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SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS THAT HINDERS STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN TERTIARY INSTITUTION: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The influence of Socio-Economic Background (SEB) is not only related to students alone but the society at large. Low SEB ultimately affects not only the performance of students but also the development of society. Hence, the higher the educational quality of a society, opportunities for more discovery and innovation abound. This study focus on an in-depth review of related theories and empirical studies. This study proposed to adopt descriptive, univariate, bivariate and multivariate method of analysis. The descriptive statistics will be use to describe the basic features of the data and provide the summaries of the data sample. . This paper seeks to find out the possible measures of academic performance of students (APS) and some of these are; Parental Education (PE), Parental Income (PI), Parental Occupation (PO), Peer Group (PG), Quality of School (QS) and Environment (ENV) and so on. This paper tries to find solutions to these questions. They are; what is the influence of parent's education on student's academic performance? What influence does parental financial background have on student's academic performance? The findings may promote the understanding of parents whose socioeconomic status is low on their involvement in monitoring the activities of their children both in and outside the home. Therefore, the outcome of the study could show how significant it is for parents to be involved in the academic activities of their children, since socioeconomic background measures such as income, occupation, educational level and group association may not be the only determinant of students" academic performance. Other factors such as home lesson, group discussion, parent's home assistance and extra reading after class room work may promote better performance academically.

Keywords: Socio-economic factors, Group Discussion, Academic performance of Students.

Introduction

Education has been a critical factor in human resource development which is necessary in driven economic growth and development of every society. Education, in a broad sense is an act or experience that has a formative effect on human mind, character or physical ability of any individual. The concern of intellectual growth and development has becomes the main aim of many countries; be it developed, emerging and developing economies (Hanushek, 2006 and Zewude, 2015). Furthermore, evidence has shown that the quality of educational system and development of a society is positively related (Battle and Lewis, 2002), and thus various effort in the form of reforms has been put in place in a bid to improve the quality of education and to promote socio-economic and political development especially in developing countries of the world. Though, Battle and Lewis (2002) recognized the relevant of education in economic development but maintained that in the contemporary society, globalization and technological revolution cannot be achieve without much regard to quality of education. They contend that quality education is the first step for every human activities and its facet. Hence, education is vital in many respects and plays a significant role in the wellbeing and opportunities of better living which to a large extent, could helps in curtailing or reducing high level of societal and environmental risk inherent in most of the developing countries. In recent time, there has been an argument on the relationship between academic performance of students and the socioeconomic background of their parents. Differences in the performance of students from different socio-economic group have over time been related to the differences in their parent‟s social class. It has been postulated that students whose parents are wealthy, highly educated, politically inclined with well paid job or occupation are comparatively better (Sauder, Lynn and Podolny, 2012) than their counterpart. Thus, socio-economic status in relative term could be viewed in different perspective such as competence and respect accorded people, groups and organisation in society (Anderson, Hildreth and Howland, 2015). Hence, hierarchies in socioeconomic background have been a major factor in a decision of who gets what, who is worthy and who deserves access to valuable resources especially in less developed countries. It appears to be widespread across the societies and afford esteemed benefits to those who occupy higher ranks (Anderson, Hildreth and Howland, 2015). Though, there has been an argument on the measures of socio-economic background. While some scholars such as Marmot and Michael (2004), Okioga (2013) and American Psychological Association (APA) argued socioeconomic background to be determined by person's work experience, family's financial security, education and occupational position, others researchers (e.g. Nowlin, Dodge, Bates and Pettit, 2004) opposed the idea believing that the aforementioned factors are relevant but not sufficient for such measure. They are of the opinion that social or economic background of parents cannot be evaluated without the inclusion of their political position as well.

Home literacy environment involves parents engaging in joint book reading with their

children. In Nigeria, the rate with which students read books outside school, and the rate the household members visited library with their children has gone bay. Parental involvement in school activities such as; parent–teacher conference, parent–teacher association (PTA) and open house visitation among others, have been termed an old fashion because of high level of poverty and the struggle to acquire the means of livelihood (Hart, 1995). According to United Nation report 2016, Nigeria is one of the poorest and most unequal countries in the world, with over 80 million (i.e. about 64%) of the population living below poverty line. Poverty and hunger has been very high especially in the rural and remote areas of different regions where majority of the population (see figure 1 below) that have been socially oppressed, economically threatened and, politically marginalized and eliminated dwell, and this rural and remote areas or communities constitute the greater population of students from low socioeconomic background.

