



SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND SELF-CONCEPT AS PREDICTORS OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' IN ANAMBRA STATE

AGOGBUA, VICTOR UGOCHUKWU^{1*}

¹Department of Educational Management and Policy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated socio-economic status and self-concept as predictors of educational attainment of secondary school students' in Anambra State. The study adopted a survey research design. Three research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprised 4636 senior secondary school students from Idemmili L.G.A of Anambra State. A sample of 700 respondents was drawn using the Simple Random Sampling Technique from ten schools. A structured questionnaire was designed as the instrument for data collection. Face Validity Test was used by the experts to ascertain the truthfulness of the instrument. The data collected were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation. The study found among others that the socio-economic status of parents affects the child's educational attainment. Several recommendations were made, which is that the government should provide free education up to the secondary level to accommodate every child in society, especially those from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Keywords: *Educational attainment; socio-economic status; students' self-concept; home environment, students' family background; conducive learning environment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the key to the growth and development of every child. However, the child's educational attainment is affected by certain factors such as the social status of parents, teacher's characteristics, school environment, and school type (Public and Private schools). Suna et al. [1] assert that the education level of parents, as well as their family income distributions, has significant differences in socio-economic status between students from different middle school types. There exists a link between educational attainments and certain home variables. Raychaudhuri et al. [2] examined factors affecting students' academic performance using

regression analysis, they found that factors like students' attendance, mother's education, and the presence of trained teachers in the school positively impact students' academic performance. They also found that the academic performance of students depends on several socio-economic factors. They concluded that students' economic status affects their performance and the risk of becoming dropouts.

Brown, Wohn, and Eliision [3] opined that prospective college students from low socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to have access to informational resources that would lead them to college. Ermisch and Francesconi [4] completed two papers built on the household production model

*Corresponding author: Email: vu.agogbua@unizik.edu.ng.

addressing the association between childhood parental employment, parental education levels, and subsequent education of children. Their findings show that time and money made available to a child affects the child's educational attainment. According to Morgan et al. [5], children who come from low socio-economic households develop academic skills slower than children from higher socio-economic status groups. The researcher noticed that children from families with high socio-economic status leave Primary school between 8 and 11 years of age while those of low economic status leave between 12 and 13 and even 14 years of age.

The researcher sees socio-economic status as a position of an individual or a family in a society determined by income, education, wealth, and occupation. Parents with good educational backgrounds are likely to make available to their wards necessary academic materials that would help them perform better in school, while students whose parents have poor educational backgrounds are most likely to perform poorly academically. According to Abu Bakar, Mamat, and Mudassir [6], parents with higher education levels also have positive academic expectations for their children. They opined that parents who assign greater importance to education have a higher family income, and a greater possibility to see to their children's academic success. Saifi and Mehmood [7] investigated the effect of socio-economic status on students' performance. Results revealed that parental education, occupation, and facilities at home affect the students' achievement.

However, Self-concept is the way a person views himself. It is a reflection of an individual's behaviour. It comprises among others, self-image, self-acceptance, self-perception, self-identity, and self-worth. We are concerned about who we are, who we can become, and how we fit into the environment to function effectively, attain a secured sense of self, and therewith strive for personal goals and development, being confident in ourselves and our actions [8,9]. In regulating behaviours and shaping perceptions, Wehrle and Fasbender [10] opined that people's self-concept guides the processing of self-relevant information that enables people to define themselves across contexts and enact certain behaviors that foster the pursuit of their goals.

The home is a major determinant of self-concept, although school experience can also influence it. Self-concept is at two different levels, specific and global level. At the specific level, self-concept refers to what an individual knows and believes about self. This means a person's specific view about himself or herself. Specific views about self include a descriptive

appraisal of what the individual can do and things he cannot do. It also includes his interest, dislikes, and dominant behavior patterns. Furthermore, what an individual knows and believes about self or a person's specific views about self. Also, it includes views in the present hopes, aspirations, and expectations for the future. At the global level, they viewed self-concept as "a person's perceived sense of basic adequacy to cope with basic life situation and to bring about important life goals". From the foregoing, it can be said that self-concept at the specific level knows the strength and weakness of self while self-concept at the global level operates at the thinking level.

