

Socio-Economic Status and Gender as Predictors of Students' Academic Achievement in Economics

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Abstract

This study investigated Socio- Economic Status and Gender as predictors of Students' academic achievement in Economics. To carry out this study, four null hypotheses were formulated to give direction. The sample of the study consists three hundred and fifty (350) randomly selected students from selected secondary schools in Isheri Local Government Area of Lagos State.

The instrument used for data collection was a self developed questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed and the formulated hypotheses were tested using independent t-test of unrelated sample and Chi-square statistical methods.

All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant. The results of the data analysis showed:

There is significant relationship between parental educational attainment and students' academic achievement in Economics;

There is prominent association between occupational background of parents and student's academic achievement; There is significant difference in the mean scores between Socio- Economic Status and Students' academic achievement due to gender and there is significant association between parental socio-economic status (SES) and academic achievement.

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

Parents should always try to encourage their children in all that they do and try to give moral support so that the children can be emotionally stable and have confidence in all that they do, whether at school or at home; Parents should do more to improve the conditions of their environment to suite the purpose of their children to perform better in school works; Teachers should make sure that their method of instructions in school address the two personality i.e. introvert and extrovert need of the students; Government should bring back the governing system as this will help to bridge the gap between the performances of children from high and low socio-economic class.

Keywords:- Keywords Socio- Economic Status, Gender, Academic Achievement, Economics

Introduction

Background to the Study

In Nigeria as in many other developing countries, education has been considered to be the cornerstone of economic growth and development. The Nigerian government believes that to survive in the competitive world economy, quality of education is the key variable. In this belief, educational reforms have been put in place directed towards improving the quality of education. These reforms in Nigeria are demanding greater students' academic achievement and commitment from teachers. This is because of the belief that Parental socio-Economic Status of the students and due to gender might be responsible for the academic achievement of student's in secondary schools.

The poor performances of students' in secondary schools pose a persistent challenge to educators and researchers who have tried to identify the factors that might be responsible for these poor results. Many reasons have been given such as; lack of qualified and dedicated teachers, lack of in structural materials, some attributed it to teacher's methodology, lack of ability of students to manipulate the English language. Yet not enough attention has been paid to the Socio- Economic Status and Gender as predictors of Students' academic achievement in Economics

Economics is concerned with human behavior such as how people earn their income and make choices between alternatives to satisfy their wants. Since Economics is concerned with human behavior, it is a social science, and like in any science subject, the procedure adopted in Economics is analytical and systematic, the validity of its various theories can be tested. Economics is one of the elective subjects studied at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level as stipulated in the National Policy on Education, (2004). Yusuf (2005), identified the relevant topics essential for the achievement of the set objectives, the structuring of the content was also based on the spiral spread thus making it possible for a concept to be learnt in its basic form in year (1) to its complex nature in year (3). An innovation in the programme is the introduction of elementary Mathematics and statistical tools of analysis for this level.

Obemeata (2000) explained the importance of Economics education to any nation. According to him Economics enables both leaders and citizen to understand basic Economics concepts, principles as well as understand, appreciate and seek to improve the economic situation for their own social good. The understanding of

Economics is a pre-requisite for good citizenship. To him the principal objective for teaching Economics in school is “to provide Economics understanding necessary for responsible citizenship” Being a responsible citizen involves the ability to take rational decision in important economic issues with good basis for doing so. In the light of all these, the poor performance of Economics students in external examination in Nigeria is of great concern to the government, parents and well meaning Nigerians.

The performances of students in the Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations for seven years (2004-2010) in Economics are shown below in Table 1 below.

Table 1:- Students performance in the Senior School Certificate Examination May/June 2004-2010 in Economics.

Year	Percentage Passed credit A1-C6	Candidate Total Number	Percentage Failed (F9)	Candidate Total Number
2004	37.59	366037	22.26	216736
2005	36.24	365142	20.20	206654
2006	49.44	537677	15.71	171145
2007	39.23	461903	22.89	270918
2008	44.22	592939	16.73	201586
2009	45.44	577545	12.43	157125
2010	56.22	690945	13.36	169377

Source: Statistic Office WAEC Lagos 2012

As shown in the Table there was persistent failure in Economics between 2004 and 2009. The highest percentage was 45.44% in 2009 and it was less than half of those registered for the subject. The highest percentage recorded was 56.22% pass at credit level in 2010. This implies that slightly above 50% of the candidates were qualified for admission into university and other allied tertiary institutions to study Economics related courses. This has serious implication for a developing nation that is aspiring for economic growth and development. It is therefore necessary to investigate whether parental socio- economic status and gender predict the students’ academic achievement in Economics.

There are differences in socio-economic background, and different entry behaviors of students’ in our schools, especially with the exit of boarding house system in many public secondary schools in Nigeria, the socio-economic background affects students’ performances.(Nelsson2001).According to Eitzen (2003) stated that; socio economic status (SES) is a function of parental education, occupation and income. It has been argued that parents who have formal education see the need for adequate monitoring of their children in the school. Literate parents struggle to provide educationally rich and stimulating home for their children.

Available evidence demonstrates that childhood socio-economic variables and early life conditions influence child performance in school (Roberts, Bornstein and Slater, 2002). Children from poor home backgrounds show poorer cognitive and low performance in school at intents, and worse verbal and achievement outcomes in the first 5 years of life.Duncan, Brooks-Gunn, and Klebanoel, (2004).Revealed that children are also more likely to experience worse school performance than their more advantaged counter parts (Isangedighi, 2007).

Low socio-economic conditions in child hood is related to functional illiteracy in adult hood, (Bpydar, Brooks-Gunn, and Furstenberg, 1997), and child hood social economic status has been associated with low performance, and cognitive function in middle age and total number of years of completing education.

Documented evidence associates the educational attainment of parents to their children’s level of intelligence, (Matarazzo, 2002).

