

# Parental and Related Factors Affecting Students' Academic Achievement in Oyo State, Nigeria

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**Abstract**—Many factors influence the educational outcome of students. Some of these have been studied by researchers with many emphasizing the role of students, schools, governments, peer groups and so on. More often than not, some of these factors influencing the academic achievement of the students have been traced back to parents and family; being the primary platform on which learning not only begins but is nurtured, encouraged and developed which later transforms to the performance of the students. This study not only explores parental and related factors that predict academic achievement through the review of relevant literatures but also, investigates the influence of parental background on the academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. As one of the criteria of the quality of education, students' academic achievement was investigated because it is most often cited as an indicator of school effectiveness by school authorities and educationists. The data collection was done through interviews and use of well-structured questionnaires administered to one hundred students (100) within the target local government. This was statistically analysed and the result showed that parents' attitudes towards their children's education had significant effect(s) on students' self-reporting of academic achievement. However, such factors as parental education and socio-economic background had no significant relationship with the students' self-reporting of academic achievement.

**Keywords**—Academic attainment, Parental factors, students, Oyo State, Nigeria.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE training and development of a child is naturally placed in the hands of the parents. This is congruent with the common assertion of sociologists that education can be an instrument of cultural change whose foundation begins from home. It is not out of place to imagine that parental socio-economic background can have effects on the academic achievement of children in school as observed by [1]. Anything that affects the development environment of children will possibly affect their education or disposition to education. Parental status is one of such important variables in

this regard. When a woman's nutritional status improves, so does the nutrition of her young children.

Student academic performance measurement has received considerable attention in previous researches. It is the challenging aspects of academic literature; and science students' performances are affected due to social, psychological, economic, environmental, and personal factors. These factors strongly influence the student's performance but vary from individual to individual and country to country. Previously, most studies of students' academic performance had been conducted on such issues like gender differences, teachers' education and teaching styles, class environments, socio-economic factors and family education background.

Educational services are often not tangible and difficult to measure because they result in the form of transformation of knowledge, life skills and behaviour modifications of learners [2]. So, there is no commonly agreed upon definition of quality that is applied to educational field. The definition of quality of education varies from culture to culture [3].

The environment and the personal characteristics of learners play important roles in their academic success. The school personnel, supports from members of the families and communities help determine the quality of academic performance. Also, this social assistance has a crucial role for the accomplishment of performance goals of students at school [4]. Besides the social structure, parents' involvement in their children's education increases the rate of academic success of the children [5]. More specifically, this study aims to identify and analyse parental factors that affect the quality of students' academic performance. The main objectives of this research are to find out the effect of parental/family background, determine the impact of educational status or qualifications of parents on students' academic achievement and determine the relationship between parents' attitudes to students' academic achievement.

## II. PARENTAL AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS AS PREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Factors such as income, mother's and father's education, family size, regularity of teachers, interest created by the teachers in the subject and interest of the students in the co-curricular activities were found to play a major role in determining academic attainment of students [6]. In addition, [7] stressed the importance of students' interest, study habits, students' perceptions of course, peer influence as predictors of students' academic achievement. Also, in reviewing the relationship between parental involvement and secondary school students' academic achievement, [8] revealed

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correlation amidst communication between children and parents about school activities and plans, high expectations and inspirations from parents, methods of parenting and academic achievements. These factors might not be unconnected with the effect posed by the backgrounds of parents. Above and beyond the other demographic factors, the effects of socio-economic status (SES) are still prevalent at the individual level [9]. The SES can be deliberated in a number of ways; it is most often calculated by looking at parental education, parental occupation, parental income and facilities used by individual parents separately or collectively. Parental education and family SES have positive correlations with the students' quality of achievement [10]-[14]. The students with high level of SES perform better than the middle class students and the middle class students perform better than the students with low level of SES [15]-[16]. The achievement of students is negatively correlated with the low SES of parents because it hinders the individual from gaining access to sources and resources of learning [17]-[19]. Low SES strongly affects the achievement of students; dragging them down to a lower level [20]. This effect is most visible at the post-secondary school level [21]. It was also observed that the economically disadvantaged parents are less able to afford the cost of education of their children at higher levels and consequently their children do not work at their fullest potentials [22]. In a previous finding in Nigeria, [23], [24] had averred that there was a significant difference between the rates of deviant behaviour among students from high and low socio-economic statuses. Also, in a related study to find out the relationship between home based environmental factors and academic performance of students, [1] observed a significant difference between the performance of students and such factors as parental educational qualifications and health statuses of the students. However, parental socio-economic statuses and parental educational backgrounds had no influence according to the study.

