

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, STUDENT ATTITUDE TO SCHOOL AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SOKOTO METROPOLIS**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the relationship among socio-economic status, student attitude to school and academic success among secondary school student in Sokoto Metropolis. Three objectives, and three hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was nine thousand six hundred and forty eight (9,648) students while three hundred and six (306) students were selected as sample size. A validated instrument were used for collecting data; Adopted version of Bala (2011) Socio-economic Status, Attitude to School and Academic Success Inventory SESASI). The instrument with reliability index of 0.82 were used in collecting relevant data. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) was used to analyze hypotheses I and II. And multiple regression analysis was applied to test hypothesis III. The result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation shows that there is a negative significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. Based on the findings, recommendations were made these include, secondary school teachers should advice students about their attitude to school in order to improve for better academic success.*

**Key Note:** Socio-economic Status, Attitude to School and Academic Success

### **Introduction**

Family background is key to students' educational development. This is buttressed by the fact that home environment is a primary socialization agent and influences a child's future aspirations. In any family setup, the responsibility of training a child always lies in the hands of the parents. The common assertion by sociologists that education can be an instrument of cultural change which is being taught from home is relevant in this discussion. It is not out of place to imagine that parental socio-economic background can have possible effects on the academic performance of children in school. Whatsoever affect the development environment of children would possibly affect their education or disposition to it. Parental socio-economic status is one of such variables. When a woman's nutritional status improves, so too does the nutrition of her young children. Parents of different occupation classes often have different styles of child upbringing, different ways of disciplining their children and different ways of reacting to their children. These differences do not express themselves consistently as expected in the case of every family; rather they influence the average tendencies of families for different occupational classes (Gupa, 2019).

In line with the above assertion, Abdu, Babakura and Tela (2020) had also argued that socio-economic status of parents does not only affect the academic success but also makes it possible for children from low background to compete well with their counterparts from high socio-economic background under the same academic environment. Moreover, Smith, Fagan and Ulvund in Nuhu, (2018) had asserted that significant predictors of intellectual performance in school included parental socio-economic status (SES). In the same vein, other researchers had posited that parental SES could affect school children to bring about flexibility to adjust to the different school schedules (Guerin, Reinberg Testu, Boulenguiez, Mechkouri & Touitou in Nuhu, 2018). In a previous local finding in Nigeria, Aliyu (2016) and Al-Matalka (2014) had averred that there is a significant difference between the rates of deviant behaviour among students from high and low socio-economic statuses. The health status of the children could also be traceable to parental socio-economic status has effects on children' academic performance.

Students' attitude to school is another factor that could affect the academic success of students in school. Attitude is a very strong variable in learning as it determines the success or failure of a child. Attitude is a correlation of students' performance in any teaching-learning subject. It is believed that learning occurs in three domains; affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains. According to Asiegbu and Ezeugbor (2018), affective characteristics are now being recognized for the significant interaction they have with academic performance. And so, attitude, one of the affective characteristics is the general evaluation of people about themselves, others, other objects, events or problems. Students' attitude to school, therefore, affects learning. In addition, Bhat, Joshi and Wani (2016) suggest that the attitude of students is likely to play a significant role in any satisfactory explanation of variable level of academic performance shown by students in studies.

Dudaite (2016) in his finding reports that many students developed negative attitudes to school, probably due to the fact that teachers are unable to satisfy their aspirations or goals. It is well known that negative attitude in school toward a certain subject makes learning or what to be learned in the future difficult. That is, if a student has a negative attitude towards schooling, it makes learning difficult. Therefore developing students' positive attitudes towards schooling should be the most important purpose of teaching. The construct of students' attitude to school was defined by Dudaite (2016) as being the subject's behaviours, the expression of their feelings regarding affection and judgements, favourable or unfavourable, for the school and school experiences. The affective characteristics of it may be an important explanatory element of quality education and investment of individual actors in the different dimensions that make up the school (Eshetu, 2015)). This construct is intrinsically related to other constructs, such as students' perceptions and interest in learning, their competence (Perceived and as result of academic performance) and motivation. As it appends with other constructs, also with attitudes there is differences regarding gender. Where girls seem to have more positive attitudes to school, while boys are less motivated and have more negative attitudes toward school (Esther, Ruffina & Anastecia, 2018). In general, results show that girls do not require more time to study, engage less in cases of misconduct and behaviour, have less absenteeism, and also have more expectations about future and are more enthusiastic about further studies and give up more easily (Esther, Ruffina & Anastecia, 2018).

On the other hand, boys are less committed to studies and give up more easily (Esther, Ruffina & Anastecia, 2018), once their representation of popular teens does not require having good grades and being committed to the school. Also, there is evidence that cognitive variables such as ability-related and expectancy beliefs, general attitudes toward school, and attitudes toward specific academic subjects are related to academic performance and that these can differ across gender and racial groups (Linnehan in Esther, Ruffina & Anastecia, 2018). On the relation between students' success in school and parental socio-economic level, the results of previous studies had shown that boys with higher levels appear to be more satisfied with school and that students from lower socio-economic status and who have less access to school resources and computers express more negative attitudes toward school. According to Popham (2005), students' attitudes to school should be enormously important to educators, because affective dispositions were seen as powerful predictors of students' subsequent behaviour. Academic activities accompanied with the use of modern technologies positively increase student attachment to school. There is a strong association between individuals' attitudes to school and their academic performance and commitment. Students who have negative attitudes towards school activities are found to exhibit challenging behaviour including anti-social and off-task behaviour (Fekadu, Negassa & Tegegne, 2019)).