Some other study indicates home background; particularly the provision of learning experience and cognitive and effective stimulation significantly influences academic performance of students’. (Sangedighi 2007).The educational background to a large extent dictates the type of parental occupation. The type of parental occupation affects the level of attention accorded the educational progress monitoring process of the parents. For example, bank workers are to work early and close late, such people hardly find it convenient to visit their children at school and check their school works at home. This is opposed to civil servants who have more time to spend with their children and also occupations of the parents determine the structure of their income or earning. Farley (2003) and Eitzen& smith, (2003) pointed out that a family’s socio-economic status is based on the parent income, occupation and education. In general, parents of high economic status have high incomes, highly respected occupation and are well educated. Parents of low socio-economic status have low incomes, unskilled or semi-skilled jobs are poorly educated. Parents of middle socio-economic class have medium business of professional occupations and a good education.

It should be noted that not all families can be classified accordingly to the criteria discussed here, some parents are very well educated but have very low income, while some parents have very high incomes but are not well educated for example (business men).

The influence of socio-economic background on academic performance is apparently observed and felt throughout the formative years of life, from infancy through early childhood and play age to adolescence, of all these formative stages of life, the period of adolescence is generally considered that most crucial Ezewu(1998)

sub-served to the view that adolescence is the most important period of human life. He further described adolescence as the spring of life of human being and a very important era in the total life span.

Hess (2000) identified children from a lower class as slow learners, aggressors and truants, his studies also compared the relative intelligence of children of high low socio-economic background which he disposed that those from high socio-economic background homes score higher on IQ test than those children from low socio-economic background homes. The differences are more marked in later childhood and adolescence than in infancy

Bernstein used the following example to illustrate this concept “I had rather you made less noise, dear” might be what a middle class mother would say to her boisterous child, where as “shut up” might be what a lower class mother would say, thus the middle class child learns the abstract meaning of words like “rather” and “less” the lower class child gets a simple short message, directly to the point.

The relationship between family size and academic performance of a student is brought into focus by Yoloye (1994) in Ogundele (1998.) that it is reasonable to expect that the father with several wives would be under greater financial strain than the father only with one wife, and therefore the polygamous man may have greater difficulty in sending his children to fee paying schools.

The success or failure of parents to provide food, adequate clothing and school materials, develop interest in school activities of their child, encourage their child in his/her education show love and affection to their child, would go a long way to determine the academic success or failure of their children in school.

Gender inequality in the educational achievement and opportunity has in recent years been recognized as one of the major obstacles to women in the development worldwide. Various findings reveal gender differences in teaching of Economics in the Senior Secondary Schools. Most of the Economics theories profoundedly widely acclaimed economists who have made significant progress in Economics related fields involving computations, rational knowledge and skills acquisitions. These proponents tend to be males than the females for instance among the celebrated renowned economists include, Adam Smith, Alfred Marshall, H.J. Davenport, John Stuart Mill, Professor Lionel Robbins to mention but few. All of them were men, can one therefore ask for the imbalance, why are there no women among them? Is it because the women fail to reason very well as men do or is because women are weaker sex? In this effect a number of research findings have been conducted to verify the influence of Socio- Economic Status and sex on academic achievement.

Treagust (1999) reported that studies indicated that male students did not achieve equal competence in Economics tasking job. Shaibu and Amen (2002) also, in their studies found that boys performed better in calculations and issues demanding for rational thinking in Economics than the female counterparts.

Abioma and Ohuche (2007) and Rayes and Stanic (2009) confirmed that male students achieved higher level in Economics achievement than female students when it comes to topics involving calculation and application of rational knowledge. But Jahun (2009) asserted that girls performed better than boys in Economics achievement test when it involved reading, rote learning and memorizing the themes in the Economics subject.

Smith and Walker (2008) reported that female students performed better than male students at age nine and ten years when their memories for thinking has not developed while male students had an edge over the female students from age eleven and above because they have possessed adequately memories for abstract thinking. In the statement of James (2001) asserted that female students performed better than the male students with the use of Inquiry Method used in the teaching of Economics while Okeke (2000) found no correlation in the performance of boys compared to the girls. However, Ibe (2004) suggested that education for the future that will equip the individual with the power to adopt to change irrespective of gender should be the most important goal of education of any society that wants to progress.

1.2 Statement of the Problem.

It is obvious that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic background of the parents and academic performance of the students'. Daramola (2000) remarked that adolescence from high socio-economic background have advantages over the adolescents from low socio-economic class. In a higher class family the basic facilities and opportunities that facilitate academic achievement are provided for the adolescents, such things include television, radio, computer etc. on the other hand, the adolescents from low socio-economic class is handicapped as these facilities which enhance his performance in school are lacking. Invariably, the situation contributes to the widening stratification and inequality in the society including Nigeria. This is a counter to the yearning and the dream of Nigeria for an equalitarian society. The issue if not checked is capable of breeding anti-social behavior like truancy, running away from school, pilfering, stealing, low national manpower etc. by the less opportune adolescents. It could also create inferiority complex and warped personality among such students'.

Therefore effect of socio-economic background calls for urgent attention to be carefully addressed hence the need for the researcher to investigate parental socio-economic status and gender as predictors of academic performance of students in Economics and how parental educational attainment, occupation, income and gender

of the individual student impinge on the academic achievement of the students and also to identify the root causes and proffer solutions.

1.3 Purpose of the Study.

The study aimed at finding out:-

- (i) Whether parental educational attainment has roles to play in students' academic achievement in Economics.
- (ii) Find out if parental occupation has relationship with students' academic achievement in Economics.
- (iii) Whether there is gender difference in the mean scores between socio-economic status and students' academic achievement.
- (iv) If there is any relationship between parental socio-economic status (SES) and academic performance of students'.

1.4 Research Questions.

The study sought to find answers to the following questions.

1. Does the parental educational attainment affect the academic achievement in Economics'?
2. Can the parents occupational background affects the students' academic achievement in Economics?
Is there significant difference in the mean scores between socio-economic status and students' academic achievement due to gender?
3. Is there any relationship between parental socio-economic status (SES) and academic performance of students'?

