

HOME ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AS PREDICTORS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ADO-EKITI, EKITI STATE, NIGERIA.

By

✉ ¹TOGUNLOJU TAIWO (Ph. D.)

taiwo.togunloju@fuoye.edu.ng

²AJADI TUNDE ABDULKADIR (Ph.D)

ajaditunde359@gmail.com

¹Department of Educational Management and Business Studies,
Faculty of Education, Federal University, Oye Ekiti

²Department of Educational Foundation,
Kwara State College of Education Ilorin.

Abstract

The study examined home environmental factors as predictors of secondary school students' academic performance in Ado-Ekiti. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, suitable for describing various aspects of home environmental factors that influence academic performance without manipulating variables. The population comprised all secondary school students in the old Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State, now consisting of one substantive Local Government and three Local Council Development Areas, with fifteen public secondary schools. A simple random sampling technique was used to select one school from each stratified zone in the Local Government Area. The sample consisted of 250 students randomly selected from all the schools and 40 teachers from five schools, with 40 students and eight teachers selected per school. Data were collected using two self-designed questionnaires: the "Home Environmental Factors Questionnaire (HEFQ)" for students and the "Secondary School Students Academic Performance Questionnaire (SSSAPQ)" for teachers. The instruments were validated by experts in Educational Management and Test and Measurement. Reliability was established using the test-retest method, resulting in coefficients of 0.78 for HEFQ and 0.82 for SSSAPQ. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Based on the findings, several recommendations were made. Parents should show special interest in their children's education by providing basic needs such as textbooks, writing materials, and ensuring the prompt payment of school fees. They should also recognize education as the most reliable and lasting legacy they can offer. These measures are essential to enhance students' academic performance, especially in the context of home-related influences.

Keywords: Home Environmental Factors, Predictors, Economic Status, Parental Attitudes, Academic Performance,

INTRODUCTION

Education is a process through which an individual acquires skills, competencies, and attitudes. It is the right of every child to be educated, be it traditional or western. Thus, education is regarded as culture to man. It performs a vital role in the distribution of people to various occupational positions, and it helps to prepare the youths of today for the future and to take up respectful adult roles not only in the political landscape but also in the economic sectors. This explains why man has to educate his offspring in the society.

Many researchers have sought to find out the reasons for the not-too-impressive performance of students. Ogbemudia and Ajasa (2013) reported a lack of good home foundation for pupils as a cause of poor performance by students, while Adesehinwa and Aremu (2019) posited that factors resident in the child, family, society, government, and the school may be composite causative effects for these downward trends.

Over time, it has been observed that students exposed to the same lessons by the same teachers perform differently when evaluated. This shows that outside the school environment, other factors influence students' optimal performance or otherwise. Hence, many other uncontrolled variables can be responsible for the academic performance of students generally, including secondary school students. According to the study by Ohanyelu (2022), students whose parents acquired better education and higher income levels would positively support their children's education in science subjects compared to those with lower education and income. The study further concluded that the learning outcomes of students in science subjects are predetermined by the kind of family background they have, which indicates that the socio-economic status of parents is a key determinant of students' academic achievement in science subjects in Southeast Nigeria. Among the family factors of greatest influence are social class variables and the educational and family environment. The social environment is a powerful informal learning situation in which the family, more specifically parents, acts as an educator. Home background, as one of the factors that affect the academic performance of secondary school students, helps to position a child academically (Orlu, 2013). The researcher further stated that a child's first educational experiences are centered in the home; that is, his ideas, attitudes, and general pattern of behavior are a result of his childhood rearing.

One task of education is to train young people to become useful members of society, and this training begins at home in an informal way. The home of the child is the first place he/she enters when born into the world by their parents. A home is a place where pupils live with their parents or guardians, and it is where they are groomed. It is a place where pupils begin to learn the norms and values of the society in which they find themselves. A family is a group of people who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Families can provide support, love, and emotional

nurturance to their members. Adem (2023) defined family as the smallest cornerstone of societies, consisting of a mother, a father, and children.

