Influence of Socioeconomic Status of Parents on the Scholastic Achievement of Mathematics Students in Selected Secondary Schools within Ado LGA of Ekiti State

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Abstract

The investigation explored the influence of socioeconomic status of parents regarding the academic successes of mathematics students in chosen secondary schools located in the Ado LGA of Ekiti State. The study encompassed both public and private educational institutions, employing a straightforward random sampling technique to select five secondary schools and sixty students. Information was gathered via a self-designed questionnaire with distinct sections A and B, concentrating on demographic details and parental elements such as education level, family background, income, and occupational status in relation to students' performance in Mathematics. The instrument underwent face and content validity procedures, and the results were assessed using Pearson correlation coefficient, yielding a value of 0.85. Hypotheses were evaluated through Chi-square analysis, and data were presented using pie charts and tables. The outcomes unveiled a significant influence of parents' educational background, family background, occupation, and income level on the academic success of mathematics students. The researcher recommends the implementation of financial assistance programs for families with lower incomes to ensure equitable access to quality mathematics resources. Moreover, schools are encouraged to establish initiatives and parental engagement programs, fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment. The study advocates for policy changes to promote fairness in mathematics education for students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Keywords: Socioeconomic Status, Scholastic achievement, Parental Education, Parental Background, Parental Occupation, Parental Income

INTRODUCTION

The nature of household a child is born into can shape the holistic development and maturation of the child. This environmental influence is acknowledged with regard to the socioeconomic position and financial standing of the child's parents. Extensive research existed on the pivotal role that family background plays in moulding mental, emotional, physical, cognitive, and psychological growth, while also impacting academic accomplishments and educational results (Poulain *et al.*, 2019; Nja *et al.*, 2021). The concept of socioeconomic status of parents (SES) is crucial in understanding the economic and social standing of families. Socioeconomic status encompasses various indicators such as income, education, and occupation, providing insights into the economic resources and social standing of parents. The socioeconomic status is composed of two distinct factors: social and economic factors. Social status refers to the position an individual hold in society through acquisition, while economic status pertains to an individual's wealth (Miftahu and Melaiye, 2021).

According to the American Psychological Association (APA) (APA, 2018), SES refers to an individual's or group's social standing or class. It is often utilized as an underlying concept to evaluate family background (Bofah and Hannula, 2017). Recent research highlights SES as a widely examined and discussed element within the educational community, influencing students' scholastic achievement (Aliyu, 2016). Researchers have consistently highlighted the influence of parental SES on various aspects of a child's development, including scholastic achievement. Numerous studies have highlighted the substantial influence of parents' SES on learners' outcomes within educational institutions (Epstein *et al.*, 2017; Qasem, 2018; Fekadu *et al.*, 2019; Maghra *et al.*, 2019). The socio-economic characteristics of a family play a vital role in shaping a child's achievements or challenges in school.

Additionally, these characteristics influence a child's entry into school, the duration of their stay, and their overall achievements (Amazu and Okoro, 2015). As pointed out

by John (2014), a child from a higher or intermediate socioeconomic level is more likely to encounter and learn a complex language code, while a child from a lower socioeconomic class is more prone to learning a limited language code. Schools, being primarily concerned with linguistic complexity, may present challenges for children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to adapt (John, 2014). Egunsola (2014) also suggested that early exposure to affluent families is correlated with higher IQs in young children. Despite being a focal point in a highly dynamic research field, there exists an ongoing debate regarding the practical significance and empirical measurement of socioeconomic status in studies involving children and teenagers (Ajila and Olutola, 2000).

Socioeconomic status implies a descriptor pertaining to the status or standing of an individual or family determined by their ability to access or manage a blend of valued resources such as wealth, influence, and economic prosperity (Ogunshola and Adewale, 2012). The investigators concentrated on Aliyu's (2016) characterization of the three-fold notion of SES as the key determinants of SES. Empirical investigations exploring the relationships among these components have identified direct connections. Importantly, these studies have demonstrated that the components of SES are distinct, with each measuring substantially different aspects that should be considered independently from one another (Abdu-Raheem, 2015). Scholastic achievement is a multifaceted construct that involves the assessment of a student's achievements in various educational domains. It includes grades, test scores, and overall academic achievements. Comprehending the elements that contribute to academic achievements is crucial for developing effective interventions and educational strategies. This presents an opportunity for children to refine their skills, enhance their grades, and prepare for new academic challenges. As defined by Ahmad and Naeema (2013), scholastic achievement refers to an individual's success in a specific academic subject, encompassing areas such as reading, language arts, mathematics, science, or any field of human learning. The successful completion of assignments and studies is indicative of a student's scholastic achievement. Educational institutions assess academic success using diverse approaches, which encompass written and verbal examinations, presentations, completion of assignments, and engagement in classroom activities and discussions, all contributing to the overall grading process. Teachers employ assessments such as assignments, tests, and examinations to gauge a student's proficiency, as highlighted by Bakare (2011). Environmental variables within the home, as identified by Bakare (2011), play a role in influencing a child's learning capabilities,