1.5 Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between parent's educational attainment and students' academic achievement in Economics.
2. There is no significant relationship between occupational background of parents and students' academic performances.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean scores between socio-economic status (SES) and academic performance due to gender.
4. There is no significant relationship between parental socio-economic status (SES) and academic performance of students'.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study is significant to so many people like the curriculum developers, experts and educators and other practitioners in education industries have studied empirically on the basis to formulate educational policies that can provide equal opportunities to the students' from high socio-economic and those students' from low socio-economic backgrounds.

This study will enhance not only the teachers, principal of secondary schools, the curriculum planner guidance counselors and other educational administrator on how they can bridge the gap between students' whose parents socio-economic status are high and those whose parents have low (SES).

The study would also acquaint the students' to keep abreast with their studies in school, not minding their parental socio-economic status.

Finally, the research would also be a great use to parents as it would inform them of what is expected of them to their children's educational pursuits not minding their socio-economic background.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in Lagos State. Lagos State has twenty(20) Local Government Areas approved by Government but (37) Lagos Council Development Area (LCDA) was established by Lagos State Government which was unapproved by the Federal Government of Nigeria. Only two (2) secondary schools accessible in Ikeja Local Government Area of Lagos State would be used.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Socio-economic status: - is a function of parental education, occupation and income.

Academic performance: - refers to the outcome of academic exercise measured by the result of examination, recorded in the students' report card.

Educational status: - the level of educational attainment by an individual in all systems of education.

Occupational status: - the parents position as measured by his income per month or per year which is a result of his profession

Literature Review.

The chapter would discuss the related literature on the relationship between parental socio-economic status (SES) and academic performance of students'. The literature would be carried out on these following headings:-

1. Concept of Economics and importance.
2. Problems facing the Economics teachings in schools.
3. Students' Attitude to teaching of Economics.
4. Concept of socio-economic status (SES).

5. Concept of academic performance of students and Socio-economic status of parents.
6. Relationship between parental socio-economic status and academic performance.
 - i. Parental education
 - ii. Parental occupation
 - iii. Nature of family
 - iv. Family size
 - v. Home environment and
 - vi. Parental encouragement
7. Appraisal of the Literature Review.

2.1 Concept of Economics and importance.

Economics is concerned with human behavior such as how people earn their living and make a choice between alternatives to satisfy their wants. Since Economics is concerned with human behavior. So Economics is a social science, and like any science subject, procedure adopted in Economics is methodological, its analysis is systematic and the validity of its various theories can be tested. Economics is one of the electives subjects studied at the Senior Secondary Schools (SSS). Under the new National Policy on Education. This Curriculum has been designed by the Comparative Education Study and Adaptation Center (CESAC) to meet the requirement of Economics in new system. (Osunnaiye; 2010).

The guiding principles of this curriculum is the need to equip graduates on Senior Secondary School with the basic knowledge and skills that will enable them to better appreciate the nature of economic problems in any Society. In light of this philosophy the following are the set objectives for the Economics course.

1. To equip students with the basic principles of Economics necessary for useful living and for higher education.
2. To prepare and encourage students to be prudent and effective in the management of scarce source.
3. To raise students' mind for the dignity of labour and their appreciation and
4. To enable students acquire skills for practical Solution to the problems of the Society and the world at large.

Obemeata (2000) explained the importance of Economics education to any nation he said it enables both leaders and citizen to understand basic Economics concepts, principles as well as understand, appreciate and seek to improve the economic situation for their own social good. The understanding of Economics is a pre-requisite for good citizenship. To him the principal objective for teaching Economics is "to provide Economics understanding necessary for responsible citizenship" Being a responsible citizen involves the ability to take rational decision in important economic issues with good basis for doing so. Adu (2002) buttressed this statement by laying emphasis on the purpose of Economics in Schools. According to him, it is useful to modern life because it gives us facts and shows us what may be expected to be the outcome of certain lines of conduct. Obemeata (2002) posited that Economics has value to the learner which includes: - Cultural Values, intellectual training and for vocational training.

Cultural Values: - Economics has some intrinsic Values that makes it appealing as a School Subject for example there is a great logic in it that connect learners to the essentials of everyday life and is also concerned with most topical events such as International Monetary Fund (IMF). Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) National Income Accounting, Fiscal Policy and among others.

Intellectual Training: - Economics contributes to intellectual training because it involves looking at issues which are new to people. It is primarily a body of knowledge but a method rather than doctrine, an apparatus of minding technique of thinking which helps its possessor to draw correct conclusion.

Vocational Training: - The vocational nature of Economics made it readily acceptable to students, Subject of direct utility in many branches of industries and Commerce. It is also an essential part of most professional examination like banking and accountancy these laudable objectives can only be achieved by a nation that is not plaque with low achievement in Economics in senior secondary Schools.

2.2 Problems facing the teaching of Economics in Schools.

Lack of teacher's commitment: The issue of teacher commitment has now become a perennial problem in educational discourse. The teachers today are occupying a paramount position in the teaching learning situation. It is agreed that no education can rise above the quality of its teacher. The teachers need to be committed and dedicated to teaching profession. Teaching requires a cultivated ability and which need to be done exceptionally well, it also a sense of vocation.

No specific conferences or workshops for Economics teacher: - Ministries of education in the country have not deemed it necessary to organize or sponsor refresher courses or workshops or even conferences for Economics teachers in secondary schools. The various state ministries of education should sponsor or organize conferences and refresher courses for Economics teachers just as they have done for other secondary school subjects such as Nigeria language, History, and Sciences. Economics which is taught by virtually all schools, about 90%

candidates enroll for Economics examination annually, it should have been of special interest not only to the principals of secondary schools but also to the officers of this ministries of education.

No Association of Secondary Schools Teachers of Economics in Nigeria. All Secondary Schools subjects have associations for example; there are associations for subjects like English language, History, Geography sciences. Even teachers teaching French in Nigeria have an association even when few schools offer French, language in Nigeria. Economics as a subject has no association to its credit. These points highlighted above were problems. Facing the teaching of Economics in Secondary Schools as highlighted by Obemeata (2000) cited by Yusuf (2005).