The home influences the child at the earliest possible time of his/her life, when his/her mind is most receptive. It provides the first impression, which may last throughout the whole life of the child. The family, being a powerful influence on the child and important as a primary agent of socialization, could no doubt enhance or hinder the academic achievement of the child, depending on the social climate in the family.

Variance in psychosocial emotional fortification in the family background could be an indicator of high or low academic performance of students, which is a prerequisite to academic achievement, coupled with low socio-economic and emotional stability of the students (Adebule, 2004). This is because psychological problems are potential sources of trouble with learning. It is therefore against this background that this study sought to determine home environmental factors as predictors of secondary school students' academic performance in Ado-Ekiti.

The environment is the immediate surroundings in which the students find themselves. It is also referred to as the physical and psychological conditions that affect children (Ogbemudia and Ajasa, 2013). The parents or guardians of the students are responsible for providing the right home environment that will facilitate effective learning for their wards. Furthermore, in pupils' home environments, some factors that influence their academic performance include parental educational background, occupation, economic status, marital status, home location, family size, and peer group. The home environment means the family background of the students, which includes all the human and material resources present at home that affect the students' education and living, such as the parents' level of education, their occupation, socio-economic status, and socializing facilities available at home. Thus, the home is the basic foundation for the child upon which the other agents of socialization are built.

The education received by a child from parents and others at home is most likely to have highly significant and dominant effects on the behaviour of the child later in life. What the child learns at home and how his/her family motivates him/her towards education contribute to the child's success or failure at school, even though the environment also plays a very remarkable role in the life and educational success of every individual.

There is a need to provide every child with the necessary basic physical, material, and emotional support, and a good background for children's optimal development. The responsibility of providing these primary needs for a child rests on the parents or guardians.

Statement of the Problem

There appears to be a dwindling, persistent poor academic performance of secondary school students in both internal and external examinations. Students who are exposed to the same teaching and learning experiences perform differently. From observations, it appears that some parents tend not to be concerned about adequate funding of their wards' education; some parents seem not to adequately oversee their children's academic performance. It appears some parents hardly inspect their wards' lesson notes; some seem not to exhibit concern for their children's studies; some appear not to be interested in performing other parental responsibilities; some appear not to have cordial relationships with their children.

Moreover, very scant attention appears to have been given to most aspects of students' home backgrounds, such as parental level of education, parental occupation, family size, and type of family, as they affect their academic performance. It is against this background that this study, therefore, attempts to investigate the relationship between home environmental factors in the areas of parental educational background, occupation, economic status, marital status, and family size, and secondary school students' academic performance in Ado-Ekiti.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to:

- i. Investigate the relationship between home environmental factors and secondary school students' performance in Ado-Ekiti.
- ii. Examine the influence of home environmental factors on students' academic performance in Ado-Ekiti.
- iii. Determine to what extent home environmental factors (i.e., parents' education level, parents' occupation, and family size) affect secondary school students' academic performance in Ado-Ekiti.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between parents' economic status and students' academic performance.
2. There is no significant relationship between parents' educational level and students' academic performance.
3. There is no significant relationship between parents' occupation and students' academic performance.
4. There is no significant relationship between parents' attitude and students' academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive research design of the survey type. The descriptive research design was relevant to the study because it described various aspects of home environmental factors that seem to affect

secondary school students' academic performance in Ado-Ekiti without manipulating any of the variables. The rationale for adopting the survey design lies in the fact that the study aimed to elicit data from students who would be randomly selected from schools across the town.

The population for the study consisted of all secondary school students in the old Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State. Presently, there is one substantive local government and three local council development areas in Ado-Ekiti. There are fifteen public secondary schools in the local government area. A simple random sampling technique was used to select one secondary school in each of the stratified zones in Ado Local Government Area. The sample for the study consisted of two hundred and fifty students randomly selected from all the schools, along with forty (40) teachers from five schools. Forty students and eight teachers were selected from each school.