The Review of Related Literature

Under this sub topic, the study takes an in-depth review of related theories and empirical studies. In addition, out of many theories on the determinants of student's academic performance, we review the Maslow's motivational theory, good parental theory, and human capital investment theory, Hence, after the discussion of these theories, we evaluated past studies in Nigeria and other parts of the world using empirical studies.

Maslow's Motivational Theory

The Maslow Theory of Motivation sometimes called "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs" was developed by Abraham Maslow in 1943 and was first published in his book on "Motivation and Personality" in 1954. In the original theory, five important hierarchy of needs were discussed which was later updated in a later book titled "Toward a Psychology of Being" in 1968. Then original five level version otherwise known as "five hierarchy of needs" remains the most widely known and discussed theory in individual development and motivation, which suggested that human beings have a hierarchy of needs. The theory shows how; "basic needs must be met before one can climb the hierarchy", to address more complex needs. He assumed that the first and the most important is for one to meet the basic physiological need for food, water and warmth, and after which, the need to be safe, the need to belong to social groups and others, to attend the hierarchy would emerge. According to the theory, each human being is motivated by needs that are inborn, most probably resulting from many years of development. The Maslow theory of motivation suggests a hierarchy of needs such as; physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, self-esteem needs and the need for self-actualization. The first discussed the basic needs which he referred to as air, water, food, sleep, among others. He perceived the physiological needs as the key because he assumed that if they are not satisfied, that one may feel sick, irritation, pain, discomfort, etc thereby making the achievement of others difficult. He pointed that the feelings to satisfy the physiological needs motivate us to

establish homeostasis tendency to reach equilibrium. Once one attends the physiological needs, we may think about other things like safety needs etc.

In a nutshell, Maslow argued that motivation is constant, fluctuating, complex with no end. He stated that man always has needs to satisfy. These needs are arranged in a hierarchical order starting from the basic or lower order to higher order needs. The hierarchy is categorized into Deficit needs (physiological, safety, belonging and self-esteem) and growth needs (self-actualization). He explained that once a particular need is satisfied, it ceases to be a motivator of behaviour and another need emerges. The fulfillment of physiological needs, such as thirst, hunger, and sleep, takes precedence over all other needs. In fact, the satisfaction of these needs is the survival and continuance of the human race. Unlike other needs, the physiological needs have a tendency to persist. Money and incentives represent the best means to satisfy the physiological needs. A learner under motivated condition, exhibits purposeful behaviour aimed at achieving the set goals.

Good Parent Theory:

Good parent theory, propounded by Adams and Singh (1980) holds that low income hurts children not because poor families have less money to invest in their children, but because low income reduce parents‟ ability to be “good parents”. In this discussion, there are two versions of the theory - the parental stress and the role model version. The “parental stress” version holds that poverty is stressful and that stress diminishes parents‟ ability to be supportive, consistent and involved in their children education. Hence, this theory claimed that poor parenting hurts the social and emotional development of children, and limits their children education and social opportunities. In like manner, the role model version emphasized parents‟ interactions with their children but it does not necessarily imply that poor patents are stressed. Instead, it usually holds that low income parents develop values, norms and behaviours that are “dysfunctional” for success in the dominant culture. In this case their children in turn adopt their parents‟ dysfunctional behavior; as a result, the children’s own chances of success decline. The parental stress model, stressed that when parental income increases parental stress declines and parenting skills improve. In this case both the stress and the role model version of the theory are quite relevant to the study in the sense that the stressed version deals with psychology, that stressed parents lacks concentration as a result, their ability to think positively towards their children social and emotional development decline which will have a serious effect on their children educational outcome. On the other hand, the role model version also acknowledges the poor family background or parents with low income develop negative values and norms toward their children academic achievement.