2.3 Students attitude to teaching of Economics in Schools

An attitude may be defined as a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given attitude object (Oskamp and Schultz 2005). Attitude towards Economics or science denotes interests or feelings towards studying Economics or science. It is the students' disposition towards like or 'dislike' science while attitude in science means scientific approach assumed by an individual for solving problems, assessing ideas and making decisions. Student beliefs and attitudes have the potential to either facilitate or inhibit learning (Yara, 2009). Many factors could contribute to student's attitude toward studying science (Economics). Several studies (Berg 2005 and Adesoji, 2008) report that students' positive attitudes to science correlate highly with their that, in general, the attitude of Nigeria students towards the basic sciences tend to decrease in the order, Biology, Economics, Physics and Mathematics. Defiana (2005) found that using integrated science environment activities improved high school student attitude toward and awareness about the environment. Ayelaagbe (2008) also reported a more positive attitude of studies after exposing them to self learning strategy. Similar results were obtained by Udousoro (2005) after using computer and text assisted programmed instruction and Popoola (2002) after exposing students to a self learning device. Popoola(2008) also reported that students attitudes and interests to sciences, especially Agricultural science correlate highly with their science achievement. Adesoji (2008) concluded that a number of factors have been identified as related to students' attitude to science (Economics). Such factors include; teaching methods, teacher attitude, influence of parents, gender, age, cognitive styles of pupils, career interest, social view of science and Scientifics, social implicating of science (Economics) and achievement. What is needed to complement the assertions and claims of such studies is the nature of relationship whether positive or negative between students' attitude and other variables such as Socio-Economic Status and Gender are enough evidence to predict Students' academic achievement in teaching and learning of Economics. Results of these types of study are likely to broaden our knowledge as how we can influence students' attitude positively towards Economics.

The importance of Economics education goes far beyond the goal of improving an understanding of the basic principles of demand and supply and the workings of our economy, students develop perceptions of their economic world at early age, which as they progress through the educational progress, develop into attitudes and opinions about the subject of Economics. Teachers influence the direction of attitude development. By finding ways to teach students more about Economics, by teaching basic Economics concepts and applying them to classroom discussions of economic issues and institutions, teachers indoctrinating students but providing a known foundation for a more informed student opinions and decision- making on vital issues. The more Economics concepts know, the more they like and value the subject and more information they have about economic issues. Students who do not have the opportunity to learn Economics and increase their economic understanding will never take much interest in the subject or in their economic world.

2.4 Concept of Socio-Economic Status (SES)

Socio-economic is a function of parental education, occupation and income. It has been argued that parents who have formal education see the need for adequate monitoring of their children in the school. Literate parents struggle to provide educationally rich and stimulating home for their children. Thus a child who discusses with the class mates, watches and listens to educative programs from television stations and video tapes on television, radio, read news paper, journals and educative magazines is likely to perform significantly well, then the one who is disadvantaged of all the educative opportunities mentioned above. Otu(2002) in his study on the influence of family background on academic performance of students' in selected secondary schools in Adavi Local Government Area of Kogi State confirmed that "students' whose parents are literate do better in the field of academic than those whose parents are less literate or not literate at all.

The type of parental occupation affects the level of attention accorded the educational progress monitoring of the parents. For example Bank workers go to work early and close late. Such people hardly find it convenient to visit their children at school. This is opposed to civil servants who have adequate time and energy to spend with their children. However occupation of the parent determines the structure of their income or earnings. Parental income is believed to dictate the ability of the parent to pay school fees and to meet other commitment concerning their children.

Ezeut (2000) in Fasasi (2003) stated that the financially reformed parents would have all means and willingness to provide pupil with all necessary aid or materials needed by the child in his educational pursuit. An

undernourished child tends to lose concentration in school works, becomes uninterested and discouraged in schooling so that he or she ends up being a truant. Stones (1994) in Fasasi(2003) reiterated that “there is the tendency to be a negative attitude towards going to school which manifests in truancy, thereby lowering academic performance.

Socio-economic status (SES) of the parents affects the following areas of the child’s school education early attendance at school, provision of books and other materials, attendance at the best school available, encouragement in school education, development of interest in school activities, academic and job aspirations.

2.5 Concept of Academic Performance

The concept of performance according to Lindsay (1982) explained two concepts of effectiveness and efficiency. Effectiveness deals with the congruence between output and goals. It refers to the usefulness of the skills and knowledge acquired by students’ to themselves and their environment, while efficiency links outputs to inputs.

Efficiency refers to the rate at which an educational system is able to provide maximum output with minimum inputs or the rates at which the system (schools) is able to reduce wastage in term of drop outs, repeaters, withdrawals, and failure.

Students’ academic performance refers to the students’ ability to do well, fairly or poorly in an examination. The rate of performance is determined through evaluation which is the systematic way of estimating the worth, quality, importance and relevant of a program with view to rating, correcting, improving or changing the system of programme.

Socio-Economic Status of Parents

Socio-economic status of parents has been found to be a function of the level of their educational attainment as well as their occupation. Jensen (1988) in Akinifesi(1996) asserted that socio-economic status today largely a matter of educational and occupational status. The parental education and occupation play a vital role in the determination of the family income, parental attitudes to children education and the family feeding habit. Akinifesi(1996) identified in the following aspects of children education are affected by the socio-economic status of their parents, early attendance to school, provision of books and other materials, attendance at the best school available, encouragement in school education, development of interest in school activities, academic and job aspirations. Children of high socio-economic status enjoy great intellectual support at home such that they had been formed to score higher on all cognitive measures (Havighust, 1964). They tend to select abstract as opposed to concrete explanation and definitions. On the other hand, children from low socio-economic status have little or no intellectual support at home.