The data for this study were collected through the use of two sets of self-designed questionnaires. The first, titled "Home Environmental Factors Questionnaire (HEFQ)," was administered to the students. The second, titled "Secondary School Students Academic Performance Questionnaire (SSSAPQ)," was administered to the teachers. The instruments were validated by experts in Educational Management and Test and Measurement departments. The test-retest method of reliability was adopted, and the reliability coefficients of 0.78 and 0.82 were obtained for HEFQ and SSSAPQ, respectively.

The data obtained for the study were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The research questions were answered using frequency counts, percentage scores, mean, and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at a 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between parents' economic status and students' performance. This research hypothesis was tested by using items one to five in the questionnaire to analyze the results.

Table 1:

RESPONSES					
S/N	Questionnaire Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		No	%	No	%
1.	It is obvious that the socio-economic status of parents is a strong determinant of student academic performance	190	79	50	21
2.	There are cases of students dropping out of secondary schools because of the poverty level of their parents	220	91.6	20	8.3
3.	The economic status of parents dictates the type of school attended by the students	185	77	55	22.9
4.	Students from high socio-economic backgrounds cope with the high tuition/school fees in secondary schools	210	87.5	20	8.3
5.	Parents' economic status determines the amount/level of evening lessons or holiday coaching provided for the students	40	16.6	20	8.3
	Total average of Respondents	845	169	183	36.6

From the table, item 1 indicated that 190 (79%) respondents agreed with the statement that parents' socio-economic background is a strong determinant of students' academic performance, while 50 (21%) of the respondents disagreed.

Item 2 showed that 220 (92%) respondents agreed with the statement that students drop out of secondary school due to the poverty level of their parents, while 20 (8%) of the respondents disagreed.

In item 3, 185 (77%) respondents agreed that the economic status of parents dictates the type of schools attended by the students, while 55 (23%) disagreed.

In item 4, 210 (88%) respondents agreed that students from high socio-economic backgrounds can cope with high tuition in secondary schools, while 30 (13%) disagreed.

In item 5, 20 (8%) disagreed with the statement that parents' economic status determines the amount of evening lessons/holiday coaching provided for the students, while 40 (17%) of the respondents agreed with the statement.

On the total average analysis of the respondents, an average of 169 respondents agreed with the research hypothesis, while 36.6 respondents disagreed.

This showed that there is a significant relationship between the academic performance of students and the economic status of parents. Therefore, the research hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between parents' educational level and students' academic performance.

This research hypothesis was analyzed using items 6 to 10 of the research questionnaire.

Table 2:

RESPONSES					
S/N	Questionnaire Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		No	%	No	%
6.	Parents' educational level influences students' academic performance	150	62.5	90	37.5
7.	The academic performance of students whose parents are literate will be better than those from an illiterate home/parent	92	38	148	61.7
8.	Literate parents often employ a part-time teacher for their children in the evening/holidays	205	85	35	14.5
9.	Students from literate homes have more learning opportunities than those from illiterate homes/parents	160	66.6	80	33
10.	The educational level of parents has no bearing on the academic performance of students	132	55	108	4
	Total average of Respondents	739	147.8	461	92.2

From the table above, item 6 indicated that 150 (62.5%) respondents agreed that parents' educational level influences their children's academic performance, while 90 (37.5%) respondents disagreed with the statement.

Item 7 showed that 92 (38%) respondents agreed that the academic performance of students whose parents are literate will be better than those from illiterate parents or homes, while 148 (61.7%) respondents disagreed.

Item 8 revealed that 205 (85%) respondents agreed that literate parents often employ a part-time teacher for their children in the evening or during holidays, while 35 (14.5%) of the respondents disagreed.

Item 9 showed that 160 (66.6%) respondents agreed that students from literate homes have more opportunities than those from illiterate homes, while 80 (33%) disagreed.