Family income has been identified as having a positive effect on student persistence and academic achievement. According to [25], the logic behind this was that college students from lower income families have to work harder than students from higher income families. Students from lower income families had to dedicate more hours to employment and fewer hours to school work. Those who were fortunate enough to utilize government financial aid typically had to negotiate a complex process for receiving it. These financial pressures caused many low income college students to disengage from school or drop out [25], [26].

The health status of the children which could also be traced to parental socio-economic background can be another factor that affects the academic performance of the students. Reference [27] had reported that in a rural community where nutritional status is relatively low and health problems are prevalent, children academic performance is greatly hindered. This assertion is again hinged on nature of parental socio-economic background. Moreover, [28] opined that when a child gets proper nutrition, health care, stimulation during pre-school years, the ability to interact will take optimal advantage

of the full complement of resources offered by any formal learning environment. Reference [29] reported a very strong relationship between family background and student success at school in the fourth grade.

Other factors as reported by [30] included race and ethnicity. Reference [31] found that racial and ethnic identity predicted academic achievement among African/American college students at (historically) Black university. Reference [32] examined differences in college-going rates among racial and ethnic groups, identified parental involvements as being important in promoting college enrolment among racial and ethnic groups that were underrepresented in higher education. The relationship between gender and the academic achievement of students has been discussed for decades as [33] observed. A gap between the achievement of boys and girls has been found with girls showing better performance than boys in certain instances [34]. Gender, ethnicity and father's occupation are significant contributors to student achievement [35], [36]. In Northern Nigeria, there is general acceptance of early marriage for the female child among the Hausas. The result of this is that female students knowing the condition and situation they find themselves may not actually achieve their potential academically since such factors as tribes, cultures and religions have predetermined their fate or destiny. One of the authors during his compulsory National Youth Service in a Northern city of the country observed that young female students (mostly between the ages of 10 and 15 are much engaged or busy with activities preparing them for marital journey which distract or discourage them from school works. The abductions and gruesome killings of female students by 'religious' militants known as Boko-Haram (meaning, Western education is forbidden) mostly in the North also lend a support to the role of beliefs in encouraging better educational outcomes. This was more profound in the villages than towns where cultural and religious beliefs and influences are still being highly upheld and regarded. Though not on high level of occurrence compared to the latter, the other two major tribes (Yoruba and Igbo), also shared this sentiment towards female children education. However, recent development through awareness via media, pressure groups (mostly women groups), legislations and soon have seen an increase in the attendance of the girls in schools thereby giving them opportunities like their male counterparts. Theory of Educational Productivity by [37] determined three groups of nine factors based on affective, cognitive and behavioural skills for optimization of learning that affect the quality of academic performance: Aptitude (ability, development and motivation); instruction (amount and quality); environment (home, classroom, peers and television) [38]. The home environment also affects the academic performance of students. Educated parents can provide such an environment that suits best for academic success of their children. The school authorities can provide guidance and counselling to parents for creating conducive environment for improvement in students' quality of work [39]. The academic performance of students heavily depends upon the parental involvements in their academic activities to attain the higher level of quality in

academic success [40]-[42] as cited by [30] highlighted mothers as the primary source of learning while implementing and maintaining socialization, beliefs and values. References [44], [45] were of the view that educated mothers provide their children with more materials and activities that promote high educational outcomes. These views are changing due to more women entering the workforce in contemporary society. Reference [46] concluded that students whose parents were educated score higher on standardized tests than those whose parents were not educated. Reference [47] argued that other circumstances regarding family background were significant. They also found that the impact of family income declined when an additional factor was added that at least one of the students' parents had a college degree [47]. This was reinforced by one of the themes in [48]'s study which highlighted the importance of encouragement from college-educated parents in students' collegiate outcomes. Educated parents can better communicate with their children regarding the activities, information and the school work being taught in school. They can better assist their children in their work so that they perform well in school [49], [50]. In a bid to determining the influence of family background on the academic performance of secondary school students in Nigeria, Steve and Sanni reported that there were no significant differences in the influence of family background on academic performance of secondary school students based on gender and age while a significant difference was noted based on family type. The reason for this might not be far-fetched as small household may tend to hold the academic achievement with high priority. Similarly, the size of many families in developing nations is on the decline as parents want the best education for their children and bearing in mind the cost of education in these countries, it is therefore expedient for families to have adequate planning as regards their children's education which might involve limiting the family size. However, the report of [51] showed a significant effect of family background and the mentioned variable. He observed that students from small family sizes perform better academically than those from large family sizes. Family size, parental attitudes and home conveniences influenced academic achievements of students.