Wisemenin Asana (2000) argued that no matter the social group one may belong; parental attitudes toward their children education contribute a great deal in improving their performance at school. Parents who are not interested in the education of their children pay little or no attention to their academic performance. Thus, such parents do not allow their children to use their free time after school hours for further studies. Instead, they give them vocational assignment, (such as cloth weaving, street-hawking etc) to do. Children’s holidays like week-ends, mid-term and inter-term holidays are spent by the children working for their parents, on their farms or for domestic works.

Some children are ‘self sponsored’ this is common to the lower socio-economic class. Such children spend their leisure time in labour doing all sorts of odd jobs and occasionally they are absent from school in order to make some money to supplement efforts of their parents. For example payment of tuition fees and procurement of learning materials.

Parents from the high socio-economic class tend to be more interested in the education of their children. Thus, they provide most learning materials for their children, pay their tuition fees promptly, serve as source of inspiration to their children while stressing their expectations from them in the children academic work, help them in their home work and even put and ensure regular attendance at out-to-school coaching classes. Children of such parents are well fed with balanced diet. Therefore, these children who are always healthy tend to perform better academically in the school work. Unlike the child or children from lower socio-economic class where there is no one to guide him or her in his or her academic work and no one to give any inspiration, he or she is left at the mercy of his own discretion whenever he makes mistakes. This adversely affects his academic performance in school.

2.6 Relationship between Parental Socio-Economic Status and Academic Performance of Students.

Relationship between parental socio-economic status (SES) and students’ academic performance can be determined by member of factors or variables. They include the following:- parental education, parental occupation, nature of the family, family size, home environment and parental encouragement.

Parental Education.

Parents who have formal education see the need to adequate monitoring of their children in the school. They are interested in the performance of their children in the school. Thus, most literate parents often motivate their children to learn in the school either through presentation of gifts or words of encouragement. Many of such parents communicate with their children in English outside the school premises. This helps the children to

acquire vocabulary needed for smooth transition from home to school work. Also, educated parents assist their child (ren) in solving home work which the children may bring from the school. This may be in addition to the out-of-school lesson and some times due to economic reason, it may be the only form of remediating the Childs' school work.

Thus a child who discusses with the class mates, watches and listens to educative programs from television stations and video tapes on television, radio, read news paper, journals and educative magazines is likely to perform significantly well, then the one who is disadvantaged of all the educative opportunities highlighted.

Parental education is an index of measuring the socio-economic status of parents and it has a significant relationship with the academic achievement of their children. Torrance and Strom (1985) carried out a series of studies and it was found that parental education has great influence on Childs' academic performance. Educated parents assured their children to be more responsible and independent. They give their children considerable freedom and the necessary support. They encourage more verbalization among their children than illiterate counterparts. They directly or indirectly build their children a sense of self expression and positive self concepts. Sprinthall (2000) supported this self concept by analysing David Elkird's findings. They pointed out that positive self concept leads to a child's self directed learning and consequently a low academic achievement.

Parental Occupation.

The type of parental occupation affects the level of attention accorded the educational progress monitoring process of the parents. For example, bank workers go to work early and close late; such people hardly find time to visit their children at school and their school works.

This is opposed to civil servants who have more time to spend with their children. However, occupation of the parents determines the structure of their income or earnings. Parental income is believed to dictate the ability of the parent to pay school fees, provide out of school lesson for the child to remediate and complement school work, purchase learning material both for the school and home lesson, provide adequate clothing and foods to create an enabling and stimulating learning environment at home through provision of some electronic gadgets, newspapers and educative magazines.

Brembeck (1996) asserted that the percentage of parents which sent their children to school declined steadily with decline in their father's occupation. He categorized professions into the following categories. Medical, dental, legal, he called category one, seventy-eight percent (78%) of the children who went to college, category two, included ministers, managers, teachers, nurses, musicians, with seventy three percent (73%) of their children becoming college students, the percent becomes smaller as the profession declines to low cadre.

Nelson (2001) in his study of "achievement among children with a working and non-working mothers" he set out to determine if children with working mothers are in fact different from children with non working mothers in school achievement.

More specifically answers to the following questions.

1. Homes where the mothers work full time, part time or not at all?
2. Do boys and girls differ in school achievement among the material employment group?

Nelson further declared that very little research has been done in this line, using Otis test of mental ability for his own studies, he declared that there was no difference in school achievement among the children from homes where mothers work full time, part time or not at all. Also that boys and girls do not differ in school achievement among the material employment group.

On the basis of the result, he said it seemed reasonable to conclude that children from homes where mothers work full time, part time or not at all perform equally in school as evidence in their performance.

Nature of Family

The nature of family orientation at a child determines the home finances and may affect the proportion of parent income available for child's education. It may also influence parental attitude to the child's education. Children from nuclear family tend to enjoy positive parental attitude towards their education than those from polygamous and extended family. In the case of the former, that is the nuclear family, tuition are paid promptly and regularly, greater percentage of learning material needed are purchased and they are better fed. On the contrary, children from the latter group are embarrassed out of school for nonpayment of tuition, lack of learning materials and are likely to be inattentive in class, become ill frequently, regular late comers and truant due to poor feeding at home. This may result in poor performance of such children in their school works Otu (2002) reported that "children from monogamous home perform better academically than those that are from the polygamous homes".

Family Size

Fisbet cited by Ogundele (2005) stated that children from small sized parents' families tend on average, to be more attentive at school and thus perform better in intelligence test than children from larger sized families. The reason being that: they seem to devote more time to their studies than engaging themselves in other activities.

Also, the family sized dictates how well its members would be catered for thus, small sized family are able to give sound and appropriate education to their children than those in the larger sized families. Musgrave cited in

Otu (2002) wrote that “several large scale and through investigation have shown that measured intelligence (I.Q) varies directly with the size of the family”.