Self-concept has a pervasive influence on the development of a child. It is very crucial to his survival and the attainment of his life goals. Some students perceive themselves positively while others may have negative perceptions of themselves. Some students have low self-esteem which affects their academic social lives. Indicators of such should be identified to assist them to overcome this self-defeating phenomenon. It is the responsibility of counselors to diagnose and manage the incidence of low self-concept among students. Parents' attitude towards their children at home affects their self-confidence. According to Xiao and Liu [11], these types of parents' support influence the self-concept of children, which influences their school achievement.

There is limited research investigation on the influence of socio-economic status, self-concept, and educational attainment. Therefore, this study is set out to investigate socio-economic status and self-concept as predictors of students' educational attainment in Anambra State.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is believed that there exists a close relationship between students' academic performance and their family background. Inequality is a factor in differences in the socio-economic background of individuals in Anambra State. Nigerian national policy on education is to give equal opportunity in terms of education. As a result, many children from low-income backgrounds cannot gain the proper educational experience which is necessary for the full development of their intellects.

Although there exist limited opportunities, many parents are interested in the education of their children both in the urban areas as well as the rural communities. The major difference that exists between parents is the difference in their socio-economic status. Family background is the disparity

that stands in the educational attainment of students and the expectations of parents. The search for an explanation for these disparities forms one of the most complex issues in education.

However, stakeholders in education are becoming aware of the fact that a student’s perception is intimately related to how he learns and behaves. It has been realized that many students have difficulty, not as a result of their coming from low socio-economic families but because they perceive themselves as unable to do academic work.

Education is important, therefore, it will be necessary to test the assumption that socio-economic factors and self-concept affect the educational attainment of secondary school students. The problem, therefore, lies in how to determine the influence of these factors on the educational attainment of secondary school students in Anambra State.

2.1 Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to investigate socio-economic and self-concept as predictors of educational attainment of secondary school students’ in Anambra State. . Specially, the study seeks to:

1. To ascertain the extent socio-economic status of parents affects the child’s academic attainment.
2. To determine the influence of family environment on the educational attainment of a child.
3. To examine the role of the family in the development of a child’s self-concept.

2.2 Research Questions

The following questions are drawn to give direction to the problem under study.

1. To what extent does socio-economic status of parents affects the child’s academic attainment?
2. Does the family environment affect the educational attainment of a child?
3. What is the role of the family in promoting the development of a child’s self-concept?

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed the survey research design because it embarked on the collection of the views of respondents in order to make decisions. The population consists of 4,636 senior secondary school students in Idemmili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Simple Random Sampling technique was used in selecting ten (10) schools, and from these, 700 respondents were drawn.

A structured questionnaire titled “Socio-Economic and Self-Concept on Academic Achievement Questionnaire” (SESEAAQ) was designed as an instrument for data collection. Face Validity Test was used by the experts to ascertain the truthfulness of the instrument. Identified errors were corrected and affected by the researcher. Split Half reliability test was used in determining the reliability of the instrument. The group was correlated for reliability coefficient(x) and found to be 0.78. The data collected were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation. Any response mean score less than 2.50 were considered in disagreement with the item concerned whereas a mean score of 2.50 and above were considered an agreement with the items of the instrument.

4. RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent does socio-economic status of parents affect the child’s academic attainment?

Table 1. Mean scores and decision on the extent the socio-economic status of parents affect the child’s academic attainment

S/N	Iteams	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	DECISION
1	Parents of high socio-economic status send their children to the best schools in town	380	225	65	30	3.3	Agreed
2	Children of low socio-economic status attend public schools	392	216	51	41	3.3	Agreed
3	Students from high socio-economic status pay their school fees on time	374	200	88	38	3.0	Agreed
4	Students who belong to societies in the school such as science clubs are of high class status	345	260	66	29	3.3	Agreed
5	Parents of high socio-economic status send their children to Universities early	380	196	84	40	3.2	Agreed

Table 2. Mean scores and decision on how family environment affect the educational attainment of a child