Human Capital Investment Theory

The human capital investment theory deals with the fundamental issues and has strong influenceson the educational achievement of children. Genetic endowments which include sex, race and cultural endowment such as the value parent place on their children affect

their educational performance. For instance, some families or societies attached educational attainment with sex. Such families or societies prefer to invest in male than female child. To them investing in female Children's education is merely a waste of resources, because they will eventually get married to another family. On the other hand, some families invest more on female's education than their male counterpart with the belief that "he, who educates a girl, educates the entire society". In this case, any of the two views may likely affect the educational achievement of the opposite sex. However, some parents prefer to invest in their business activities for quick turnover at the expense of their children future well-being. Whereas some parents spend their last penny just to ensure that their children acquire the best education. Given the overview, Becker (1975) developed the theory of human capital investment in which he outlined the various interactions paths between income and human capital development. According to the theory, rich parents can invest more financial resources in their children's education. Parents‟ money can also be used to buy better educational quality, which may affect both current educational performance and children's future demand for education. Moreover, low income parents might push their children towards work in the labour market in order to contribute to family finances; in the absence of sufficient money transfers from their parents children from low income families may decide to work while studying (Dustmann and Micklewright, 2001), with possible negative effects on their academic performance, or decide to quit education at the minimum leaving age to earn money and finance their consumption.

Review of Related Empirical Studies Abroad

Due to the intangible nature of educational services, it has always been difficult to measure. This is because some of the indicators of academic performance such as knowledge transformation, life skills and behaviour modifications of learners have been difficult to capture (Tsinidou, Gerogiannis and Fitsilis, 2010). To this effect, there has not been a consensus on the relationship between level of parents‟ education level, parental profession, language, quality of school, income, environment, religious affiliations among others indicators and students academic performance. While some argued that quality of education varies from culture to culture (Michael, 1998), others point environment and personal characteristics of learners as an important determinant of academic performance of students. In terms of the environment, it was argued that the school personnel, lecturers, members of the families and communities play significant role in providing help and support to students for the promotion of their academic performance. Thus, social assistance has also been tipped to play a crucial role in the accomplishment of performance goals of students at school (Goddard, 2003). Besides the environment, social structure, parents‟ involvement in their child‟s education and others factors mentioned above are claimed to be positively related with the rate of academic success of students (Furstenberg and Hughes, 1995). Beyond demographic factors such as age,

gender, marital status, race, education, income and occupation, Capraro, Capraro and Wiggins (2000) posited that the effects of socioeconomic background (SEB) remains an important determinant of academic performance at the individuallevel. Socioeconomic background can be measured in a number of different ways. But from the empirical evidence, it is mostly measured by factors like parental education, occupation, income, and facilities used by individuals separately or collectively.

Their findings shows that students with high level of SEB perform better than the middle class students and the middle class students perform better than the students with low level of SEB (Garzon, 2006; Kahlenberg, 2006 and Kirkup, 2008). In like manner, other studies on the relationship between gender and academic achievement of students discovered so much variation between achievement of boys and girls. The evidence shows that girls perform better than boys in certain instances (Chambers and Schreiber, 2004). Further investigation with the inclusion of ethnicity and father's occupation shows a significant contribution to student achievement (McCoy, 2005). In a similar study, Duke (2000), Eamon (2005), Lopez (1995), Sander (2001) and Trusty (2000) found a negative relationship between the student's achievement and low socioeconomic background (SEB) level of parents.

Review of Related Empirical Studies in Nigeria

In Nigeria, there are very few studies in this area especially in the relationship between parent's socioeconomic background and academic performance of students in the tertiary institutions. Some of studies in this area emphasize more in factors that determines primary and secondary schools students‟ academic achievement in Nigeria. Other factors such as; ethnicity religious biasness, discrimination, poverty, isolation by dominant group, political instability, resource limitations and war may also affect the academic success of students. It may be reasonable to say that some students with strong and high socioeconomic status may or may not follow their success target due to some odds. This may likely lead to the failure of their academic achievement and retard their dream of becoming great in the society. In Nigeria, some studies reveal socioeconomic background as a strong predictor of student's academic performance both in the primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. For example, Julian (1992) and Ehigie (2001) revealed that the nature of occupation of the parents tends to affect students‟ educational performance.

