

Parental Background and Academic Performance of Primary School Pupils in Maru Local Government Education Authority, Zamfara State- Nigeria: Implications for Sociology of Education

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to investigate the Parental Background influencing Primary School Pupils Academic Performance in Maru Local Government Education Authority Zamfara State-Nigeria. The objectives of the Study are therefore to establish the parental economic factors and parental educational background influencing academic performance in public primary schools in Maru Local Government Education Authority. A descriptive survey research design was used in the study. The target population was 148 public primary school of Maru Local Government. Ten 10 primary school were purposively selected from total population. Validity of the instrument: face and content validity were validated by some experts, including one in test and measurement all from the faculty of education and extension service Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a test and retest was carried out in 2 schools out of the sample with an intervals of two weeks after which the two scores was compared using Pearson product moment correlation formula and the reliability index of 0.824 was obtained which indicate the agreement of the 2 test was good enough for usage. Study, indicated that many parents do not play their roles in terms of their children's education as evidenced by low motivation, and parents also do not follow their children's academic success. It was recommended that parents should discourage absenteeism of pupils in the school. Parent should devote more of their time to the upbringing of their children by providing academic materials.

Keywords: Parental Background, Parental Influence, and Pupils Academic Performance.

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INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria especially in rural areas, most families are poor and cannot adequately afford 3-square meals not to talk of meeting the educational needs of their children (Smith, 2000). This indeed has serious implications on the learning and performance of less privileged children in school. Children from such families are forced to miss classes, unable to do their assignments and most seriously are driven from school due to nonpayment of schools fees. Indeed, family background in terms of family type, size, socio-economic status, occupation and educational background play important role in children's educational attainment and social integration (Osunloye, 2008).

Measuring academic performance can occur at multiple levels and serves multiple purposes. For instance, it has been indicated that classroom teachers often conduct formative and summative tests to evaluate student mastery of course content and provide grades for students and parents. Graduation tests in particular are used to determine whether a student has mastered the minimum content and competencies required to receive a high level of education. Each of these kinds of assessments engenders significant questions related to test design, types of decisions supported by the results as well as alternative assessment.

Socio-economic status of the family is a significant variable or factor that influences the academic performance of the students either positively

or negatively depending on the level of support given to students by his/her parents or guardian. Therefore, the higher the socio-economic status and support of parents, the higher the educational life chance of the children and vice versa, (Mahuta, 2007).

Parent's education has to do with educational qualification or attainment of the parent. There are parents with high formal educations and those with no formal education. Education of the parents must have influence on the educational attainments of the children in the school. The educational qualifications or attainment of parents also influence a child's academic performance. Students from parents with high formal educational qualification tend to perform better than children from parents with low levels of formals education (Datta in Viatonu, 2004). This is because parents with high formal education provide adequate intellectual and environmental stimulation for their children's academic growth and development than their educational counterparts.

Basically, children of parents with formal education have access to intellectual stimulating materials such as magazines, audio, visual, audio-visual and internet access, pictorial readings among other things which aid their academic growth, this is coupled with the attitudes willingness and ability of parents to educate their children. Children of parents with high formal education tend to find learning interesting and stimulating the ready assistance from their literate parents.

Statement of the Problem

The academic performance of a child is affected by the parental background, social, economic and cultural practices. Parents need to play their role fully in order to promote the academic performance of their children in school. They are expected to ensure that children have enough time to study at home and avoid certain traditions that would hinder learning of their children. Many children have been hindered from reading their optimum level in academic pursuit to some negative factors from home. These include lack of parental encouragement, lack of conducive environment, poor financial or lack of feeding, ill health and lack of interest on the part of the students and parents. On another development, some pupils were dropped out of the school without completing their study because some parents are not providing their children educational needs.

Before we look at the part played by parental background in school performance, which is the main concern of this study, the first thing that should strike our minds is the wrong conception that parental background is synonymous with home location, that is, whether urban or rural. A study involving home

background should not consider location only, but also the parental socio-economic status, parental support and encouragement, family size and position in the family. These factors operate severally and in different capacity to affect a child's academic pursuit or school performance. Perhaps the high rate of out of school children in the northern Nigeria and zamfara state in particular could be as a result of poor socio-economic and educational background of parents. This motivated the researchers to investigate the effect of academic background of parents on academic performance of pupils in primary schools in Maru Local Government Education Authority of Zamfara State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Investigates the influence of academic background of parents on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Maru Local Government Education Authority?
2. Find out the influence of parental socio-economic factors on the academic performance of pupils in primary schools in Maru Local Government Education Authority of Zamfara State?

