

THE ROLE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND ON SELF-CONCEPT AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of socio-economic background on self-concept and academic achievement of senior secondary (SS) school II students in Aguata education zone of Anambra State Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study. Ex-post facto design was used for the study. A sample of 300 SSII students was randomly selected from ten co-educational secondary schools. Instrument for the study was a questionnaire which was face validated as well as trial tested to determine its reliability. Data generated from the respondents were analyzed using Mean, Standard deviation and ANOVA statistics. Result of data analysis show that socio-economic background significantly influences self-concept and academic achievement of students.

KEYWORDS: Socio Economic Background, Self Concept, Academic Achievement, Family

INTRODUCTION

Family is generally acknowledged as the smallest social unit in society. In Nigeria it consist of a man, his wife, children and other immediate relations (the extended as different from thr nuclear family). The family has among others roles the responsibilities of socializing and providing the basic needs of the child (Okorodudu, 2010; Mezieobi & Opara, 2007). Implicitly, a child's family socio-economic background may impact the child's self-concept and academic achievement including resources and prestige within a community. Socio-economic background refers to the social and economic standing of any given family.

In this study, the Nigeria, minimum wage scales will be applied in categorization of people into high, middle or low socio-economic status. Students whose parents earn between ₦18,000) – ₦50,000) per month are referred as being of low socio-economic background. Those whose parents' monthly income are between ₦50, 000 and ₦300,000 belong to middle class while those whose parents earn ₦300,000 and above per month belong to the high socio-economic background. For the purpose of this study socio-economic background of students are classified based on parental income, occupation and education.

According to Gouc (2007), socio-economic background is relative standing of a family in a society based on its income, power, background and prestige. It can also be the relative position of a family or individual on hierarchical social structure based on access to or control over wealth, prestige and power. Ovute (2009) explained that family socio-economic background includes family income, standard of house occupied or rented, family size, parental education and level of family stability among other factors. From the foregoing, socio-economic background can be categorized into levels such as high, middle and low. In this study, children of High Socio-Economic Background (HSEB) are children

from the highest social class. They include for instance, children of highly placed politicians, industrialists, manufactures, importers among others whose income are ₦ 300.00 and above. In Nigeria children of Middle Socio-Economic Background (MSEB), on the other hand come from social class between the low working class and the high class. It includes professionals, lecturers, doctors and business people whose monthly income is between 60 to 300, 000 naira. The Low Socio-Economic Background (LSEB) includes the petty trades Affirmer and artisans whose monetary incomes fall below ₦ 8,000.00 in Nigeria.

Eamon (2005) and Hochild (2003) observed that students from ISEB are more likely to drop out of school as they face more challenges than children from HSEB. Their inadequate financial income creates frustration, and sense of helplessness which in turn impact on both self-concept and academic achievement unlike those of HSEB.

Socio-Economic Background (SEB) can is typically be determined by the classification placed on source education and profession according to the societal esteem. Hence, SEB could operationally be defined as a composite measure of income, level of education and occupational prestige. Some studies argue that higher levels of SEB directly leads to more positive attitudes toward schooling in children and positive attitude leads to higher academic achievement. Wells, Malpass, Lindsay, Fisher, Turtle and Fulero(2000) pointed out that socio-economic background is a most critical variable in the determination of achievement, stressing that the opportunity to achieve success is influenced by learning, availability of special help at home, reference materials and tutors. Another relating factor is energy level which reflects the quality of nutrition provided due to SEB. They note that SEB impact influence on student academic achievement.

The issue of socioeconomic background and its relationship to students' achievement can also be explored specifically on the level of parental education, income and occupation. Literature on academic achievement seems to show that parent level of education is important in predicting children's academic achievement (Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn & Dunkan, 1994; Haveman & Wolfe, 1995). Father's occupation, social status and life style have considerable influence on the ease or difficulty with which students can gain recognition in the society. In other words, it is observed that, to a large extent, parents' social status may determine the influence of home in the student's up-bringing.