impacting scholastic achievement either positively or negatively. These variables include socioeconomic status of parents, the level of parental supervision, home location, and the availability of library facilities, among others. Basil (2017) argued that scholastic achievement is typically superior among children from literate and high-income families compared to those from impoverished and less-educated environments. He attributed this difference to various factors, including the provision of a balanced diet, good health, and facilities that stimulate intellectual activity in high socio-economic homes.

Conversely, adolescents from low socio-economic backgrounds may engage in activities like smoking cigarettes and using substances like India hemp, which can negatively impact their cognitive functions, potentially leading to poorer scholastic achievement. Basil emphasized that adolescents from homes with good or high SES are more inclined to achieve superior results than their counterparts within less favorable environments. The investigation unveiled that inadequate factors such as family income, household composition, and insufficient government funding are elements that influence students' scholastic achievement. In terms of home environmental variables, insufficient supervision by parents has been identified as a significant influence on children's lives, as highlighted by Aremu and Sokan (2013). Parents, particularly mothers who spend more time with their children, play a crucial role in imparting fundamental life skills and knowledge to their offspring. The level of parental motivation toward their children's academic endeavors is a key determinant of the children's performance.

Academic achievement as noted by Busari (2000), is commonly acknowledged as the manifestation of knowledge gained or skills cultivated across different academic disciplines. Despite coordinated endeavors through legislation and educational reforms aimed at alleviating the adverse consequences of underachievement, there has been limited progress in tackling this problem over the decades (Miftahu and Melaiye, 2021). Parental involvement manifests in various forms, encompassing effective parenting practices at home including promoting a safe and steady environment, offering intellectual stimulation and participating in parent-child discussions. Furthermore, it encompasses interactions with schools, such as sharing information, attending school events, participating in school activities, and engaging in school governance. Ogunshola and Adewale (2012) noted that parents from different occupational classes often adopt distinct child-rearing styles, disciplinary approaches, and reactions to their children.

The impact of economic and social standing on the scholastic achievement of children is particularly pronounced during the early developmental years, with children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds facing greater challenges. Unlike their counterparts in high-income families, children from low-income households often lack access to essential materials and resources crucial for academic success. However, not all children have the privilege of coming from homes equipped with the necessary educational resources. In this context, a parent's socioeconomic status emerges as a critical factor in providing these resources and exerting a substantial effect on an educational outcomes of children. Socioeconomic status significantly affects parental involvement, surpassing the influence of other factors. The extent to which SES of parents can motivate a child to attain success in academics remains a pertinent question. Nevertheless, existing evidence suggests that parental participation, as a whole, contributes positively to students' success.

Education stands as a pivotal element in the advancement of any society, and mathematics, being a fundamental subject, plays an essential part in molding students' cognitive capacities and problem-solving aptitudes. The proficiency of students in mathematics not only reflects their individual capabilities but is also impacted by various external factors. One such significant external factor is the socio-economic status of students' parents. Lawal and Wahab (2011) asserted that fostering swift economic development by boosting investments in education is a praiseworthy choice, provided it does not compromise the average cost or quality of education. The Nigerian economy could experience substantial benefits from elevated government expenditure in the education sector, even if it involves reducing investment in other areas.

Ekiti State, situated in southwestern Nigeria, has gained recognition for its dedication to education, boasting numerous secondary schools committed to nurturing young minds. Ado Local Government Area, among the prominent local government areas in Ekiti State, serves as an ideal setting for investigating the influence of parents' SES on children's academic achievement in mathematics. A thorough understanding of this relationship holds the potential to inform more effective educational policies and interventions, aimed at bridging achievement gaps and promoting equitable access to quality education. The learners' academic achievement in mathematics is of particular concern because it is a subject that demands logical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. In many educational systems, mathematics performance is a key determinant of a student's overall academic success and their future opportunities, including admission to higher education institutions and career prospects. Research on the influence of parental socio-economic position has been shown to have an impact on academic achievement conducted in various contexts, but the outcomes may vary depending on cultural, social, and economic factors specific to a region. Therefore, it is essential to investigate this relationship within the unique socio-economic and educational landscape of Ado LGA in Ekiti State.

