

## Parental Factors as Determinants of English Language Achievement among Junior Secondary School Students in Cross River State, Nigeria: Implications for Learners' Formative Evaluation



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**ABSTRACT:** The study examined the influence of parental factors on the English Language achievement of Junior Secondary School students of Cross River State, Nigeria. A sample of 500 junior secondary students was selected for the study. Two hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance and findings showed that socioeconomic status of parents significantly influence students' English Language achievement while parenting style had no significant influence on English Language achievement. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among other things that, Public Awareness Campaigns should be mounted for parents on ways to improve the socioeconomic status of their wards which is a significant factor in the latter's English Language achievement.

**KEYWORDS:** Parental socioeconomic status, parenting style, English Language achievement, formative evaluation.

### INTRODUCTION

The dwindling academic performance of students in both internal and external examinations is a disturbing and distressing development to parents, teachers the government and numerous stakeholders in the education sub-sector of Nigeria. The core subjects such as English Language and Mathematics are worst affected as shown by WAEC and NECO results in recent years; as reflected in the 2014 and 2015 results shown in Table 1. This situation affects both the Senior and Junior Secondary school students. However, this study focuses on the Junior Secondary School learners whose academic performance over the years has become a major source of worry. Numerous factors may be responsible for the dwindling academic performance of this category of students. Apart from the home variables, other factors include societal, cultural, governmental neglect, religious influence and environmental conditions. Some stakeholders of education attribute the observed failure rate in English Language to the students' social adjustment problems.

**Table 1. Summary of 2014 jsce results for cal.edu.zone.**

S/N	LGA	SUBJECT	TOTAL CANDIDATES	NO. PASSED	NO. FAILED	% PASSED	% FAILED
1	Akamkpa	Mathematics	1043	827	216	79%	21%
		English Language	1044	906	138	87%	13%
2	Akpabuyo	Mathematics	544	375	169	69%	31%
		English Language	542	389	153	72%	28%
3	Bakassi	Mathematics	165	48	117	29%	71%
		English Language	165	143	22	87%	13%
4	Biase	Mathematics	876	490	386	56%	44%
		English Language	877	790	87	90%	10%
5	Calabar Muni.	Mathematics	3135	1076	2059	34%	66%
		English Language	3113	2642	471	85%	15%
6	Calabar South	Mathematics	2047	571	1476	28%	72%
		English Language	2047	1829	218	89%	11%
7	Odukpani	Mathematics	655	399	256	61%	39%
		English Language	641	528	113	82%	18%

**Source:** Planning, Research and Statistics Department, Secondary Education Board, Calabar.

## **Parental Factors as Determinants of English Language Achievement among Junior Secondary School Students in Cross River State, Nigeria: Implications for Learners' Formative Evaluation**

Several studies have linked parental or home factors to students' behavior which eventually hampers their learning and achievement in school subjects. Ogodo (2005), for instance, carried out a study on home background and discipline behaviour of secondary school students in one of the Senatorial Districts of Cross River State. He sampled three hundred and three respondents (174 males and 129 females) drawn from five Local Government Areas. Their ages ranged between fourteen (14) and eighteen (18) years. Two null hypotheses tested at 0.5 level of significance, guided the study. Home Background and Disciplined Behaviour Questionnaire (HDQ) was used for data collection. Data obtained were analyzed using the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result of the One-Way analysis of variance showed a significant difference among students from home with autocratic, democratic and uninvolved parenting styles. The Fisher's LSD test result showed that students from autocratic parenting style background displayed significantly higher level of indiscipline behaviour than students from democratic parenting style background ( $t = 2.86$  as against critical  $t$ -value of 1.96). The results revealed that students from autocratic parenting background with ( $X = 37.87$ ) were more disciplined than students from authoritarian parenting style background (With  $X = 40.87$ ).

Ekor (2002) asserted that students from affluent homes do not lack educational opportunities. Facets of knowledge are brought to their doorsteps through internet, television sets, video sets and radio sets. Some have their home private study rooms or at least comfortable spaces where they can relax at home to do their assignments and revise. They do not trek long distances to school, as they are either in boarding houses or are provided with enough pocket cater for their transportation and other needs. Cherry (2012) noted that the majority of parents display one of three qualitatively different parenting styles. These are: Authoritative parenting style which is highest in all of the dimensions mentioned above, that is disciplinary strategies, warmth and nurturance, communication styles, and expectations of maturity and control; and Authoritarian parenting style which is high in disciplinary strategies and expectations of maturity and control but low in warmth and nurturance and communication styles; Permissive parenting style which is high in warmth and nurturance but low in terms of disciplinary strategies, communication styles, and expectations of control and maturity.