As such, parents from this family report lower educational expectations, less monitoring of children's school work and less overall supervision of their social activities compared to students from families with high income. Oni (2007) and Omoegun (2007) observed significant difference between behaviour of students from high and low socioeconomic status. In addition, Adewale (2002) traced the relationship between nutritional status, health and academic performance of students in rural community. He reported that academic performance of students in rural community where nutritional status is low with prevalent

health problems is greatly affected. Moreover, Eze (1996) pointed that when a child are have proper nutrition and health care, the ability to interact properly in formal learning environment is enhanced. A study in a sample of selected secondary school in Kwara state on the relationship between home-based environment factors and the academic performance of students were found to positive and statistically significant (Ogunshola and Adewale, 2013). Hence, further investigation established, parent's academic qualifications and student's health status significantly affect student's academic performance, while parental socioeconomic background and education have no significant effect of student's academic performance.

Let us look at these parameters of socio-economic factors. They are:

Measures of Socio-Economic Background

In the literature, socioeconomic background (SEB) of parents is usually assessed using combinations of factors which include economic, social and political measures. But majority of studies in this area have primarily used measures such as income, level of education and occupation as a proxy for SEB because of its impact on individuals‟ health and wellbeing. It has been argued that people with high socioeconomic background have strong ability to access quality healthcare, medical services, education and well paid jobs compared to people with middle and low SEB. Socioeconomic background has been thought to be significant in examining the academic performance of students whose parents‟ SEB is low, middle and high. Though, from the reviewed literature discussed above, it was crystal clear that students with high SEB seem to perform better than their counterpart. This method has gain predominance in development and educational studies around the globe. SEB was initially conceptualized and adopted by an American author - Taussig (1920) in a study on father's occupational status, which he classified into seven categories. Some years later this concept was adopted by Sims (1927) and Cuff (1934) in their respective studies. Though, study like Sims (1927) and Chapin (1933) deviated a bit from the primary measures of SEB by developing instruments such as the Sims Score Card and the Chapin scale respectively which they viewed as sophisticated measures of SEB in America. This development was based on the belief that SEB should reflect cultural and material possessions (e.g. furniture, accessories), income and participation in community activities.

Parental Financial/Income

Parental financial in this context mean income of parents. Hence, income is the money received by an individual or business in an exchange for service delivery or provision of good. The sources of an individual, business and household ranges from wages, salaries, profits, rents, and any flow of earnings received. Other earning may include social security, pensions, interests or dividends, and royalties among others. Income is important in day-today activities in relation to households and businesses (Boushey and Weller, 2005). According to John Maynard Keynes, as income increases, so will consumption. Since investment is a function of savings, families or individuals

with high income tend to save or invest more than those with low income. This is because, low income families are concerned more with the responsibilities of accomplishing the immediate needs and do not accumulate much wealth that could be passed on to future generations, and thus increasing the level of inequality in the society. Therefore, families with higher and dispensable income can accrue more wealth and emphasis on meeting instant needs with the ability to consume and enjoy more luxuries (Boushey and Weller, 2005).

Parental Education

Education to a large extent plays a significant role in income. Therefore, discussing parental education attainment cannot be completed without the consideration of the level of family income. Hence, these factors would be difficult to be separated in the study of socioeconomic influence of student's achievement. Though, they can be studied independently, but it should be clear that parents' educational attainment is independent of income. Parents' level of education may influence the value parents place on education, and this in turn, could influence their children's educational goals (Young and Smith, 1997) through their level of interaction at home.

Also, according to American Psychological Association, "higher levels of education are associated with better economic and psychological outcomes such as; more income, control, greater social support and networking". However, studies have shown that parents from lower SEB households seem to give orders to their children while parents with a higher SEB interact and play with their children (Annette, 2003). More so, Annette further shown that "children who are born in lower SEB households have weaker language skills compared to children raised in higher SEB households". Hence, the differences in language skills affect the abilities of children of low SEB to learn and make worse the problem of education dissimilarity between low and high SEB neighborhoods, and thus affect their academic achievement.