[52]'s study on student and parental characteristics, and student success. Coleman found that parental factors such as household composition, socioeconomic status, and parents' level of education were stronger predictors of students' educational attainment than direct school-related factors. In furthering the work of Coleman, the results of research carried out in Turkey by [43] pointed out that graduates' academic success was influenced by the interrelationships among parental educational and occupational status. Also, an intellectually stimulating home setting in which parents provide opportunities for children and encourage them to become involved in working discipline; and parent-child interactions that support the pursuit of excellence in academic and cultural experiences enable children to be more successful, [53] observed.

In view of the above discussion, this present study focuses on such parental factors as parents' background, education and attitude as they affect the academic attainment of students.

#### *A. Research Question*

Does parental background have any influence on the academic attainment of students?

#### *B. Research Hypothesis*

- (i) Parental family background or status does not have significant effect on the academic achievement of students.
- (ii) Parental educational background/qualification has no significant effect on students' academic achievement.
- (iii) Parental attitude towards their children's academic achievement has no significant effect on the academic achievements of the students.

#### *C. Theoretical Framework*

The theoretical framework in this present study is based essentially on two theories as follows;

- (i) Functionalist theory and
- (ii) Social learning theory

#### *D. Functionalist Theory*

It is compatible with the theory of human capital and maintains that education is a resource opened equally to everyone but family or parent influences it together with personal characteristics and level of education people attain. From this perspective, individuals attain as much as they inherently capable of attaining in an educational system.

The functionalist proponents argue that children though, patterns and exploration are stimulated by family socialization practice and some of which are knowledge enhancing and others are knowledge inhabitancy, since better-off families or parents tend to favour knowledge enhancing socialization of their children while children from the lower category of parents face severe problems at school such as limited vocabulary and poor informal learning environment at home which are responsible for producing different level of cognitive ability and commitment to education among lower class students is attributed to socialization by parents who are unable to provide their offsprings with suitable intellectual environment.

#### *E. Social Learning Theory*

Social learning theory posits that learning is a cognitive process that takes place in a social context and can occur purely through observation or direct instruction, even in the absence of motor reproduction or direct reinforcement. In addition to the observation, learning also occurs through the observation of rewards and punishments, a process known as vicarious reinforcement [54]. The theory expands on traditional behavioural theories, in which behaviour is governed solely by reinforcements by placing emphasis on the important roles of various internal processes in the learning individual.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The section states the design of the study, the sampling procedure, the description and administration of the instruments, method used in collecting and analyzing the data.

#### A. Research Design

The research was targeted at elucidating relevant information about the parental background and students' academic attainment. Furthermore, some questions that could influence the students' academic attainment were asked to know the effect of some other factors in establishing a concrete relationship between them and students' performance.

#### B. Population of the Study

The population of the students under study was made up of science students (both males and females) in five (5) selected Public Senior Secondary Schools in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo state. One hundred (100) students were randomly selected from each of the schools within this L.G.A.

#### C. Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of one hundred (100) senior secondary school students were randomly selected from five schools within this L.G.A. Random sampling was used for convenience in the selection of schools and respondents using table of random number.

#### D. Research Instrument

The research instrument used for the purpose of this study included questionnaires and interviews. The structured questionnaire was used for the study. It consisted of four sections. The first section of the questionnaire sought information on demographic data such as sex, class, age, religion and family while the second section required the respondents to supply information about their family structure and education. The third part focused on both parent's education as the fourth and the last part contained questions pertaining to parents' occupation and attitude respectively. The interviews were conducted to give a clear picture of what was expected of the respondents as far as self-assessment of their academic performances is concerned.

#### E. Validation of the Instrument

A face validity of the test items was done by the experts in the field of education to ascertain the reliability of the questionnaire. Prior to approval, necessary corrections were made by the experts

#### F. Method of Data Collection

Questionnaire to elicit relevant information about the demographic data of the students (age, gender), parental socio-economic status, parental educational background, qualifications and participation in academic activities were used. In the selected schools, students' academic achievements were measured through interviews with students to assess the academic performance of the students.