The study at hand seeks to look into the influence of the socioeconomic position of the parents, encompassing factors such as income, education, family background, and occupation, on the scholastic achievement of maths students in designated secondary educational institutions within Ado Local Government Area. Through a comprehensive examination of this relationship, the study aims to offer insights that can guide educational policies, pinpoint areas for targeted interventions, and foster a more equitable educational system in Ekiti State. Recognizing the significance of how socioeconomic status of parents influences the scholastic achievement of maths students is essential for the development of effective strategies to enhance educational outcomes and mitigate disparities among students. The findings from this study will contribute valuable knowledge to the educational community and policymakers, enabling evidence-based decisions to enhance the quality of mathematics education in Ado LGA and, consequently, throughout Ekiti State.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The significance regarding secondary school pupils' academic achievement in mathematics cannot be overstated, given its profound implications for their educational progress and future prospects. Mathematics, serving as a foundational discipline, plays a pivotal role in nurturing the ability to think critically and solve problems. Moreover, that often serves as yardstick for evaluating students' overall cognitive abilities. Nevertheless, there is a pressing concern regarding the potential impact of socioeconomic status of parents on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools within Ado Local Government Area, Ekiti State.

Despite the concerted efforts to enhance the quality of education in Ekiti State and ensure equitable access to learning opportunities, persistent disparities in academic outcomes persist among students. Notably, the socio-economic status of parents emerges as a recognized factor contributing to these divergences.

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This research endeavors to explore and understand the influence of socioeconomic status of parents on the academic achievement of mathematics students in chosen secondary educational system within Ado LGA of Ekiti State. Through this investigation, the study aims to provide empirically grounded insights that can inform educational policies, foster greater equity in education, and ultimately contribute to the enhancement of mathematics education quality in the region.

Purpose of the Study

This study was carried out to:

i. Assess the influence of educational level of parents;
ii. Examine the influence of parents' family background;
iii. Determine the influence of parents' level of income;
iv. Investigate the influence of parents' occupation; on the scholastic achievement of Mathematics students in selected secondary schools in Ado LGA, Ekiti State.

Research Questions

The study employed the following guiding questions:
To what extent does:

i. parental level of education;
ii. parental family background;
iii. parental level of income;
iv. parental occupation;

influences the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

HO_1: Parent's level of education;
HO_2: Parent's family background;
HO_3: Parent's level of income;
HO_4: Parent's occupation;

does not significantly influence the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State.

Methodology

The research design employed in this study is descriptive survey research. Descriptive survey research aims to investigate a segment of the population, often large, by selecting samples from that population to explore the relative distribution and relationships between its variables. The specific focus of this study is to gather essential information regarding the influence of socioeconomic status of parents on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools within Ado LGA of Ekiti State.

The study encompassed both male and female mathematics students in both public and private secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State. The sampling method employed was simple random sampling. Out of the available secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State, five (5) schools were randomly selected for inclusion in this study. From these selected schools, a purposive sample of sixty (60) students was chosen, ensuring a proportional representation of both genders, with twelve (12) students selected from each school.

The data collection instrument utilized in this study was a self-structured questionnaire titled - Questionnaire on the Influence of Socioeconomic status of parents on the Scholastic achievement of Mathematics Students in Selected Secondary Schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State. The questionnaire comprised two sections, A and B. Section A focused on gathering information about the respondents' demographic features, while Section B included inquiries regarding parental levels of education, family background, income, and occupational status concerning their children's scholastic achievement in Mathematics within secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State.

To gauge responses in Section B, a four-point Likert format was employed, with SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), and SD (Strongly Disagree) as the response levels.

The reliability of the research instrument was assessed using the split-half statistic method. Twenty copies of the questionnaire were distributed to students from Ijanmodu Comprehensive High School, Ijan Ekiti, and Ayodeji Daramola Grammar School, Ijan Ekiti, who were not part of the study sample, administered at two different times within a two-week period, the retrieved questionnaires were divided into odd and even groups. The scores of these groups were then correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation method, resulting in a reliability coefficient of 0.85, signifying the instrument's reliability.

The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and underwent validation by the research supervisor. A sample of the instrument was presented to the supervisor for professional input, corrections, and comments, which were incorporated into the final version to ensure both face and content validity.

For data collection, the researcher personally visited the selected schools, engaged with school authorities, and obtained permission before administering the questionnaire to students. Adequate time was provided

for students to respond to the questionnaire items, ensuring a high response rate with the goal of obtaining accurate and comprehensive data.