Parental Occupation

As one of the measures of socio-economic background (SEB), parental occupation has a huge role to play not only in the family but in the society at large. Parental profession incorporates both income and educational accomplishments. Other things being equal, occupational rank is partly dependent on the educational fulfillment, which to a certain height determines the income levels that varies with different jobs even within the same ranks of occupations. Thus, it demonstrates attainment in skills required for a job. In the contemporary society, occupational
status has been viewed as a gauge to measure social position. To a greater extent, it influences decision making ability, control, and mental demands on the job. Some of the most admired and respected occupations like physicians and surgeons, solicitors, petrochemical engineers, biomedical engineers, University professors, bankers, among others are careful grouped in the high SEB classification, while lower rankings jobs like messengers, Clark, housekeepers, drivers, cleaners, machine operators, vehicle

cleaners, among others are grouped in the low SEB
classification. It should be noted that less valued jobs attract lower salary or wages which is more arduous, and dangerous with high level of independency (Scott and Leonhardt, 2005).

Environment

In this context, environment refers to surrounding influence. It involves all the internal and external influence on the life and academic activities of students. Hence, an environment is made up of home, neighborhood and school environment or influence. Home environment is considered one of the prominent issues in student welfare. Students from poor home are characterized with insufficient living conditions and more vulnerable to all sort of ailment which deteriorates their state of health (Bradley and Corwyn, 2002). The experiences of students from low SEB is quite different from their counterpart owing to the disparities in their home environment. Therefore, this disparity in the home environment plays a significant role in SEB and reading outcome of students (Aikens and Barbarin, 2008). Thus, majority of students of low SEB have little or no academic materials at home than their high SEB peer and this suggest why students of low SEB rank have poor reading habit than their high SEB counterparts (Aikens and Barbarin, 2008; Evans, 2004). Home environment is important in predicting the academic performance of students because of it characteristics which includes parental involvement and home literacy environment. While parental involvement in school is described by active dedication in school activities like conferences, meetings and event (e.g. parent–teacher conference, PTA meeting, volunteering & fundraising), home literacy environment addresses the rate with which parents take part in their children study, the rate of outside the school study, and the number of time household members or parents visited the library with the children to encourage them.

Peer Group

In absence of the discussed factors, the difference in the level of academic performance of students in higher institutions of learning has also been linked to other factors like peer group, quality of school and group association, among others. Differences in levels of academic achievement have been influenced by socio-economic background (SEB) indicators especially parental education which has been said to have had strong influence on parental income and occupation. During the intermediate stage of development (i.e. from puberty to adulthood), peer groups tend to face sudden changes owing to the fact that at this adolescents stage, they tend to spend more time with their peers with less or no adult supervision. In most some cases, they like to discuss about their school and careers with their parents, but delight more in conversation about sex and other interpersonal issues with their peers (Steinberg, 2010). Because of the freedom foreseen and excitement for discussion, children are always willing and desired to join such groups especially when they are

accepted into the group, even when it is complicated with negative activities, but less likely to accept those with difference sense of thought and line of discussion (Steinberg, 2010).

Quality of School

Quality of school has been another thoughtful factor that can promote students academic performance. Quality of school encompasses the physical leaning environment, quality of teachers/lecturers, attitude of staff, qualifications, quality library, textbooks and working conditions among others. The quality of school facilities appears to be indirectly related learning and students‟ achievement. Empirical investigation has proven that the quality of the learning environment has strongly correlated with students‟ academic achievement (Carron and Chau, 1996); and that students whose schools lacked adequate facilities such as inadequate library were significant and more likely to show lower scores and higher repetition than those whose schools were well equipped (Willms, 2000).