#### G. Method of Data Analysis

Simple percentage is used to analyse the data collected. Also, tables are made to summarize the frequency of occurrences of data. e.g. Number of respondent = 50 therefore the Percentage of occurrence = 100. Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analyses were employed to measure the relationships between variables in order to analyse family background. We used SPSS Package to run the analysis by coding 'Rich to be 3, Average 2 while Poor was coded to be 1. Students' self-assessment of academic achievements were also coded. These include Very good, Good, Average and Poor which were coded as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Also, the level of parents' education was coded as follows; University 5, Polytechnic/College 4, Secondary 3, Primary 2 and Illiterate 1. In assessing the attitude of parents to child's education for example, positive questions like: My parents provide learning materials were coded as; Strongly agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2 and Strongly disagree 1 while negative question for example My parents do not care about my education were coded with a reverse order of the latter scores. The means of the responses were later found to determine the attitudes of parents.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the research work are summarized in Tables I-VII.

TABLE I  
 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF THE RESPONDENTS

	SEX		CLASS		
	Male	Female	SS I	SS II	SS III
Frequency	42	58	40	27	43
Percentage	42	58	40	27	43

The demographic data of the respondents were shown in Table I. There were 16% female respondents more than their male counterparts. Similarly, the respondents distributed across the senior classes in the selected schools. The highest number of respondents was from SSIII (43), followed by SSI with 40% of the respondents while SS II recorded the lowest number of respondents (27). In addition, 63% were between 15 and 16 while respondents between ages 13 and 14 were 28%. 8% and 1% of the respondents fell within ages 17-above and 11-12 respectively.

TABLE II  
 STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Self-assessment	Frequency of respondents	Percentage (%)
Very good	24	24
Good	35	35
Average/Fair	29	29
Poor	1	1
Unspecified	11	11
Total	100	100

The results of the self-assessment of students revealed that 24, 35, 29 students were assessed to be very good, good, fair respectively while only one student reckoned a poor academic achievement. However, 11 of the respondents either not

sure/willing or could not provide adequate information for this part which was achieved through interviews (Table II).

TABLE III  
FAMILY BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

Family background	Frequency of respondents	Percentage (%)
Rich	19	19
Average	78	78
Poor	2	2
Unspecified	1	1
Total	100	100

Table III summarizes the family background of respondents, while 19% believed they are rich, the respondents from average background were 78% while the rest did not specify their family background. It is also important to state that only 2% of the respondents believed they are from a poor family background.

TABLE IV  
LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE FATHERS OF RESPONDENTS

Level of education	Frequency of respondents	Percentage (%)
University	44	44
Polytechnic/ College	22	22
Secondary	29	29
Primary	3	3
Illiterate	0	0
Unspecified	2	2
Total	100	100

In assessing the level of education of fathers of respondents, with reference to Table IV, 44% of fathers could be said to have attended university, 22% being graduates of polytechnics or colleges while 29% and 3% only completed secondary and primary schools education respectively. Although, none of the fathers was reported to be illiterate as 2% refused to respond to this question.

TABLE V  
LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF MOTHERS OF RESPONDENTS

Level of education	Frequency of Respondents	Percentage (%)
University	35	35
Polytechnic/ College	31	31
Secondary	28	28
Primary	4	4
Illiterate	1	1
Unspecified	1	1
Total	100	100

Table V gave a summary of the mothers' level of education. 35%, 31% and 28% of them completed university, polytechnic or college and secondary education respectively while 4% of them had primary school education. Also, only 1% was reported not to have basic education and 1% of them did not specify his/her mother's education level.

According to Table VI, there was no correlation between the academic achievements of students and their family background as the relationship was reported not to be significant at 5% probability level, this was so because the Pearson correlation (0.233) was more than 0.05. It is also

important to state here that only 89 of the 100 respondents gave a full self-assessment of their academic achievement, hence N which is the number of respondents was taken to be 89.