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

3. What is the influence of academic background of parents on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Maru Local Government Education Authority?
4. What is the influence of parental socio-economic factors on the academic performance of pupils in primary schools in Maru Local Government Education Authority of Zamfara State?

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey design was adopted. The researchers found this design suitable as it would help to obtain data across section of information touching on parental influence on academic performance in public primary schools in Maru Local Government Area of Zamfara State. The descriptive survey research design allows the researchers to collect information through administration of questionnaires to a sample of individuals (Orodho, 2009). The descriptive survey design was intended to produce quantitative information about parental influence on academic performance. The population of the study is the entire Head-teachers, Teachers, Pupils and Parents in public primary schools in Maru Local Government Education Authority. Maru has 148 public primary schools with 55,798 total enrolments, 37,198 boys and 18,600 girls and with a total number of 2,508 primary schools teachers.

Table 1: Sample Size

SN	Sample	Pupils Sample Size	Teachers' Sample Size	Head Teachers Sample Size	Parent	Town
1	Banaga S M.P.S	21	22	1	3	Maru
2	Dade MPS	21	30	1	3	Maru
3	Kadaddaba P.S	7	7	1	3	Kadaddaba
4	Jabaka P.S	5	10	1	3	Jabaka
5	Danmarke P.S	9	10	1	3	Danmarke
6	SPS Kanoma	17	6	1	3	Kanoma
7	J.N.I Maru	89	13	1	3	Maru
8	MPS Ruwandoruwa	140	26	1	3	Ruwandoruwa
9	Cheboji P.S	31	5	1	3	Cheboji
10	Yangurmu P.S	17	3	1	3	Yangurmu
	Total	357	132	10	30	

Source: Field Work, 2019

The instruments for this study are:

- (a) Head teachers Questionnaire
- (b) Teachers Questionnaire
- (c) Pupils Questionnaire
- (d) Parent Questionnaire

- a) **Head Teachers Questionnaire:**-The questionnaires contained two major sections; Section A which sought Demographic Information, while section B sought information on Parental Factors which Influence Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools in Maru Local Government Area of Zamfara State.
- b) **Teachers Questionnaire:**-The Teachers questionnaire also contained two sections. Section A which sought Demographic Information of the teacher while section B sought information on Parental Factors which Influence Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools.
- c) **Pupils Questionnaire:** -The pupils' questionnaire contained two sections; Section A which sought Demographic Information of the pupil while section B sought information on Parental Factors that Influence Pupils' Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools.
- d) **Parents' Interview:** -The interview was conducted to parents of the ten sample schools in Maru Local Government area to seek their opinion on parental factors that influence pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in sampled school for the study.

The validity of the instrument was obtained by giving the instruments to experts from the Department of Educational Foundations, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto, for content and face validation of the instruments. This team of experts made assessments on the instruments and provided the feedback that was included in the final instruments. In order to test the reliability of the instruments to be used in the study, the test-retest method was used. The questionnaires and interview were administered to the respondents of two primary schools twice with an interval of two weeks after which the scores of the two tests was compared using Pearson Product Moment Correlation formula, and the reliability index of 0.84 was obtained which indicate the agreement between the two results, thus, implying that the instrument is good enough for usage. The administration of questionnaires was done by the researchers. The questionnaires were administered by the researchers to the respondents in the schools and the interview were also be conducted for parents of pupils in selected sampled schools.

The data collected from respondents through questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of simple percentage and frequency count using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). While data collected through qualitative method was coded, indexed and interpreted into themes and sub themes and finally transcribe into writing.

RESULTS

The tables below show the respondents (pupils) by sex.

Table 2: Sex

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	213	60.0	60.0	60.0
Female	142	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	355	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 2 indicated that 213 respondents (pupils) representing 60% are male and 142 respondents representing 40% are female.

Table 3: shows period spent in the school by the pupils

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
less than 3 years	89	25.1	25.1	25.1
3-5	148	41.7	41.7	66.8
5-7	118	33.2	33.2	100.0
Total	355	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 3 indicated that 89 respondents representing 25.1% have been in school in less than three years, while 148 respondents representing 41.7%

have been in school between three to five years and 118 respondents representing 33.2% have been in school between five to seven years.