According to Chauhan, (1992), academic achievement is extremely essential at the upper socio-economic level and relatively less essential at the lower level. Richmond (2001) pointed out that children from upper and middle socio-economic background achieve academically higher than children of LSB and this according to Boyles (2000) is due to inequality of resources among the rich, middle and poor children. Bayl esmaintained that no amount of compulsory education can overcome education disabilities imposed on the children of poor socio-economic background by virtue of their class of existence. White more (1999) observed that the fathers of adolescents who are high achievers belong more to the higher socio-economic background, that is, those with a high ranking occupation, better education and reasonable income than the fathers of the low achievers. Ballen (2000) explained that progress in school facilitates more for the children of the upper and middle socio-economic backgrounds due to the supports they get from home, than the lower class adolescents who are academically handicapped in school due to poor environmental simulations.

Parental educational level positively influences children's education. Cohen, Doyle, Turner, Alper, and Skoner (2003) stated that children's reading and arithmetic attainment and social adjustments in schools are positively co-related to parental level of education. This is due to that fact that children spend more time at home than they do at schools, and the parents have the opportunity for a number of interactions with their children in one-on-one situations. Indeed,

socio-economic background plays a significant role in parent-child relationship. Singh (1996) reports that unemployed or low income parents tend to see themselves as incapable because they can not meet the needs of their children and families. Inadequate resources create conflict in the home. Such a state of affairs may influence the parent-child relationships and subsequently the holistic development of the child, including education the academic achievement.

The level of education of parents also may influence the child's academic achievement and self-concept. Singh (1996) asserted that the education of parents can help the children to develop proper personality characteristics and equip them better to adjust socially, and academically. Based on behavior pattern of educated and uneducated parents, the author concluded that high degree of literacy leads to more positive and healthy pattern of behavior. However, Gupta and Wogu (1999) study on self-concept and socio-economic background of 120 randomly sampled Nigerian students using. Self-concept Personality Word list by Pratibha Deo and Socioeconomic Status Scale by Sharma and Chauhan revealed no significant difference between high and low socioeconomic groups with respect to self-concept. These inconsistencies in literature about the influence of socio-economic background on self-concept calls for concern in this study.

Self-concept, also called self construction, self identity or self perspective is a multi-dimensional construct that refers to an individual's perception of 'self' in relation to any number of characteristics (Bong, 1999). It is an internal model which comprises self-assessment (Gerrig, Richard, Zimbardo & Philip (2002). Self-concept can also be referred to as self evaluation or perception, and represents the sum total of an individual's beliefs about his or her attributes. Baldwin and Hoffman, (2002) perceive it as a variable with which an individual evaluates himself or herself in domains in which he or she considers important and it is influenced positively or negatively by an individual's age, gender, educational discipline/level and socio-economic status.

Self-concept is a multi-dimensional construct that refers to an individual's perception of self in relation to any number of characteristics. It is a person's perception or view of self which is formed through experiences gained in the environment from reinforcements and significant others. It simply refers to how one thinks about oneself. McGraw (2008) explains self-concept as a person's composite or collective view of himself or herself across multifunctional set of specific perception. It is based on self-knowledge and evaluation of value or worth of person's capabilities that are formed through experience and interpretation of environment. It indicates past selves and future selves. Future or possible selves represent the individual's ideas of what might become, what would likely become, or what people are afraid of becoming. Cheng and Furuham (2004) asserted that self-concept correspond to hopes, fears, standards, goals, and threats. Possible selves may function as incentives for future behavior and they also provide an evaluative and interpretative context for the current view of self (Martin and Milot, 2007).

An individual's self-concept may be either positive or negative. A positive self-concept in an individual is expressed in the development of interest to school, having many friends, putting oneself up before others, accepting compliments, always happy, and humorous, always trying new things and non-jealous (Berger, 2008). On the contrary, several signs which indicate that an individual has a negative self-concept include: poor attitude towards school activities, having few friends, putting down oneself, rejecting compliments, teasing others, showing excessive amount of anger, being excessively jealous, appearing conceited and hesitating to try new things (Berger, 2008). Researchers believe that each individual has a global self-concept that reflects how the individual evaluates his or her self worth as a whole (Byrne & Worth Gavin, 1996). They also believe self-concept has three different components the view of one's self

(self image); how much value one places on one-self (self esteem or self-worth) and what one wishes he/she is really like (ideal self). According to Rogers in Demnchick and Kirschenbaum (2008), every one strives to become more like an 'ideal self'. The closer one is to the ideal self, the happier one will be. Rogers also claimed that one factor in a person's happiness is unconditional positive regard from others. Kass and Michael (1994) explain that unconditional positive regards often occurs in close or familiar relationships, and involves a consistent level of affection regardless of the recipient's actions.