Item 10 indicated that 132 (55%) respondents agreed that the educational level of parents has no bearing on the academic performance of students, while 108 (45%) disagreed with the statement.

On average, an average of 147.8 respondents were in agreement that there is a significant relationship between students' academic performance and the research question. Therefore, the research hypothesis tested valid for the study and was rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between the parents' occupation and students' academic performance.

The research hypothesis was analyzed by using items 11 to 15 in the questionnaire for discussion.

Table 3:

S/N	Questionnaire Items	RESPONSES			
		Agreed		Disagreed	
		No	%	No	%
11.	Parents' occupations have no bearing on the academic performance of students	205	85.4	35	14.6
12.	The occupational level of parents will determine the academic performance of students	160	66.6	80	33.3
13.	Self-employed parents cannot provide the needs of their children like civil servants	215	89.6	25	10.4
14.	Students from self-employed parents are affected by their domestic work at their various homes/schools	150	62.5	90	37.5
15.	Parents' occupation does not give room for checking their children's books and assignments at home	186	77.5	54	22.5
	Total average of the Respondents	916	183.2	284	56.8

From the table above, item 11 indicated that 205 (85.4%) respondents agreed that parents' occupation has no bearing on the academic performance of students while 35(14.6%) disagree.

Item 12 revealed that 160 (66.6%) respondents agreed that the occupational level of parents will determine the academic performance of students while 80(33.3%) of the students disagreed.

Item 13 showed that 215 (89.6%) respondents agreed that self-employed parents cannot provide the needs of their children take the civil servants. While 25 (10.4%) disagreed.

Item 14 on the table indicated that 150 (62.5%) agreed that parent's occupation does not give room for checking of their children's books and assignments at home while 54 (22.5%) respondents disagreed.

On the average analysis, an average of 183.2 respondents were on the side of agreement that there's significant relationship between student's academic performance and the occupation of parents, while 56.8 disagreed with the research hypothesis. Therefore, the research hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between parent's attitudes and students' academic performance.

The research hypothesis 4 was analyzed using items 16 - 20 in the questionnaire.

Table 4:

RESPONSES					
S/N	Questionnaire Items	Agreed		Disagreed	
		No	%	No	%
16.	Parents' attitude towards learning influences their children's academic performance	159	66	81	33.8
17.	The amount of learning materials provided for the students determines their academic performance in secondary school	210	87.5	30	12.5
18.	Parents who adopt a carefree attitude towards their children's education are unable or refuse to provide the basic needs of their children.	220	91.7	20	8.3
19.	Brilliant students in secondary schools are from parents who show a lot of interest in education	208	86.7	32	13.3
20	Middle-class parents monitor their children's progress at school than manual working-class parents do	230	95.8	10	4.2
	Total average of the Respondents	1027	205.4	173	34.4

In the table above, item 16 showed that 159 (66%) respondents agreed that parents' attitude towards learning has an influence on their children's academic performance, while 81 (33.8%) disagreed.

Item 17 revealed that 210 (87.5%) respondents agreed that the amount of learning materials provided for the students by their parents determines their performance at school, while 30 (12.5%) disagreed.

Item 18 also showed that 220 (91.7%) agreed that parents who adopt a carefree attitude towards their children's education are unable or refuse to provide the basic needs of their children, while 20 (8.3%) disagreed.

Moreover, item 19 revealed that 208 (86.7%) respondents agreed that brilliant students in secondary schools are from parents who show a lot of interest in education, while 32 (13.3%) disagreed.

Item 20 showed that 230 (95.8%) agreed that middle-class parents monitor their children's progress at school more than manual working-class parents do, while 10 (4.2%) disagreed with the statement.

From the total average analysis of Table 4, it showed that out of 1027 respondents sampled for the research hypothesis, on average, 205.4 responded positively that there is a significant relationship between students' academic performance and the attitudes of parents towards learning, while 173 respondents were on the negative side.

This validates research hypothesis 4 for the study. Hence, the research hypothesis was considered appropriate and valid enough for this study. It was therefore rejected.