Home Environment

It is evident that low school performance of some children is related to school poor material situation in the home. Financial condition of the parent particularly the object poverty strike parents experiences all forms of education backwardness. Children’s from poor home are handicapped directly by high rate of sickness and poor rate of attendance at school hence performance is arrested. Bank (1996) also found that extreme poverty of parents militates against school achievement of children. Extreme poverty is likely to result to malnutrition and poor living condition which are bound to have effect on health consequently on school performance. He found out that sickness is a result of poor health and frequent absence from school is the effect of poor material situation in the home.

Over – crowding at home is also an index of low income of parent and large family size; this can impede child’s home work, his private teaching at home and his leisure. The nature of home from where a child comes to school affects his emotional disposition, children from broken homes are often more maladjusted than those from stable homes. The child lives with either of the parent and thus he is likely to miss the parental or material love depending on which the child lives with. Adekola (2002) supported this claim when she wrote that children from separated homes are not well catered for educationally, physical, morally and mentally. Such children who are lacking proper home upbringing are the vagabonds, thugs, armed robbers, thieves and other criminally minded people in our society today.

On the other hand, child from organized home where the parents live together with mutual love and understanding is more likely to enjoy greater love, feeling of security, motivation and all forms of incentives. This raises his self concept lead to proper adjustment in life and good academic performance.

Brembeck (2000) also found that parental education has positive relation with academic performance of their children. He supported this findings by probing into the home environment of the educated as well as illiterates. He examined variables which are likely to prevail in the home. In the educated home, there is likely to be achievement press, good language models, and academic guidance stimulation to explore various aspects of the larger environment, the intellectual interest and activities in the home. He found that the overall index of the home environment had a correlation of +0.8 with the total score on the entire achievement test.

Parental Encouragement

Another measurement of socio-economic states is the parental encouragement and interest. The degree to which a child perceives his parent encouraging or discouraging him affects his academic performance in school. Torrence and Strom (1985) agreed that when a child has parent who are understanding, who give him support and freedom he needs and who exercise positive guidance through examples and precepts, this child has greater chance for mental health and consequently high school achievement than when these basic attributes are lacking. Bowman and Mathew (1998) supported these findings with their research on high school dropouts. They found that when intelligent and social were controlled, the only factor that affects students’ achievement is the attitude of parents toward education.

Most of the parent of the dropouts had no objection to their children leaving the school whereas most of the parents encourage their children to finish high school.

Brembeck (1985) also found that parental encouragement has positive correlation to academic performance of students’. This parental encouragement is determined by socio-economic status of individual parents. He supported his findings by examining the style of life of Beth who is a child of the suburb and Julia, who is a child of the slum. Beth’s home environment is full of motivation and reinforcement; hence there is regulation and continuities in her school and home.

Julia on the other hand enjoyed in motivation and reinforcement at home. The home is a sharp contrast of the school; it is full of discontinuities and irregularities which result in irregularities in attendance at school. Her style of life at home was generally dull. It was found that Julia’s achievement at school was low compared to her peer group.

2.7 Appraisal of the Literature Reviewed

The literature reviewed for this study is carried out under those headings which include the following, the concept of socio-economic status (SES), concept of academic performance, (determinants of the relationship between parental socio-economic status and students’ academic performance) with the following variables such as the parental education, parental occupation, parental encouragement, nature of the family and size of the family and the home environment.

The concept of socio-economic status is a function of all these variables like the parental education, occupation and income academic performance of the study refers to that students’ ability a potential to do well, fairly or poorly in an examination.

Socio-economic status (SES) of parents has been found to be function of the level of their educational attainment as well as their occupation.

In conclusion therefore parental education, occupation of the parents, the size of, family, parental encouragement, home environment etc. all of these are determinant have bearing on students' academic performance in school.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design used for this study was a descriptive survey. Descriptive survey according to Ilogu(2006) is used to collect data that would enable the researcher to describe systematically the characteristics features of the given population. The design was appropriate and deemed fit because a questionnaire was used to collect data from the sample with the view of generalizing on the entire population.

Population of the Study

The target population for the study consisted of all secondary school students' in Lagos metropolis. The accessible population consisted of some selected students in secondary schools in Ikeja local Government Area of Lagos State.

Sample and Sampling Procedure The sample comprised three hundred and fifty (350) randomly selected students' from five (5) selected public secondary schools in Ikeja L.G.A. Lagos state.

Seventy (70) students, comprising thirty – five (35) male and thirty – five (35) female were selected from each of the five (5) schools their ages ranges between 15-20 years.

The researcher used stratified sampling procedure to select sample of study. Stratification used was based on gender, class of study and the type of school. It is believed that the procedure would enhance the emergence of representative sample.

Instrumentation

The major instrument the researcher used for data collection contained (20) item self designed questionnaire tagged; Socio- Economic Status and Gender as predictor of Students' Academic Achievement. (SESGPSAA).

The instrument was divided into three sections A, B and C

SECTION A: Source for information about students' biographical data, information such as the name of school, type of school, class of study, age, sex and religion.

SECTION B, consisted of (20) items bothering on relationship between parental (SES) and students' academic performance. It is on (5) point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and strongly Disagree (SD).

SECTION C sought information on students' academic performance.

Thirty Multiple Choice Questions in Economics adopted from Lagos State Unified Examination for Senior Secondary Schools (11) 2013.

Scoring of the instrument

Section A: was not scored. It was included just for the purpose of identification and items here are mainly in Nominal scale.

Section B: with the adoption of likert scale format which ranging from Strongly agree (SA)=5, Agree (A)=4, Undecided (UND)=3, Disagree (D)=2, Strongly Disagree (SD)=1. These ratings depend on wording of the statements. If the items are in positive statements then the rating takes the above scoring pattern but if the statements are worded negatively, the scoring takes the reverse form starting from the Strongly Disagree taking 5 points and downward in that order with Strongly Agree scoring 1.

In Section C: Assess Students' Academic Achievement. From the achievement test administered to the students based on 60 marks to be complemented by their Continuous Assessments scores in schools, to be demanded for from their class teachers in the schools studied with the permission of the school principals. In all, total of 100% and any students above 50% has achieved well academically and less than 50% is a failure or underachievement.