TABLE VI  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SELF-REPORTING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE STUDENT AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

	Academic achievement (Aa)	Family background (Fb)
Aa	Pearson Correlation	128ns
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.233
	N	89
Fb	Pearson Correlation	128ns
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.233
	N	89

\* ns: not significant

TABLE VII  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SELF-REPORTING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE STUDENT AND FATHERS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION (FLE)

	Academic achievement (Aa)	Father's level of education (Fle)
Aa	Pearson Correlation	.105ns
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.327
	N	89
Fle	Pearson Correlation	.105ns
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.327
	N	89

\* ns: not significant

TABLE VIII  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SELF-REPORTING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE STUDENT AND MOTHERS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION (MLE)

	Academic achievement (Aa)	Mother's level of education (Mle)
Aa	Pearson Correlation	.054ns
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.618
	N	89
Mle	Pearson Correlation	.054ns
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.618
	N	89

\* ns: not significant

There was no correlation between the father's education and the academic attainment of the students (Table VII). Similarly, the relationship between the mother's education and academic attainment of students were found to be insignificant at 0.05 probability level (Table VIII). Both parents' educations were found not to correlate with the educational attainment of their wards.

TABLE IX  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-REPORTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE STUDENT AND PARENTS' ATTITUDE (PA) TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

	Academic achievement (Aa)	Mother's level of education (Mle)
Aa	Pearson Correlation	.296**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005
	N	89
Pa	Pearson Correlation	.296**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005
	N	89

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between parents' attitude and students' academic achievements shows an appreciable level of significance. A significant relationship was found to occur between these two variables at 0.05 and 0.01 probability levels (Table IX).

#### V. SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Among all the factors that affect academic achievements of students, this study found the parent attitude, support or contributions to be highly significant predictor of students' academic outcomes. The finding was corroborated with [56]. It is also confirmed by [56] and [57] as they reported a significant connection between academic achievement and home environment which depends on parental support which might not be determined by their financial capability, educational status or background.

Parents' education in this study had no corroboration with the dependent variable. This is not in agreement with the findings of [1], [44] and [45]. They reported a strong positive relationship between mothers' education and children academic achievement.

Several factors have been highlighted to play a major role in determining the academic achievement of students. These factors may include age, gender, geographical belonging, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language, religious affiliations. Other factors which can either be classified as school factors are teachers education, teaching style or the use of instructional materials, class environment etc. Parental factors which may include parents' occupation, socio-economic status, family size and type, educational levels and their attitudes towards child's education and or academic achievement. Earlier, the relationship of communication between the children and parents about school activities and plans high expectation or inspiration from parents, method of parenting and academic achievement has been discussed. The health status which could be traceable to parental socio-economic background can be another factor influencing academic achievement of students. Other factors that are associated to parents' background had so far been discussed in relation to academic attainment of students.

In this study, parental background which included education, family background and attitude of parents to the education of their wards had been studied. The education of parents and family background were found not to have any significant relationship with students' academic achievement. However, the dependent variable showed a high level of statistical correlation with the attitudes of parents.

#### VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### A. Research hypothesis

(i). Parental family background or status (financial) does not have significant effect on the academic achievement of students. The family background of students in this present study has no influence on their academic achievements; therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

(ii). Parental educational background and qualification has no significant effect on students' academic achievement. Like the parental family background, educational background of parents has no influence on the students' academic achievement in this study; therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

(iii). Parental attitude towards their children's academic has no significant effect on the academic achievements of the students. Parental attitude was found to be a determining factor in the academic achievements of students as a high level of correlation was observed in this present study. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

Indeed parents are not only important for their roles in contributing the chromosomes (genes) but also as custodians to nurture, encourage, protect and secure the development of the resulting products (children) of their union. The physical, emotional, intellectual characteristics are important aspects to be monitored and improved upon by parents and guardians towards producing high academic outcomes in children.

Parents are therefore advised to establish a good environment that does not encourage only the growth of the physical, social but also the psychological, emotional and intellectual of children. It has been proven that with adequate (not necessarily perfect) parenting coupled with quality education, adequate academic facilities, better educational policies and programmes, any children irrespective of the gene could attain the best academic level.

There is a range of factors that affect the quality of performance of students as [58] also observed. A series of variables are to be considered when identifying the affecting factors towards quality of academic success. Identifying the most contributing variables in quality of academic performance is indeed a very complex and challenging job. The students in public schools belong to a variety of backgrounds depending upon their demography. Consequently, these must be adequately considered by authorities at every level most especially, the government, education planners, teachers, counsellors and other personnel involved in educational administrations.

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