Results and Discussion of Findings
In this research study, a combination of descriptive and quantitative statistical methods was employed for data analysis. The descriptive analysis involved the utilization of pie charts and tables to present data distribution. The quantitative approach incorporated non-parametric statistics, specifically chi-square, for hypothesis testing to assess relationships between observed and expected variables in the dataset. Responses obtained from the administered questionnaire were collected and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20.0).
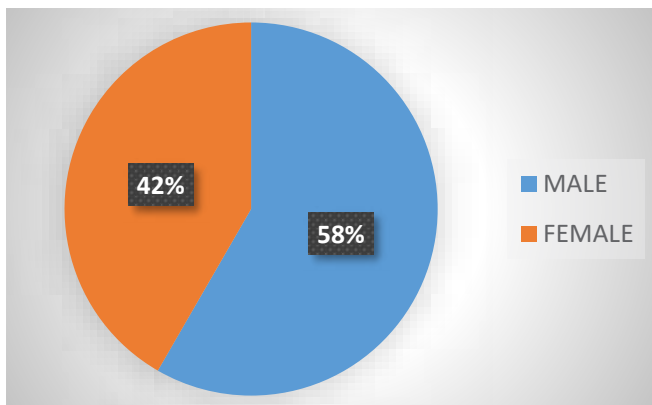
Figure 1: Demography of Respondents

As illustrated in Figure 1, 35 respondents, constituting 58 percent of the total population, are identified as male, while the remaining 25 respondents, representing 42 percent of the population, were female.
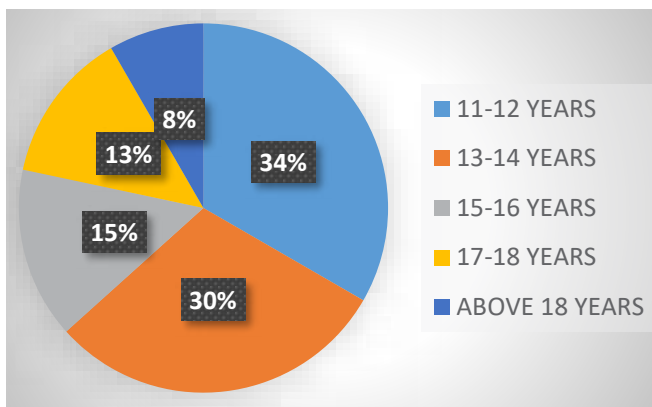
Figure 2: Age of respondents

In Figure 2, it is evident that among the respondents, 20 individuals, accounting for 34 percent of the population, fell within the age range of 11-12 years. Additionally, 18 respondents, representing 30 percent of the population, were situated within the age bracket of 13-14 years.

Furthermore, 9 respondents, constituting 15 percent of the population, were from 15-16 years old. Moreover, 8 individuals, making up 13 percent of the population, were in the age range of 17-18 years, while 5 respondents, equivalent to 8 percent of the population, surpassed the age of 18 years.

Table 1: Chi-Square value for Hypothesis 1.

Value	Df	X^2Cal	X^2Tab	Remarks
Observed-34.8 **Expected**-25.2	4	56.431	9.488	Reject H_0

$H0_1$: There is no significant influence of parent's level of education on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State.

Table 1 shows that the overall calculated chi-square value is 56.431 at 0.05 level of significant and at 4 degrees of freedom. The calculated chi-square value 56.431 is greater than the Table value 9.488, which means the null hypothesis will be rejected. It can be concluded that there is significant difference in the response of students on the items. The study therefore showed that secondary school students' scholastic achievement in Mathematics is significantly affected by their parents' level of education.

Table 2: Chi-Square value for Hypothesis 2.

Value	Df	X^2Cal	X^2Tab	Remarks
Observed-26.2 **Expected**-33.8	4	24.310	9.488	Reject H_0

$H0_2$: There is no significant influence of parent's family background on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State.

Table 2 displays the computed chi-square value, indicating an overall value of 24.310 at a significance level of 0.05 and with 4 degrees of freedom. The calculated chi-square value of 24.310 surpassed the critical table value of 9.488, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This suggests a noteworthy disparity in students' responses to the items. Therefore, the study concludes that there is a significant impact of parents' family background on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students in Mathematics.

Table 3: Chi-Square value for Hypothesis 3.

Value	Df	X^2Cal	X^2Tab	Remarks
Observed-31.8 **Expected**-28.2	4	28.690	9.488	Reject H_0

$H0_3$: There is no significant influence of parent's level of income on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State.