Negative self-concept during adolescence has been associated with maladaptive behaviours and emotions while positive self-concept has been linked to positive social and emotional development. For the fact that negative self-concept in adolescence has been associated with various maladaptive behavioural and emotional problems, it is important to address signs of negative self-concept in adolescents. Furthermore, by determining the specific causes of a negative self-concept, adolescents can be helped to combat any negative views that they hold about themselves. Also, by intervening to improve on adolescents' self-concept, social, academic and behavioural adjustments can also be improved upon.

Academic self-concept refers to the personal beliefs about one's academic abilities or skills (Marsh and Martin, 2011). This academic self-concept develops or evolves as one grows older. Tiedemann's (2000) study notes that academic self-concept begins to develop in early childhood, from age 3 to 5, due to parental and early educators' influences. Some researchers, contend that academic self-concept does not develop until age 7year or 8years when children begin evaluating their own academic abilities based on feedback they receive from parents, teachers and their peers (Leflot, Onghena & Colpin, 2010; Rubie-Davies, 2006). According to Rubie – Davies (2006), by age 10 or 11, children start comparing their academic abilities with their peers.

Achievement is the capability to operate efficiently, react quickly or perfectly to a given task. Therefore to achieve is to accomplish, acquire or gain by effort or do something successfully with an effort or skill. It describes the level of success in relation to a task or job carried out. Academic achievement is an outcome of teaching and learning encountered. It reflects the extent to which students have attained their educational stated objectives as well as students cognitive attainment in the core subjects at school level. Academic achievement has become an index of a child's future in the competitive world. In order to develop an identity in the society, children are becoming more concerned about their academic achievement. Children's academic achievement may differ due to predictor factors like gender, and socioeconomic background.

Literature on parents' education suggests that it influences their beliefs, behaviours and expectations, thus leading to positive outcomes in school achievement of children. Alexander, Entwisle, and Bedinger (1994) note that parents of moderate to high education background hold beliefs, and expectations that enhance their children's achievement in school works. Those of low educational level have beliefs and expectations that negatively influence their children's school achievement. In fact, the researchers observed that the academic attainment of parents have tangible influence on the performance of children in school as the children often feel at ease when they work out problems with their parents. Closely related to parental education is their income. Corwyn and Bradley (2002) explained that household income influences achievement of children in school as the parental income tend to predict the physical environment and learning experiences of the child in the home, based on the availability of reading materials.

Gerwal (1995) studied on the effect of socio-economic background on academic performance of 550 randomly selected students (350 boys and 200 girls) of class X 1 from 16 higher secondary schools of Bhopal. The study of these students with modal age of 16 years, reveal that socio-economic status of the parents influence students' academic achievement. Manocha (1993) studied the relationship between adolescent self-concept and academic subjects (science, commerce, humanities) of 297 students. Using Hubil and Dharward Semantic Differential Scale, the study revealed that differential influence on the self-concept of students in the three different groups. Science students formed significantly separate group considering themselves to be much superior to both commerce and humanity groups. The humanity group seemed to suffer from inferiority feelings considering themselves as lower than both science and commerce groups.

In another setting, Khan and Jemberu (2002) studied the influence of family and socioeconomic background on educational achievement and occupational aspirations of high and low achieving adolescents. The sample consisted of 80 students selected from 4 four socio-economic status. These are the high, middle, low and lower classes. Results showed that the impact of socioeconomic background on educational achievement was not significant.

