academic performance of their children.

VIII. DISCUSSION

*Parents' occupation and students' academic performance*

After analysing the data collected for the sub-variables, it was observed that parents' occupation has significant impact on the academic performance of their children in business studies. It was observed that most children from families with lucrative jobs perform better than their colleagues whose parents have low income earning jobs. This is as a result of parents putting their children through in schools with well trained staff, great infrastructure and high standard.

This result agrees with the result of studies by Obanya and Ezelon (2002) which revealed that more people from the high socio-economic class aspire to highly rated professions such as medicine, engineering, law, etc. Children from such homes start school early from nursery school to university and are assisted by their parents. While some children from the lower class work all day in farms or hawk in the street due to poverty and ignorance. Children from the lower class are not encouraged by their parents to go for prestigious profession.

*Parents' income and students' academic performance*

The result of findings indicated that parents' income level significantly influence the academic performance of their children in business studies. It was observed that parents with high financial status provide better opportunities and condition for their children than parents with low financial status. While rich parents are able to support their children's educational pursuit with good quality of business studies textbooks, computers and other essential materials for study and learning, poor parents can hardly afford such materials and this situation has negative effects on their children's academic performance.

The result of this study was in line with Beck (2011) who observed the effects of parents' income on the academic performance of their children. Beck observed lack of textbooks, computers, lateness to school, late payment of school fees etc. are some of the setback associated with children from poor family. The setbacks impede the performance of these students.

CONCLUSION

From the results obtained from the analysis of data collected, the following conclusions were drawn:

- i Parents' occupation has a significant impact on the academic performance of their children in business studies. Most children from parents with more professional and lucrative jobs perform better than children whose parents have poorly paid jobs.
- ii Parents' income level has a significant effect on the academic performance of their children. wealthy parents tend to produce children with better academic performance than poor parents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- i Government and all stakeholders should provide enabling environment aimed at improving the socioeconomic status of parents and the entire society.
- ii Parents should be encouraged to engage in more productive endeavours. Government can create entrepreneurial friendly atmosphere for the people

to enhance their capacities and ensure increase in income and better jobs.

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