Table 3 presents the overall calculated chi-square value of 28.690 at a significance level of 0.05 with 4 degrees of freedom. The computed chi-square value, exceeding the

critical table value of 9.488, leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates a substantial difference in students' responses to the items. Consequently, the study concludes that there is a significant influence of parents' level of income on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students in Mathematics.

Table 4: Chi-Square value for Hypothesis 4.

Value	Df	X^2Cal	X^2Tab	Remarks
Observed-32.8 **Expected**-27.2	4	38.945	9.488	Reject H_0

$H0_4$: There is no significant influence of parent's occupation on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State.

Table 4 illustrates the comprehensive chi-square value, calculated at 38.945 with a significance level of 0.05 and 4 degrees of freedom. The computed chi-square value surpassed the critical table value of 9.488, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This implies a substantial difference in students' responses to the items. Thus, the study concludes that there is a significant impact of parents' occupation on the scholastic achievement of secondary school students in Mathematics.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study delved into the influence of socioeconomic status of parents on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools within Ado LGA of Ekiti State. The investigation focused on evaluating the influence of parental level of education, family background, level of income, and occupation on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students.
A descriptive research design of the survey type was adopted for this study, involving a population comprising five selected secondary schools, both public and private, in Ado LGA of Ekiti State. The sampling method employed was simple random sampling, with five secondary schools randomly chosen from Ado LGA. The study included sixty students, purposively selected to maintain gender balance, with twelve students from each school.

Data collection utilized a self-structured questionnaire divided into two sections (A and B). Section A addressed demographic features, while Section B focused on parental characteristics, including level of education, family background, income, and occupation, in relation to their children's scholastic achievement in Mathematics. The Likert format, with four response levels (SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree), was employed for responses in Section B. The instrument underwent face and content validity procedures. Data analysis involved the use of pie charts and tables to present questionnaire item results.

The study's findings lead to the conclusion that there exists a significant positive correlation between parents' socioeconomic status and students' scholastic achievement in mathematics within the LGA of Ekiti State. Respondents generally concurred that parents with higher income levels exhibit the capacity to pay school fees promptly, provide essential learning materials, and establish a more conducive learning environment at home—contrasting with lower-income parents who lack the financial means to support their children's educational needs.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the influence of socioeconomic status of parents on the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools in Ado LGA of Ekiti State.

In light of the study's outcomes, it was established that socioeconomic status of parents plays a pivotal role in shaping the scholastic achievement of mathematics students in selected secondary schools within Ado LGA of Ekiti State. Specifically, parents with higher levels of education contribute to a more conducive learning environment at home, positively influencing their children's attitudes and aspirations toward learning mathematics. Additionally, the nature of parents' work significantly impacted the time, attention, access to educational materials, tutoring, and overall conducive learning environments provided for their children, ultimately affecting students' scholastic achievement in mathematics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the results of this study, the following recommendations are proposed.
1. Financial Support for Mathematics Resources: The government and other stakeholders should establish programs that provide financial assistance to families with lower income, enabling them to access quality mathematics resources, including textbooks, educational technology, and tutoring services. This will help to bridge the resource gap and ensure all students have equal opportunities for learning.
2. Occupational Exposure Initiatives: Head of Schools in collaboration with teachers should develop initiatives to expose students to diverse careers in mathematics-related fields. They can collaborate with professionals and organizations to organize career talks, workshops, and mentorship programs, offering insights into the real-world applications of mathematics and inspiring students from various family backgrounds.

3. Parental Education and Engagement Programs: The government and other stakeholders should implement programs that empower parents, regardless of their educational background, to actively engage in their children's mathematics education. They should provide workshops and resources that enhance parents' understanding of the importance of mathematics and equip them with strategies to support their children's learning at home.

4. Equitable Access to Advanced Mathematics Courses: The government and other stakeholders should ensure that students from all socioeconomic backgrounds have equal access to advanced mathematics courses. They should implement policies and programs that prevent tracking and streaming practices that may disproportionately affect students from lower-income families, limiting their opportunities for advanced maths education.

5. Scholarship and Tuition Assistance for Mathematics Enrichment Programs: The government and other stakeholders should create scholarship programs and tuition assistance for students interested in participating in mathematics enrichment programs, competitions, and workshops. This will ensure that financial constraints do not hinder students from diverse backgrounds from engaging in activities that can further enhance their mathematical abilities.

DECLARATION
The Authors declare no conflict of Interest.

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