Academic achievement of students may not depend only on the quality of instructions at school, availability of educational facilities, students' intelligence quotient, but also on other important factors like the socioeconomic background. Similarly, self-concept of students which is positively linked with academic achievement may also be a factor of students' socio-economic background. Presently, literature available to the researchers on the influence of socioeconomic background on both academic achievement and self-concept of students seem to be inconsistent. While some studies indicate that higher academic achievement and positive self-concept correlate with high and moderate socioeconomic background other findings show no significant relationship existing among academic achievement and self-concept with levels of socioeconomic groups. This situation calls for further research on the influence of socioeconomic background on school adolescents' achievement and self-concept. The problem of the study therefore is: What influence does socioeconomic background have on students' self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students in Anambra State of Nigeria? The need to answer this question necessitated the study.

The main purpose of this study is to determine the influence of students' socioeconomic background on self-concept and academic achievement of senior secondary schools students' in Anambra State of Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined the influence of socio-economic background (parental education, income and occupation) on self-concept senior secondary school students and the influence of socio-economic background (parental education, income and occupation) on self-concept of senior secondary school students' academic achievement. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. These were:

- What is the influence of socio-economic background (parental education, income and occupation) on self-concept of secondary school students?
- What is the influence of socio-economic background (parental education, income and occupation) on academic achievement of secondary school students?
- Socio-economic background (parental education, income and occupation) does not significantly influence self-concept of secondary school students.

- Socio-economic background (parental education, income and occupation) does not significantly influence academic achievement secondary school students.

Methodology and Data Collection

This study adopted an Ex-Post-Facto design. Nworgu (2006) opined that Ex-Post-Facto design involves a study in which the phenomenon has taken place and cannot be manipulated. It establishes relationships and not causation and effect. This design is considered suitable because students' socio-economic backgrounds have already taken place and self-concept variables are not manipulable as they have already occurred.

The study was carried out in Aguata Education Zone of Anambra State, Nigeria. Aguata education zone is bounded by Aguata, Orumba North and Orumba South, local government areas. The zone has two tertiary Institutions-Federal Polytechnic Oko and Federal College of Education Umunze and 30 secondary schools. This area of study was chosen because of the large number of adolescents who have opted for business instead of schooling. This attitude depicts poor interest in academic pursuit, thus, resulting in continuous reduction of adolescents into secondary schools in the area. The population of this study consists of all the senior secondary school students in co-educational secondary schools in Aguata education zone totaling 2,364 students. From this, samples of 300 SSII students were selected using simple random technique from 10 co-educational secondary schools.

The researchers administered copies of questionnaire with the help of three research assistants. The questionnaires were collected back the next day, so as to enable those who did not know their parents socio-economic status to find out from their parents. The academic achievement of the sampled students were collected in 3 core subjects namely, English language, mathematics and biology. Data collected were analyzed using Means, Standard Deviation and analysis of variance (ANOVA) tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Frequency Analysis of Students Socio-Economic Background

Socio-Economic Background	Level	N	%
Parental Education			
Less or up to primary school	Low	38	12.7
Secondary education	Middle	111	37
University education	high	151	50.3
Parental Occupation			
Teaching/lecturing	High	15	5
Trading	middle	136	45.39
Patty trading/farming	low	149	50
Parental Income			
Less than -#50,00 monthly	low	80	26.7
#50,000-#300,000 monthly	middle	134	44.7
Above #300,000	high	86	28.7

Analysis of the data show that 12.7% of students are from parents less or up to primary school education. Those whose parents have secondary education are 37% while those whose parents have university education are 50.3%. In terms of parental occupation, 5% of students have parents who are teaching, 45.39 have parents who are trading while those whose parents are into other occupation are 50%. Students parental income reveal that 26.7% of parents receive less than #50,000 monthly, 44.7% of parents receive #50,000 to #300,000 while 28.7% of parents receive over #300,000 monthly.

