

## IMPACT OF HOME ENVIRONMENT ON STUDENT'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN NASARAWA-WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT PUBLIC DAY SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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### Abstract

*This study investigated the influence of the home environment on students' academic performance in public day secondary schools in Nasarawa-West, Nasarawa State. Specifically, the study aimed to determine how parental educational background, family size, and parental socioeconomic status within the home environment affect students' academic outcomes. A descriptive survey research design was employed. The target population included 65 principals and 900 teachers. Using stratified and simple random sampling techniques, a sample of 20 principals and 100 teachers was selected. Data were collected using a 30-item questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2, Strongly Disagree=1). The mean score threshold was set at 2.50. The findings revealed that: Parental educational background positively impacts students' academic performance, with a mean of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 1.03. Family size influences students' academic performance, with a mean of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 0.18. Socioeconomic status positively affects students' academic performance, with a mean of 3.19 and a standard deviation of 0.77. Therefore, it is recommended that parents remain actively involved in their children's academic affairs to foster improved academic achievement. Parents should also be encouraged to develop strategies to enhance their income, ensuring the sustainable provision of basic and school-related needs. Furthermore, governmental and non-governmental organizations should support disadvantaged parents through empowerment initiatives and the creation of socioeconomic opportunities.*

**Keywords:** Impact, Home Environment, Educational Background, Academic Performance, Socio-economic Status, Public Day Secondary School.

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### Background to the Study

A significant body of research consistently demonstrates a strong correlation between parents' educational attainment and their children's academic performance. Active parental involvement in a child's education, such as reviewing homework, discussing schoolwork, and attending parent-teacher conferences, can positively influence academic achievement. Furthermore, authoritative parenting, characterized by clear expectations coupled with supportive guidance, is generally associated with more favorable academic outcomes compared to permissive or authoritarian styles. Beyond parenting approaches, access to learning materials, educational opportunities, and reduced financial stress can also significantly impact academic success. Establishing positive family relationships, providing emotional support, and maintaining a stable home environment are additional factors that contribute to a child's ability to focus on academics. Finally, the availability of a dedicated study space and access to technology can directly influence academic outcomes.

The academic goals set for young children necessitate in-depth and exceptional tutoring or teaching from parents, educators, and other stakeholders. Collins (2007) identified

numerous factors influencing learners' educational outcomes, emphasizing the home environment as a significant determinant of academic achievement. Education is a crucial component of human quality, vital for generating high incomes and fostering sustainable socio-economic development. Ogawa (2010) similarly posited that education is an essential ingredient in poverty eradication, explaining that it facilitates the transmission of skills, knowledge, and values across generations, thereby ensuring a country's social, economic, and political continuity and advancement. Fairmon (2010) highlights that in most global education systems, secondary education serves as the highest learning level preparing individuals for tertiary institutions, technical, and vocational training. Thus, secondary-level education is critical for strengthening global socio-economic growth.

Pintrich and De Groot (2011) underscore that students' higher academic attainment is crucial for the success of young individuals within society. Achieving strong academic performance at this level is therefore sacrosanct, as education is viewed as a pathway to social mobility, equipping children with the necessary skills and experience to assume responsibilities within society without discrimination. However, public day secondary schools in the Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State have consistently demonstrated poor performance in the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE), with the majority of students scoring below a C-grade, which is the minimum entry requirement for Nigerian universities. In 2022, the West African Examination Council (WAEC) reported that less than half of the over 1,000,000 candidates who registered for the SSCE (WASCE) nationwide secured at least five credits, including English Language and Mathematics.

Faaz (2017) further exemplifies how socio-economic position profoundly impacts student educational achievements, noting a clear disparity between students from financially stable backgrounds with educated parents and those without. He categorized components of the home environment to include a child's family background, such as parents' education, profession, financial status, and socializing facilities, all of which influence a child's living conditions. Similarly, Parveen (2017) opined that family size, income, relationships, parental educational levels, and overall socio-economic status positively correlate with students' academic performance.

Given these insights, it is imperative that renewed empirical studies continue to investigate factors within the learner's home environment that significantly impact school subject achievement. For this reason, this study identifies parental educational background, family size, and parental socio-economic status as key environmental variables.

Good education is not a matter of chance; it is a product of effective teaching and learning, coupled with the dedicated efforts of teachers who guide and facilitate learning, schools that provide conducive environments, students who are central to the learning process, and parents who sponsor, support, and cater to their children's well-being and their home environments. Often, blame for poor student performance is solely placed on teachers and school authorities. However, many families in our society appear to neglect their children's education, with some parents seemingly holding erroneous notions about their children's performance, being unaware of their roles, or failing to fulfill their duties of guidance and encouragement in their child's academic journey. While some attribute mass failure or success to teachers and school authorities,

others view family socio-economic status as a primary influence on a child's academic performance. Nevertheless, some students have indicated that academic performance is a joint effort between school authorities and parents within diverse home environments. This calls for further research to ascertain the root causes of poor student performance and propose viable solutions. In some communities, for instance, both students and parents attribute recurring widespread failures in Junior and Senior West African School Certificate Examinations (WASCE) and National Examinations Council (NECO) solely to factors stemming from school authorities and teachers. Some students even resort to "special centers" for examinations. However, a few enlightened parents maintain that factors within students' home environments also contribute significantly to these outcomes. It is on this premise that this study aims to identify some of the home environmental factors impacting students' academic performance and to proffer solutions.

### **Research Questions**

The following three research questions guide this study:

- i. To what extent does parental educational background influence the academic performance of public day secondary school students?
- ii. How does family size influence the academic performance of public day secondary school students?
- iii. To what extent does parents' socio-economic status influence the academic performance of public day secondary school students?