The effect of socioeconomic status on students' achievement was examined by Ciftci and Cin (2017) in a meta-analysis study. They explored literature review covering a total of 187 research studies, out of which 66 were included in the meta-analysis. The 66 research studies were compiled to obtain a sample of 266,817 subjects. The results of the random effect model showed that socioeconomic status has a high level of effect on students' achievement. In a predictive study, Akhtar (2012) investigated the influence of socioeconomic factors of Pakistani students on their achievement. The sample of the study comprised secondary school students enrolled in four districts of Rawalpindi of intermediate and secondary education Division. The achievement of students was collected in form of grade from the gazette of respective Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education. Linear regression showed mother's education, income, refrigerator, and source used to travel to school has positive effect on achievement. Number of siblings and transport facility (car/van) has negative effect on achievement.

Most studies in the literature explored had established significant links between parental socioeconomic status of students and their academic achievement. Parenting style, however, had been found not to contribute significantly in influencing students' academic achievement generally. The peculiarities of the researchers' geographical setting formed part of the unique features of the present study, which gap the researchers have attempted to fill.

### **PROBLEM OF THE STUDY**

The study was informed by the abysmal English Language achievement of junior secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria as shown in Table 1. A situation which had continued to account for very high annual dropout rates among students, as they choose to give up due to their inability to cope. Some of the affected students, in frustration, resort to various forms of examination malpractices and other vices within the school system. Government and other stakeholders of education have done a lot, including ensuring that only professional teachers were employed to teach, so as to nip the ugly situation in the bud, without any positive results. Consequently, the researchers had to undertake to investigate the influence of parental factors on English Language achievement among junior secondary school students in Cross River State, Nigeria. Expectedly, various stakeholders of education in the State may glean from the findings of the study to reposition the school system for improved achievement in English Language among secondary school students.

### **METHOD**

The study made use of the ex-post facto research design. The choice of this design was owing to the fact that the independent sub-variables (parental factors) were not manipulated. Their influence on the dependent variable (English Language Achievement) had already occurred prior to the study. The Population of the study was all Junior Secondary School students in Cross River State

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Public Secondary Schools whose total figure was 5110, comprising 2420 males and 2690 females. The study sample was five hundred (500) junior secondary school students randomly selected from the population.

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled 'Home factors, Deviant Behaviour Questionnaire (HFDBQ). The questionnaire items were of the modified 4-point Likert type with four response categories of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument passed through face validation by experts in Measurement and Evaluation. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied in testing the two hypotheses at .05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

### Hypothesis one

The null form of this hypothesis stated that parental socioeconomic status does not significantly influence English language achievement.

#### Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of English Language achievement on parental socioeconomic status

Level of parental socioeconomic status	N	Mean (X)	Std. Dev.	Std. Error
High	67	27.522	9.046	1.10514
Average	373	28.416	8.715	.45124
Low	60	24.850	8.551	1.10388
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>27.868</b>	<b>8.799</b>	<b>.39350</b>

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean	F-value	P-value
Level of parental socioeconomic status	666.332	2	333.166	4.361*	.013
Error	37966.956	497	76.392		
<b>Total</b>	<b>38633.288</b>	<b>499</b>			

- Significant at .05 level . P< .05

From Table 2, the P-value of .013 is less than the level of significance (.05) chosen for the study . Based on this outcome, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that parental socioeconomic status significantly influence students' achievement in English language.

To find out which pair of the group means was responsible for the significant results, a post hoc (LSD) test was carried out. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Post HOC (LSD) pairwise comparison of English Language achievement by level of socioeconomic status**

Level of parental socioeconomic status	High	Average	Low
High	27.522 <sup>a</sup>	-0.894 <sup>b</sup>	2.67.2 <sup>b</sup>
Average	.442 <sup>c</sup>	28.416 <sup>a</sup>	3.566 <sup>b*</sup>
Low	.082 <sup>c</sup>	.004 <sup>c</sup>	24.850 <sup>a</sup>

\*: Significant at .05 level. P< 05.

a: Values along the main diagonal are group means

b: Values above the diagonal are mean differences

c: Values below the diagonal are P-values.