S/N	Iteams	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	DECISION
6	Children from high socio-economic status receive more attention from their parents	281	267	94	58	2.9	Agreed
7	Children from high class status have conducive environment to study at home	409	186	75	30	3.3	Agreed
8	Students from low socio-economic status live in rowdy environment not suitable enough to study	344	210	97	49	3.0	Agreed
9	Children from high socio-economic status perform better at school	344	208	98	50	3.0	Agreed
10	At times parents of high socio-economic status hire lesson teachers to teach their children at home	364	215	80	41	3.2	Agreed

Table 3. Mean scores and decision on the role of the family in promoting the development of a child’s self-concept

S/N	Iteams	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	DECISION
11	Parents allowing their children express themselves freely	420	200	60	20	3.4	Agreed
12	Allowing children to express their view points over issues at home	424	192	60	24	3.4	Agreed
13	Parents motivating their children to do well	345	195	110	55	3.1	Agreed
14	Encouraging them to do better when they are not doing well	332	260	67	41	3.0	Agreed
15	Parents involving their children in decision making at all times	420	198	52	30	3.4	Agreed

Table 1 revealed that all the items 1,2,3,4 and 5 have mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. This is an indication that socio-economic status of parents affects the child’s academic attainment.

Research Question 2: Does the family environment affect the educational attainment of a child?

The result of the finding in table 2 showed that items 6-10 of the respondents fall within the agreed level of 2.5. It shows that respondents agreed that the family environment affects the educational attainment of a child.

Research Question 3: What is the role of the family in promoting the development of a child’s self-concept?

The result presented in table 3 revealed that items 11,12,13,14 and 15 of the respondent fall within the agreed level of 2.5. The findings, therefore, shows that the family play a role in promoting the development of a child’s self-concept.

5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings in research question 1 showed that the socio-economic status of parents had a great influence on the educational attainment of their children.

Parents of high rank are usually desirous to maintain their status-quo by giving their children the best education, whereas parents of low rank view the pursuit of education as a difficult task for their inability to provide the needed facilities for the education of the child. This is in collaboration with the findings of Adetutu and Adebayo [12], which revealed that students from families with high socio-economic status performed significantly better than their counterparts from families with low socio-economic status.

From research question 2, the findings showed that the family environment affects the educational attainment of a child. This implies that children from high-income parents live in homes conducive to both health and academic work. They are exposed to more social and educational facilities which enhance learning. Children from well-to-do parents have a good reading environment at home and at the same time perform better at school. The result of the findings supports the study by Baghayo [13] which has shown that students with positive and stimulating home environments achieve better academically than those who come from the poor home environment. However, Sintema and Singogo [14] emphasized that children whose home environment is academically demotivating can rarely boast of high academic achievement.

Findings in research question 3 revealed that factors such as, parents allowing their children express themselves freely, their viewpoint over issues at home, and motivating them to do better help a lot in the development of their self-concept. This is in line with the findings of Cheng, Meiyang, and Beiwan [15] that parental involvement and parent-child discussion of school matters positively associate with student academic achievement. According to Jhoselle [16], parents and academic institutions should acknowledge the importance of self-concept that students of this generation need to improve. He maintained that learned belief, attitude, and impression of children towards oneself begin at home.

6. CONCLUSION

Education plays a pivotal role in the growth and development of every child. Education is a clear means to upward mobility, but good educational success cannot be achieved unless it is backed up with appropriate finance. It is clear to accept the fact that income, education, and occupation exercise a great influence in the social life of parents which further would have a reinforcement effect on the educational attainments of their wards. The more income the parents have, the better chances they have to give their children the best educational background. Similarly, students' positive self-concept and other variables such as parent's encouragement are correlated to good academic performance.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings it is recommended that,

1. Government should upgrade facilities in public schools as this would go a long way to enhance students' education.
2. Libraries should be built and equipped in communities with relevant materials to enable low-income groups to access up-to-date information.
3. The Government should provide free education up to the secondary level to accommodate every child in society, especially ones from low socio-economic backgrounds.
4. Parents should encourage their wards to always do better and also allow them to express their views over issues at home. That way they see themselves as relevant not just in the family both in society.
5. The Government should raise the living standards of citizens through the provision of low-cost housing which an average citizen can afford.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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