Group Association:

Group association involves both parent teachers association and parent teacher's organization. These two organizations consist of parents, teachers and school staff. The goals of the organizations may vary from one to another, but more importantly it is mostly concerns with Student's welfare improvement and the school development. Parent Teachers Association (PTA) ordinarily should partake in the provides leadership training and staff support, while Parent Teacher's Organization (PTO) should facilitate fund-raising to supplement educational materials, encourage school, drug awareness, reading programs, grant, promote social interaction between families and enhance unbiased platform for information sharing on issues that could improve the welfare of the students. Therefore, it is believed that the association between parents and teachers may offers the students best possible learning environment, because of their active role in developing programs, advocacy and training. However, the group association encourages discrimination of vital information concerning student's academic activities and the way to improve their performance.

Model Specification:

Model specification is the determination of which independent variables should be included in a regression. In general, this procedure is associated with the understanding of theories rather than the empirical measures. This knowledge is important in selecting appropriate functional form of the model and the key variables to be included or excluded from the model. This is important because it enable us to avoid specification error and to ensure quality interpretations. Hence, this section discusses and presents regression model for the estimation. For instance, considering the main objective of the study, the functional relationship between academic performance of students (*APS*) and socioeconomic background of parents (SEB) is specified as;

$$APS = f(SEB, SEB, SEB, SEB, SEB, SEB, SEB)$$

This function indicates the possible measures of academic performance of students (*APS*) and they

includes; parental education (*PE*), parental income (*PI*), parental occupation (*PO*), peer group (*PG*), quality of school (*QS*) and environment (*ENV*) cetris paribus. However, given the functional form of the existing relationship between the selected variables, the econometric techniques proposed for the evaluation of the specific objectives of the study is shown below. At first, we model the relationship between parental education and student's academic performance as presented in equation 1 below.

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ = □□ + □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ + □□□□ - (1)

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□; are the natural log of academic performance of students and parental education respectively. □□□□; is the unexplained error term or the unpredictable random disturbance term that is supposed to be identically distributed. □□ □□□□□□□ □□; are the unknown parameters of the model and must be estimated using sample data. Hence, □□ is the constant while □□; is the coefficient of parental education (□□□□□□□). This technique enhances the prediction on the value of □□□□□□□, based on a given value of □□□□ without the interference of other variables. In addition, adopting the same method as expressed in eqn.1 above, the relationship between parental income/parent's financial background and student"s academic performance can be estimated using equation 2 as shown below. □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ = □□ + □□□□□□□□□□□□□□ + □□□□ - (2)

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□; remained as defined above, while □□□□□□□□□□□□ is the natural log of parental income/parent's financial background. □□□□; is the error term and; □□ □□□□□□□ □□ are the unknown parameters of the model. □□; represents the constant term while □□ is the coefficient of parental income or parent's financial background. On the other hand, having established the econometric relationship between parental education, income/finance and academic performance of students (□□□□□□□) as shown in eqn.1 and 2 above respectively, the third objective of the study will be evaluated with the aid of bivariate econometric model or technique. This will enable us establish the nature of relationship between parental occupation (*PO*), group association (*GA*) and academic performance of students, as well as inspect if they have any significant impact on academic performance of students (□□□□□□□). Thus, the bivariate econometric model is expressed below;

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ = □□0 + □□1□□□□□□□□□□□□ + □□2□□□□□□□□□□□□ + □□□□ - (3)

□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□; are the natural log of parental occupation and group association respectively. □□0,□□1 □□□□□□□ □□2; are the unknown parameters of the model. □□0; is the constant term, while □□1□□□□□□□ □□2 are the coefficients of parental occupation and group association respectively. □□□□; is the unpredicted error term. In like manner, the addition of more than two variables in the right hand side of eqn.3 above will result to multivariate regression model proposed for the estimation of the fourth objective. Hence, applying the multivariate technique, the nature of the relationship between peer group (*PG*), quality of school (*QS*), environment (*ENV*) and academic performance of students will be investigated. Also, we shall further ascertain if they have significant impact on student's academic performance. However, the

econometric representation of this relationship is presented in eqn.4 below.
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ = □□0 + □□1□□□□□□□□□□□□+□□2□□□□□□□□□□□□ + □□2□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ + □□□□ ---------- (4)
□□□□□□□□□□□□,□□□□□□□□□□□□□□

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