In Table 3, the mean difference between average (28.416) and Low(24.850) accounted for a significant result because it yielded a p-value of .004 which is below the chosen level of significance(.05).Other mean differences were not significant. This implied that the significant influence of socioeconomic status of parents on students' English Language Achievement was as a result of the significant difference between parents of average socioeconomic status and those with low socioeconomic status.

### Hypothesis two

This hypothesis stated that parenting style does not significantly influence secondary school students' English language achievement.

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## Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of English Language achievement on parenting style

Parenting style	N	Mean (X)	Std. Dev.	Std. Error
Democratic	363	28.204	8.892	.46670
Autocratic	75	27.560	8.446	.97523
Permissive	44	26.886	9.189	1.38522
Neglectful	18	24.778	7.034	1.65793
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>27.868</b>	<b>8.799</b>	<b>.39350</b>

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F-value	P-value
Parenting style	262.350	3	87.450	1.130	.336
Error	38370.938	497	77.361		
<b>Total</b>	<b>38633.288</b>	<b>499</b>			

From Table 4, the p-value (.336) is observed to be higher than the chosen level of significance (.05). Based on this result, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that parenting style does not significantly influence secondary school students' English language achievement.

## DISCUSSION

The study found that parental socioeconomic status had significant influence on Students' English Achievement. This was in line with the position of Ekor (2002), who asserted that students from affluent homes do not lack educational opportunities. Facets of knowledge are brought to their doorsteps through internet, television sets, video sets and radio sets. Some have their home private study rooms or at least comfortable spaces where they can relax at home to do their assignments and revise. They do not trek long distances to school, as they are either in boarding houses or are provided with enough pocket cater for their transportation and other needs.

The results of the study also indicated that parenting style does not significantly influence Secondary School students' English language Achievement. The findings contrast those of Roche (2007) who showed that levels of permissive parenting was significantly related with academic strain. Parents with permissive style allow their children to have free control of their behaviors and actions.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNERS' FORMATIVE EVALUATION

Evaluation, in the context of school learning, is the process of comparing a learner's actual and expected performance in any given assessment situation. The process could be formative – where learners are continuously subjected to assessment activities or tasks within a given instructional season, or summative – involving a one-shot examination or test at the end of a term or school session. Formative evaluation serves to effectively track and enhance learning progress as it involves the continuous engagement of learners in assessment processes. Parents of high-level socioeconomic status are most likely to be in a position to provide the needed learning facilities at home to help their children to make rapid progress academically. Such learning resources like internet facilities, visual and audio aids, can easily be provided at home by wealthy parents to support their children's learning progress and thereby improving their overall rating in formative evaluation. Parenting styles that support learning progress of children would also naturally beef up their school performance in formative evaluation. Such children tend to be highly competitive academically among their colleagues.

Parents who are academically supportive in their mode of parenting would always be on hand to readily track the learning progress of their children by checking their notebooks, prying into knowing their performances in classwork and other forms of continuous assessment and possibly guiding them into problem solving or engaging private instructors to help. The roles of parents in the assessment of the learning of their children, as opined by Ojating (2019), really complement what the teacher does and facilitate the overall learning process. This is, however, applicable only if they (the parents) have what it takes to stimulate their children academically. Home environments that support learning activities are therefore critical in guaranteeing outstanding performance records in formative evaluation. This was corroborated by Berlin (2018), when he noted that lack of engagement of families in helping children with homework and the like can hamper their learning progress.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicated that students' parental socioeconomic status had significant influence on their achievement in English Language. That is, the higher the level of socioeconomic status the higher the achievement of students in the subject and

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vis versa. Parenting style, on the other hand, was found to have no significant influence on the students' achievement in English Language. In other words, the choice of parenting style is not significantly linked to achievement in English. Some studies have, however, refuted this position, having found significant relationships between various parenting styles and students' performance in school subjects.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) The Parents' Teachers' Associations (PTA) in Secondary Schools should create veritable platforms for the sensitization of parents on the various tips for wealth creation to enhance their income and help them meet the school needs of their children.
- (ii) Public Awareness Campaigns should be mounted for parents on ways to improve the socioeconomic status of their wards which is a significant factor in the latter's English Language achievement.

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