Table 4: Age of the Pupils

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
8-9	198	55.8	55.8	55.8
10-12	157	44.2	44.2	100.0
Total	355	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 4 shows that 198 respondents representing 55.8% are between eight to nine years old

and 157 respondents representing 44.2% are between ten to twelve years old.

Table 5: Do your parents provide all basic needs to support your Education .E.g. exam, Uniforms, etc.?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	173	48.7	48.7	48.7
No	182	51.3	51.3	100.0
Total	355	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 5 indicated that 173 respondents representing 48.7% agreed Yes that their parents provide all basic needs to support their education while

182 respondents representing 51.3% disagree No that their parents provide all basic needs to support their education.

Table 6: Do your parents provide other reading materials to read at home apart from what you get from school?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	211	59.4	59.4	59.4
No	144	40.6	40.6	100.0
Total	355	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 6 shows that 211 respondents representing 59.4% agreed yes that their parents provide other reading materials to read at home apart from what

they get from school. While 144 respondents representing 40.6% stated No that their parents provide other reading materials to read at home.

Table 7: Are you (Pupils) Satisfied with the way parent/guardian plays his/her role in your Education?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	297	83.7	83.7	83.7
No	58	16.3	16.3	100.0
Total	355	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 7 indicated that 297 respondents representing 83.7% stated Yes that they are satisfied with the way their parents play their roles in their

Education, and 58 respondents representing 16.3% stated No that they are not satisfied with the way their parents play their roles in their education.

Table 8: Do you think your parents/guardian are your role models

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	323	91.0	91.0	91.0
No	32	9.0	9.0	100.0
Total	355	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 8 indicated that 323 respondents representing 91.0% agreed by saying Yes that parents are their role models, while 32 respondents representing 9%

disagreed by saying No that parents are not their role models.

Table 9: Pupils responses on parents encouragement to learn

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	295	83.1	83.1	83.1
	No	60	16.9	16.9	100.0
	Total	355	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 9 indicates that most of the participants encourage their children to learn with 83.1%.

Demographic Data of Parents

Table 10: Age of the Parents

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
30 – 40	4	13.33	13.33	13.33
40 – 50	16	53.33	53.33	53.33
50 – 60	10	33.33	33.33	33.33
	30			

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 10 shows that 4 respondents representing 13.3% are between the age bracket of 30 – 40 years, while 16 respondents representing 53.3% are within the age bracket of 40 – 50 years of age and also

10 respondents representing 33.3% are between the age of 50 – 60 years of age.

4.2.5 Part B Analysis of Parents' Responses

Table 11: Do you contribute to the education of your child?

Option	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	30	100%	100%	100%

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 11 shows that 30 respondents representing 100% all agree that they in one way or the other contribute to the education of their children.

Table 12: Do you encourage early school attendance to your child?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	20	66.7	66.7	66.7
No	10	33.3	33.3	33.3

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 11 shows that 20 respondents representing 66.7% says that they always make sure that their children go to school as early as possible, while 10 respondents representing about 33.3% says they do not know the exact time that children left to

school because they always left before the children wake up from sleeping and some of the parent use to leave their home for three to four months in search of foods for the children.

Table 13: Do you encourage your child to read at home?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	20	66.7	66.7	66.7
No	10	33.3	33.3	33.3

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 12 shows that 20 respondents representing 66.7% say Yes that means they encourage their children by checking their note book and help them where necessary, while 10 respondents

representing 33.3% says No, they do not check their children note nor help them in doing homework and assignment.

Table14: Do you arrange extra class to your children at home?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	12	40	40	40
No	18	60	60	60
	30	100	100	100

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 14 shows that 12 respondents representing 40% says that they arrange extra lesson to their children, while 18 respondents representing 60%

says No they do not provide extra lesson to their children at home.

Table 15: Do your children do some activities at home before going to school in the morning?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	5	16.7	16.7	16.7
No	25	83.3	83.3	83.3
	30	100	100	100

Source: Field Work 2019

Table 15 indicates that 5 respondents representing 16.7% ask their children to carry some activities at home before going to school in the morning. Fetching water is among the example given by parents of such children. While 25 respondents representing 83.3% says No they do not need anything from their children at home before going to school.

provide adequate intellectual and environmental stimulation for their children's academic growth and development that their counterparts with low educational level.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