Validity

Two methods of validity were used. They included; face validity and content validity. The questionnaires after preparation were given to the experts for test constructions for moderation, verification and corrections. After consultation, the experts came out with the good items evaluated as the most suitable of the questionnaire.

Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was carried out.

30 copies of the instrument were administered to 30 students which are entirely different from the students to be studied; the rationale behind this is to test the suitability, usability and reliability of the instrument. The responses of the respondents on two administrations were obtained and correlated using test retest reliability to test for stability consistency of the items. The co-efficient reliability obtained was 0.65 at the double administration carried out. This value showed that the test was reliable by this high coefficient.

Administration of the Instrument

The researcher personally administered instrument to the students with the assistance of the school counselor to ensure hitch free administration. Every subject was given ample time to react to the items and help was provided where a respondent would ask for explanations.

Data Analysis

The hypotheses formulated were subjected to statistical testing for the purpose of either accepting or rejecting them. The statistical methods used for this study were Chi-square(χ^2) and t-test of independent statistical methods. These methods were preferred because the searcher was trying to establish causes of relationship between the two sets of variables that is socio-economic status (Independent variable) and academic performance (dependent variable).

The t-test of unrelated sample was also used in the study because in hypotheses III to test for gender differences between the mean scores of students socio-economic status (SES) and academic performance.

All hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significant.

Discussion of the Results

The results of this study are presented analytically hypothesis by hypothesis.

Table 1: **Bio Data Analysis of the Respondents.**

Class of Study	No	Percentage
Science Students	139	39.71
Art Students	109	31.14
Commercial Students	102	29.14
Total	350	100

Table 1 above showed the class of study of the respondents. Respondents who were science oriented revealed (139) 39.71%, Art respondents were (109) 31.14% and the commercial subjects were (102) 29.14%.

It showed that science oriented respondents were in majority, while the least respondents were commercial subject respondents of 29.14%.

Table 2: **Age distribution of the respondents**

Age range	No of respondent	Percentage
15 – 17 years	212	60.57
18 – 20 years	138	39.43
21 years above	Nil	0.00
Total	350	100%

Table 2 shows the age distribution of the respondents. From the table above age range between 15 – 17 years respondents were (212) 60.57%, 18 – 20 years respondents were (138) 39.43% while age range above 21 years respondents recorded no percentage. Age range between 15 – 17 years respondents were in majority.

Table 3: **Gender Distribution of the Respondents**

Gender	No of Respondent	Percentage
Male	175	50%
Female	175	50%
Total	350	100%

The evidence of the table 3 above revealed that both sex (male and female) respondents were (175) 50% each. This was due to the administration of questionnaire to the two schools the researcher used for the study.

Table 4: **Parental Occupational Status of the Respondents**

Parental Occupational Status	No of Respondents	Percentage
Civil servant	198	56.57
Private workers	58	16.57
Self employed	94	26.85
Total	350	100%

Table 4 above revealed the parental occupational status of the respondents. The evidence of the table above showed that respondents who were civil servant constituted (198) 56.57% respondents who were private workers contained (58) 16.57% and those respondents who were self employed constituted (94) 26.85% of the total number studied. It therefore means that respondents who were civil servants were in a majority, while the least were those respondents with private work.

Table 5: Parental Qualification of the Respondents

Parental Qualification	No of the Respondents	Percent
WAEC	60	17.14
N.C.E	98	28
H.N.D	25	7.14
B.ED	125	35.71
M.E.D	30	8.57
Others	12	3.43
Total	350	100

Table 5 showed an evidence of parental qualification of the respondents. WAEC respondents constituted (60) 17.14%, N.C.E respondents (98) 28%, B.Ed subjects (125) 35.71, M.Ed respondents contained (30) 8.57% and other respondents constituted (12) 3.43%.

This revealed that parental qualification respondents who had Bachelor in Education (B.Ed) of (35.71%) were in majority while the least respondents' parental qualification of (3.43%) was those not mentioned.

Table 6: Religion Distribution of the Respondents

Religion	Number of Rep.	Percent
Christianity	177	50.57
Muslim	173	43.43
Other	-	-
Total	350	94.00

The table 6 above showed the religions distribution of the respondents. Respondents who were Christians contained (177) 50.57%, the Muslim respondents constituted (173) 43.43% and there was non respondent for other religions. From the table above, it therefore, showed that Christianity respondents were more than the Muslim subjects with a little difference of (7.14) 2.04% this was good indications for the country which called for tolerance and unity in diversity.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses One: There is no signification relationship between parental educational attainment and students' academic performance.

Table 7: Shows the relationship between parental educational attainment and students academic performance

Variable	Nos	X ² cal	X ² crit	D.f	Decision
Relationship between parental educational attainment and students academic performance	350	126.15	26.30	16	Significant

Table 7 showed an evidenced of association between parental educational attainment and students academic performance.

The computed chi-square (X²) value of (126.15) resulted from the relationship between parental educational attainment and students academic performance showed significant since chi-square X² calculated value is greater than chi-square critical value of (26.30) given (16) degree freedom at 0.05 level of significant.

Consequently the null hypothesis stated that there will be no significant relationship between parental educational attainment and students academic performance is rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between parental occupational background and students' academic performance

Table 8: Relationship between Parental Occupational Academic Performances

Variable	Nos	D.F	X ² cal	X ² crit	Decision
Relationship between occupation and academic performance	350	16	165.33	26.30	Significant

Table 8: revealed the association of parental occupation and students academic performance. Calculated (X²) value of 165.33 is greater than chi-square (X²) critical value of 26.30 given (16) degree of freedom (DF) at 0.05 level of significant. Therefore, this means that the formulated null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between parental occupation and academic performance of students is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is retained.

Hypothesis Three: There is no gender difference between the mean scores of socio economic status (SES) and students' academic performance.

Table 9: Gender difference due to mean scores of SES and students academic achievement.