The above analysis shows that the students are more of middle socio-economic background than of low or high socio-economic background.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Influence of Socio-Economic Background on Students Self-Concept

Source	Socio-Economic Background (SEB)	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model		3.65	24	0.15	1.14	0.301
Intercept		467.56	1	467.56	3.50	0.000
Parental education Parental occupation Parental income	High SEB	.18	2	0.06	0.48	0.621
Parental education Parental occupation	Middle SEB	0.66	4	0.16	0.36	0.700
Parental income Parental education	Low SEB	0.02	4	0.23	1.72	0.147
Parental occupation Parental income						
Parental education Parental occupation	Overall SEB	0.74	6	0.12	0.92	0.480
Error		36.72	275	0.13		
Total		2150.30	300			
Corrected Total		40.371	300			

The analysis of the data show that the probability value associated with the overall calculated value of F (0.92) for the influence of parental background on the students' self-concept is 0.48. Since this value (0.48) is greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was accepted. Thus, parental background (parental education, parental occupation and parental income) have no significant influence on the students self-concept.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Influence of Parental Background on Students Academic Achievement

Source	Socio-Economic Background (SEB)	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model		5043.451 ^a	24	210.144	1.074	0.373
Intercept		186067.133	1	186067.133	951.102	0.000
Parental education Parental occupation Parental income	High SEB	101.737	2	50.868	0.260	0.771
Parental education Parental occupation	Middle SEB	469.071	4	117.268	0.599	0.663
Parental income	Low SEB	1111.697	4	277.924	1.421	0.227
Parental education Parental occupation						
Parental income Parental education Parental occupation Parental income	Overall SEB	1468.532	6	244.755	1.251	0.280
Error		53799.136	275	195.633		
Total		894350.000	300			
Corrected Total		58842.587	300			

The data above show that the probability value associated with the overall calculated value of F 1.251 for the influence of parental background on the students' academic achievement is 0.280. Since this value 0.280 is greater than the

0.05 level of significance, the null' hypothesis was accepted. Thus, parental background (Parental education, parental occupation and parental income) has no significant influence on the students' academic achievement.

DISCUSSIONS

The results of the study showed that there was difference among the self-concept percentage of students whose parents had less or up to primary school education secondary education are in favour of parents with university education. The self-concept of the students also varied slightly according to the parental occupation in favour of the students whose parents are involved in patty trading and farming.

Similarly, the self-concept of students differed according to parental income in favour of middle income parents. Generally, the analysis of the mean difference in self-concept with regards to parental background indicates that there is no significant influence of parental background on self-concept at 0.05 level of significance.

This is in contrast with the reports by Eamon (2005) and Hochild (2003) who found that there is a significant influence of parental background on student's self-concept. This finding seems unexpected because from observation made and comments, from students' parental background do affect students' self-concept. This could be that students at this level try as much as possible to boost or uplift their self-concept to enable them to move on beyond their parents' level.

The study also revealed that there was difference in the mean achievement score of students whose parents had less or up to primary school education and university education in favour of secondary education. The achievement of the students also varied slightly according to parental occupation in favour of the students whose parents are in trading. Similarly, the academic achievement of students also varied slightly according to parental income in favour of middle income parents. Furthermore the analysis of the mean shows that differences in academic achievement with regards to parental background indicate that there is no significant influence of parental background on academic achievement at 0.05 level of significance. This is in contrast with the reports by Ryan and Adams (1999) who found out those higher levels of students socio-economic background towards school in children and positive attitudes lead to higher academic achievement. This indication could be as a result of different exposures acquired by the students due to generation differences that exist between the children and their parents.

CONCLUSIONS

The study examined the influence of socio-economic background as correlate of self-concept and academic achievement of secondary school students in Anambra state in Nigeria. Applying the ex-post facto design, the study sampled three hundred (300) junior secondary class II students from Aguata education zone. The findings indicated that parental background (parental education, parental occupation, and parental income) has no significant influence on the students' self-concept and academic achievement. The result of the study is significant to the general public in that it will provide awareness on the relationship between socio-economic background and academic achievement and self-concept. With this awareness, the general public will understand the need for parental education, income and occupation on the education of the child, through provision of essential reading materials, and providing needed education at home. Empirical evidence indicated that students are influenced by their socio-economic background both in self-concept and academic achievement.

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