### **Hypotheses**

The following three null hypotheses were formulated to address the research questions:

- i. Parental educational background has no significant impact on the academic performance of public day secondary school students.
- ii. There is no significant impact of family size on the academic performance of public day secondary school students.
- iii. There is no significant impact of parental socio-economic status on the academic performance of public day secondary school students.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The primary objective of this study is to examine the home environment and its effect on the academic performance of secondary school students in the Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. Specifically, this study sought to:

- i. Determine the extent to which parental involvement influences secondary school students' academic performance in the district.
- ii. Examine the extent to which parents' socio-economic status influences secondary school students' academic performance in the area.
- iii. Ascertain the extent to which parental educational background influences secondary school students' academic performance.
- iv. Determine whether the type of family structure and family size influence secondary school students' academic performance in the district.

## **Significance of the Study**

This study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge regarding the relationship between the home environment and academic achievement among secondary school students in the Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. The findings of this study will assist various authorities, including teachers, parents, and caregivers, in adopting effective child-rearing and teaching methods. This, in turn, can help bridge the gap in academic performance and facilitate the organization of students in a manner that ensures academic inclusion for all, regardless of their family background.

## **Delimitation of the Study**

This study was specifically designed to investigate the relationship between the home environment and academic achievement among secondary school students in the Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. It was restricted to 65 secondary schools within the District, with a sample size of 20 principals and 100 teachers.

## **Methodology**

This study adopted a Descriptive Survey research design. The study was conducted in the Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. The study population comprised 65 principals and 900 teachers from 65 public secondary schools. A sample size of 20 principals and 100 teachers was utilized. The primary instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled: "Impact of Home Environment on Students Academic Performance Questionnaire (IHESAQQ)".

The questionnaire was structured into three sections: Section A focused on the impact of parental educational background, Section B on the impact of family size, and Section C on parents' socio-economic background on students' academic performance. The instrument consisted of three-item questions constructed by the researcher and validated by two experts: one in educational management and another in measurement and evaluation, both from the Federal University of Lafia. The instrument utilized a four-point rating scale: Strongly Agreed (SA)-4, Agreed (A)-3, Disagree (D)-2, and Strongly Disagree (SD)-1.

A mean score of 2.50 served as the decision threshold. To establish the reliability of the study, a trial test of the instrument was conducted on 5 principals and 20 teachers who were not part of the main sample but possessed similar characteristics. Cronbach Alpha statistical tool was used for this purpose, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.85, thereby indicating a high internal consistency of the instrument. Descriptive statistics, specifically the mean and standard deviation, were used to answer the research questions.

## **Results**

Research question 1: To what extent does parental educational background influence the academic performance of public secondary school students?

**Table 1: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of the Parents Educational Background on the Academic Performance of Students in Public Day Secondary Schools in Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State.**

Item No.	Item Description	N	X	SD	Decision
	Parental Educational background influences the academic performance of students in public secondary schools. Educated parents provide more guidance to their children in areas of assisting them in home work and checking their exercise books when they return from school.	120	3.03	1.03	Agreed

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of 3.03 and 1.03, indicating that parental educational background influences students' academic performances in public schools.

**Table 2: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Family Size on the Academic Performance of Public Secondary School Students.**

Item No	Item Description	N	X	SD	Decision
	Family size impacts students' academic performance in public day secondary schools. Polygamous families are less likely to cater for the school needs of their children.	120	3.61	0.18	Agreed

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of 3.61 and 0.18, indicating that the family size influences students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Nasarawa West S. District.

Research Question 3. To what extent does parents' socio-economic status influence the academic performance of public day secondary school students?

**Table 3: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Socioeconomic Status on the Academic Performance of Public Day Secondary School Students.**

Item No	Item Description	N	X	SD	Decision
	Socio-economic status of parents influence the academic performance of public day secondary school students. Children whose parents are rich provide more school requirements than children from the poor family.	120	3.19	0.77	Agreed

Table 3 shows the mean scores and standard deviation of 3.19 and 0.77, indicating that social economic status of parents impacts students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The first finding showed that parental educational background has influence on students' academic performance in public day secondary schools in Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. The finding agrees with Parveen (2017) who states that the educational level of parents has a positive significance on students' academic performance. The second finding showed that, family size impacts positively on their students' academic performance in secondary schools. While the third finding showed that parents' social economic status has influence on students' performance in secondary schools in Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. This finding agrees with Aikens and Barbarin (2018) whose finding indicated that parents' socio-economic status has a positive relationship with parents' contribution to their child's education.

## **Conclusion**

This empirical study investigated the impact of home environment on students' academic performance in Nasarawa-West Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. Descriptive survey research design was used in which data from the sampled schools were collected using questionnaires. A stratified random sampling technique was used to sample the respondents (principals and teachers). The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented using mean scores and standard deviation.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concludes that parental educational background; family size and parental socio-economic status are correlated and have impacts on students' academic performance in public day secondary schools. This is because many of the values transmitted by the schools were first inculcated in the child at home since it is the first socializing agent. The home environment definitely influences the academic achievement of the students.

## **Recommendations**

The study recommends that: there is need to encourage parents to continue their parental involvement in their children's academic affairs as this is a way of improving academic achievement. Furthermore, parents should be encouraged to come up with strategies that will help to improve their income, as this will enable sustainable provision of basic and school needs. Parents and other significant persons (stakeholders) should make students' home conducive and stimulatory to learning not only on the school subjects but education in general.

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