Gender	No	Mean	Standard deviation	D.F	t. cal	t. crit
Male	175	7.62	4.30		18.13	1.96
Female	175	14.69	2.86	348		

Table 9 above showed gender difference between the mean scores of socio economic status and students' academic performance. From the table above computed values for mean score and standard deviation of male were (7.62 and 4.30) while the female mean score and standard deviation were (14.69 and 2.86) respectively. Calculated total value of (18.13) resulted from the gender difference between in the mean scores of socio economic status and student academic performance is significant since the t calculated value of (18.13) is greater than the t critical value of (1.96) given (348) degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significant.

It therefore means that posited null hypothesis is rejected hence there is significant gender difference in the mean scores of students academic performance.

Hypotheses Four: There would be no significant relationship between parental socio-economic status (SES) and academic performance

Table 10: **Relationship between Parental Socio-Economic Status (SES) And Academic Performance**

Variable	Nos	X ² cal	X ² crit	D.F	Decision
Relationship between socio economic status and academic performance	350	233.74	26.30	16	Significant

Computed chi-square (X²) value of 233.74 resulted from association of parental Socio-Economic Status (SES) and academic performance is significant since the chi-square value calculated of 233.74 is greater than the chi-square critical value (X²crit) of 26.30 given 16 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis formulated is rejected; hence there is significant relationship between parental SES and students' academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in the present study "Socio- Economic Status and Gender as Predictor of Students' academic Achievement in Economics" have revealed that the four posited null hypotheses for the study were all rejected while all the alternative hypotheses were obtained. There is no significant relationship between parental educational attainment and students' academic performance was rejected, it therefore mean that the alternative hypothesis is upheld hence, there is significant relationship between parental educational attainment and academic achievement in Economics. This finding is supported by Torrance and Strom (1985) revealed that parental education has a great influence on child's academic performance. They explained that educated parents assured their children to be more responsible and independent. Educated parents give their children considerable freedom and the necessary support. They encourage more verbalization among their children than illiterate counter parts.

They directly or indirectly build their children a sense of self expression and positive self concepts. This statement was buttressed by Sprinthall (2000) cited that self concept by analyzing David Elkirids findings, pointed out that positive self concept leads to a child's self directed learning and consequently a high academic achievement.

Significant relationship exists between occupational background of parents and students' academic achievement in Economics. This statement was in line with Brembeck (2000) assertion that percentage of parents which sent their children to school declined steadily with decline in their father's occupation. He categorized professions into the following categories.

Medical, dental, legal, he called category one, seventy – eight percent (78%) of children who went to college, category two included ministers managers, teachers, nurses, musicians, with seventy - three percent (73%) of children becoming college students, the percent become smaller as the profession declines to low cadre. This implies that the type of parental occupation affects the level of attention accorded to educational progress monitoring process of the parents. For example, bank workers go to work early and close late; such people hardly find time to visit their children at school and inspect their school works. This is opposed to the civil servants who have more time to spend with their children

There is no significant mean scores of students Socio- Economic Status and Academic Achievement in Economics due to gender. was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was upheld. It therefore means that there is gender difference between the mean scores of students' socio-economic status (SES) and academic achievement.

It is widely believed that the impact of the parents socio-economic status (SES) has on child's academic performance may be affected by sex of both the parents and the child. It has been showed that boys whose father showed insufficient paternal affection were less secure, less confident and less socially adjusted than those boys whose father manifested sufficient affection. Falua (1983), Babalola in Faula (1995), Turner, Eccles and O'Brien (2002) stated that not only do women in North America take care of their children more than the men, but adolescence girls and boys spend much of their spare time doing different things as well. This suggests that there is difference in sex in regards to children upbringing.

Treagust (1980) equally reported that studies indicated that male students did not achieve equal competence in

science and mathematics. Shaibu and Ameh (1998) also in their study collaborated the statement that boys performed better in science than female counterparts, Jegede and Inyang (2009) also indicated males superiority in science learning and its skills and this was also based on parental (SES).

The result of this study also, revealed that significant relationship exists between Socio- Economic Status (SES) and Students' academic achievement in Economics. This statement was adequately supported by Jenson (1988) in Akinifesi (1996) asserted that socio-economic status today is largely a matter of educational and occupational status.

He explained that parental education and occupation play a vital role in the determination of the family income, parental attitudes to children education and the family feeding habit.

Akinifesi (1996) identified the following aspects of children education are affected by the socio-economic status of their parents, early attendance to school, provision of books and other materials, attendance at the best school available, encouragement in school education, development of interest in school activities, academic and job aspirations. He concluded that children of high socio economic status enjoy great intellectual support at home such that they had been formed to score higher on all cognitive measures.

Havighust (2000) in the same view revealed that children tend to select as abstract as opposed to concrete explanation and definitions. On the other hand, children from low socio-economic status have little or no intellectual support at home. In collaboration to this statement Wiseman in Asana (2000) argued that no matter the social group one may belong, parental attitudes towards their children education contribute a great deal in improving their performance in school.

Conclusion and Recommendations.

None of the null hypothesis formulated for this study was accepted for the study, all were rejected while the alternative hypotheses were obtained. This implies, that there is significant relationship between parental educational and students' academic achievement in Economics, there was prominent significant relationship between parent' occupational background and students' academic achievement., there is significant difference in the mean scores between Socio- Economic Status and academic achievement of the students due to gender and significant relationship exists between Socio- Economic Status and Students' academic achievement in Economics. From the findings of this study there is a strong indication that Socio- Economic Status and Gender are predictors of Students' academic achievement.

Recommendations

1. Parents should always try to encourage their children/ wards in all that they do and try to give moral support so that the children would be emotionally stable and have confidence in all that they do, whether at school or at home.
2. Parents should endeavour to improve the conditions of their home environment to suite the purpose of their children performing better in school works.
3. Teachers should make sure that their method of instructions in school address two personality i.e. introvert and extrovert students.
4. Government should bring back the governing system as this will help to bridge the gap between the performances of children from high and low socio-economic class.

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