On parental academic level, studies have put forward to explain how parent educational background influence students' academic performance. For example, Musarat, Fozia and Ayesha (2013) found that, students whose parents are highly education scored higher GPAs. This finding was based on the fact that highly educated parents are more likely to provide learning materials, are more likely to check their children's exercise books, are more likely to engage their children in home lessons or help them in solving their homework, and are more likely to support their children in their overall educational process towards ensuring that they achieve better grade. In support of this finding, Ahmad and Naeema (2013) emphasized that, parents with an educational background would be in good position to be second teachers to their child. Furthermore, they are more likely to guide and counsel their child on the best way to perform well in education, and are more likely to provide necessary support required by the child. In previous study, Musgrave (2000) observed that, children from highly educated homes are more likely to follow the footsteps of their parents, and as such strive hard to achieve better grade. In support of this, Viatonu (2004) found significant relationship between parent academic background and students' academic performance, and explained that parents with higher level of education are more likely to

On poor socio-economic status, many studies have found that parental income level is a strong predictor of academic performance. These studies justified that parents who are advantaged by high income level tend to provide necessary educational needs to their children than their counterparts with low income level. In support of this finding, Suresh (2012) explained that, socioeconomic status is the most significant predictor of academic performance when other variables are controlled for. This significant relationship was precipitated by the fact that parents with high socioeconomic status are more likely to buy books and other learning materials for their children even if they are not highly educated or even if they have large family size. Sule (2003) earlier emphasized that, a number of school children lost the desire to attend school because of their parents' financial status. He further stressed that those who attend school, spend most of the weekdays assisting their parents in the farm. As a result of higher demand of children contribution in the households, over one million Nigerian children remain vulnerable to social risk. The propounding effect of low family income is the displacement of school children from school, thereby exposing them to social insecurity in later life. A number of explanations have been offered as to why parental income is associated with academic performance, including the fact that parents with low level of income are likely to provide less for their children and are more likely to see their children education as additional burden to the family (Ersado, 2003). However, other researchers were of the

view that persistence and awareness on the benefit of education among parents play significant role rather than income level. Their argument was that parents who are aware of the potential benefits of education will cater for their children education with the little they have. Such parents are more likely to look beyond their poverty level and devise all means to ensure that their children have access to quality education (Pong & Ju, 2000; Sullivan, 2000). In general, parents play limited roles in their children education in Maru local government area, and these limited roles have been connected with their socioeconomic status, academic background.

Summary of the Major Findings

The major findings of this study are as follows;

1. Parents do not adequately provide their children with varieties of learning materials that will improve their academic performance. Equally, items such as school uniforms and books are inadequately provided while school and examination fees are seldom paid. Parents do not adequately play their roles in terms of children's education. This is evidenced by low motivation, inadequate provision of conducive home environment for learning and low attendance to school activities. Moreover, parents do not often engage their children in extra moral lessons and also do not follow their children's academic success.
2. Economic hardship made many parents to shoulder their responsibilities of providing their pupils educational needs which in turn affect their pupils academic achievement.

CONCLUSION

A number of studies have been conducted to investigate family background on academic performance, employing different variables and different methods. These studies largely indicated significant relationship between variables of family background and pupils' academic performance, with evidence indicating insignificant results. In this study, it was gathered that many parents do not play their roles in terms of their children's education as evidenced by low motivation, inadequate provision of conducive home environment for learning and low attendance to school activities. More so, parents do not often engage their children in extra mural lessons and also do not follow their children's academic success. Other findings indicate that parents do not adequately provide their children with varieties of learning materials that will improve their academic performance. Equally, items such as school uniforms and books are inadequately provided while school and examination fees are seldom paid. Furthermore, it was discovered that parents do not fully involve and support school activities, and in many cases, they do not discourage absenteeism of their children. However, they do discourage drug abuse and encourage their children to respect school rules.

Although no certain significant relationship was measured in this study, however, these challenges could be attributed to family background.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. Parents should devote more of their time to the upholding of their children by providing academic materials like text books, good nutrition, and writing materials also they should provide extra moral lesson for their children.
2. Financial assistance and loans should be given to low economic status parents by the Governments and other Nongovernmental agencies, so as to help the parents to take full responsibilities of their children educational needs.

Implication of the Study to Sociologists of Education

Indeed many findings have been discovered in this study, with many implications to sociologists of education. The finding on the fact that many parents play limited roles indicates that sociologists of education should frequently hold many conferences only on the roles of parents in their children education. Such conference should target parents and academicians as participants. The finding that academic background, socioeconomic status and cultural practices of parents significantly predict students' performance portrays that more sociological studies should be conducted to explain these effects, in terms of parental perspectives.

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