DISCUSSION

Findings from hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between the economic status of parents and students' academic performance. This means that these students are not cognizant of their academic performance due to the economic background of their parents, which affects their academic performance. This finding is supported by the study of Salisu, Saleh, Yusuf, and Nasiru (2021), which revealed that parents' income status affects the academic performance of students.

Findings from hypothesis two revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between the educational level of parents and students' academic performance. This relates to the parents' educational level, which contributes to the academic performance of students. The level of education of the parents plays an

essential part in the academic performance of the students. The indication is that the set of students from average educational family backgrounds performed better than those from low educational family backgrounds. This finding is supported by the study of Nnorom, Ezenwa, and Nwankwo (2020), which claimed that some families lack modern mechanical or electronic devices, educational materials, and supervision at home to enhance a student's academic performance. They further claimed that some parents are unwilling to be involved in the academic performance of their children due to their socioeconomic status. This confirms that children from high social groups perform better than their counterparts in lower social classes. The higher performance of students from upper-class families may be attributed to a lot of factors, such as parental value of education, money, mobility, and the social class to which they belong.

Findings from hypothesis three revealed that there is a significant relationship between the occupation of parents and students' academic performance. This indicates that the parental occupation also contributes to the academic performance of students. Parents with good jobs are financially buoyant enough to sponsor the education of their children, which may affect the academic performance of their children. This is supported by the study of Rana, Nadeem, and Saima (2015), who concluded that highly educated parents, to an extent, have more influence on their children to achieve and perform well in their studies at the secondary school level. The assertion was supported that highly educated parents usually show interest and care in their children's academic performance or achievements, as well as in their choice of subjects and career, while in secondary school.

Findings from hypothesis four indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between the attitudes of parents towards learning and students' academic performance. This means that the attitude of parents has a great impact on the academic performance of students. This showed that any parents whose attitudes towards their children's education are negative or neglectful would definitely affect the academic performance of their children, either positively or negatively. The values we hold determine the goals with which we strive, and we devote our energies to areas related to values, which is why more research attention has been concentrated on attitudes.

Those with positive attitudes tend to develop more interest than those with negative attitudes. This is in line with Angwaomaodoko (2023), who found that parental involvement, such as behavioral, cognitive, and affective involvement of parents in the academic life of their students, plays a positive role in the outcome of their children's academic performance. Bulton (2018) states that middle-class parents take more interest in their children's progress at school than manual working-class parents do, and they become relatively more interested as their children grow older. Most middle-class fathers visit schools and discuss their children's progress, whereas manual working-class fathers (parents) seldom do so.

This may be due to the fact that manual workers work longer hours than middle-class workers and are likely not to be paid when not engaged in work.

CONCLUSION

From the statistical analysis and findings in this study, the following conclusions and inferences could be drawn:

- The socio-economic background of parents plays an important role in the academic performance of secondary school students.
- The educational level of parents has an influence on the academic performance of students in secondary schools.
- The occupation of parents plays a significant role in the academic performance of secondary school students.
- The attitude of parents towards learning has an influence on the academic performance of students in secondary school.
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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Parents should work harder to become financially buoyant and show special interest in their children's education by providing their basic needs, such as textbooks, writing materials, and the prompt payment of school fees.
2. Parents should try to upgrade their education to see the education of their children as the best, most reliable, and lasting legacy.
3. The government should work as much as possible to improve the economic status of the country so that parents will be gainfully employed and able to adequately cater for the education of their children.
4. Parents should always show warm and positive attitudes towards the education of their wards in order to be fully committed to funding their education. Additionally, parents should make unscheduled visits to their children's schools to ensure that the children are performing well academically.
5. Proper orientation should be given to parents, no matter their educational development and background, to spend time with their children, check their academic work, provide guidance where necessary, and discuss the academic problems of their children with their teachers or school counselors. This will help address students' problems early enough and tackle them before they affect the students.

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