Apart from students teachers' attitudes towards teaching are also important, this is because the role of the teacher as facilitator of learning and the contributions to students' academic performance is enormous. For example, the classroom teacher is the one that is saddled with the responsibility of translating the learner's thought into action. In other words, teachers' experiences and behaviours towards the teaching-learning process in the classroom contribute greatly to students' attitudes towards their teachers, the subject being taught and the school at large. This in turn will affect the students' academic success. Evans; Gibson cited in Fekadu, Negassa and Tegegne (2019) were of the opinion that students taught by more experienced teachers tend to have favourable attitude towards the school, school and perform at a higher level because their teachers have mastered the content and acquired classroom management skills to deal with different types of classroom problems.

Evidence shows had suggested that how a student performs in school is influenced by his concept of self. By self, we generally mean the conscious reflection of one's own being or identity, as an object separate from others or the environment. There are a variety of ways to think about the self. Two of the most widely used terms are self-concept and self-esteem. Self-concept is the cognitive or thinking aspect of self (related to one's self-image) and generally refers to the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her existence.

According to Abubakar in Li and Qui (2018), there is a great deal of research that shows that self-concept is, perhaps, the basis for all motivated behaviour. It is the self-concept that gives rise to possible selves, and it is possible selves that create the motivation for behaviour. Self-concept and academic performance are dynamically interactive and reciprocal, each is mutually reinforcing to the extent that a positive (or negative) change in one facilitates a commensurate change in the other and academic self-concept is more highly correlated with academic performance than general self-concept. Students with high self-concept tend to approach school related tasks with confidence and success of those tasks reinforces this confidence. The opposite pattern is likely to occur for children

with low academic self-concept. A positive self-concept is valued as a desirable outcome in many disciplines of psychology as well as an important mediator to other outcomes. According to the research and a comprehensive meta-analysis conducted by (Maghra, Galadima & Rufus, 2019), self-concept has a direct and indirect effect on subsequent academic performance. Not only is self-concept an important outcome lent support to this when he found that low self-concept affects academic success in a study of some psychological correlates of academic success and failure.

Academic success is the amount of knowledge derived from learning. The children gain knowledge by instructions received at school and are organized around a set of core activities in which a teacher assigns tasks to students and evaluates and compares the quality of their work. The school provides a wide variety of achievement experiences than does the family. The concept of academic performance has several references. It usually denotes activity and mastery, making an impact on the environment and competing against some standard of excellence. A child with poor academic performance is one whose actual success, as indicated by his scholastic performance in school, does not measure up to his potential performance as indicated by his abilities. Mwariri, Marete and Mwenda (2017), also defined students with good academic performance as those whose school academic success is above expectations formed based on their activities. Academic performance is based on the number of factors, such as children's attitudes, interests, personality characteristics and social class in addition to learning. Therefore, the main thrust of the study is to examine relationship between parental socioeconomic status, students' attitude to school, self-concept and academic performance among senior secondary school students in Sokoto Metropolis.

The theoretical framework that guided this study is Operant Conditioning Theory (E.L. Thorndike, 1874-1948) was the first American psychologist in stimulus response theories who conducted a series of experiments on learning with animals. His experiments involved the use of cats, dogs, and chickens. He devised experiments in which an animal was placed in a cage from which it could escape to reach food. The food was visible but not accessible from the cage and the hungry animal soon began to seek a lure. Only pulling a cord hanging within reach outside the cage could open the door of the cage. In an attempt to reach the food, the animal clawed, banged and prowled around the cage, occasionally touching the release cord. In this trial and error fashion, some animals hit on the solution to their problems. Successive attempts by the same successful animals took shorter periods by cutting out the useless activities. From his experiments, Thorndike (1911) derived three laws and five principles. He holds the view that we stamp in effective stimulus-response (S-R) connections and stamps out those responses that are useless. He formulated several laws of learning and classified them as either primary or secondary. His primary laws he expressed by the terms readiness, exercise, and effect. He identified five secondary principles, namely multiple response, mental set, partial activity, response by analogue or assimilation, and associative shifting. According to Mukherjee in Onwukwe, Anyanwu and Agommuoh (2017), the law of effect was the most important of Thorndike's laws of learning. This implies that only those responses of the organism followed by reward and satisfaction would be learnt. Also those unsuccessful responses followed by punishment and annoyance would be eliminated from the behaviour repertoire of the organism.

Some empirical studies related study were reviewed like the study conducted by Bakori in Onyanacha, Njoroge and Newton (2015), the relationship between secondary school

students' attitudes to academic subjects, locus of control and their Academic Achievement in Sokoto State. He infers that there is a significant relationship between attitude to school and academic performance. Also Tambawal cited in Ovansa (2017), on locus of control and attitude to school as correlates of academic performance of secondary school students' of Sokoto State based on finding agreed that attitude, is a determinant in learning achievement. However, Ovansa (2017) identify other related significant factors such as teacher related factors and parents' attitude towards school.

Stakeholders in childrens' education such as parents, teachers, government, and non-government agencies are disturbed about the mass failure of students, especially in WAEC and NECO examinations. Some parents and even school authorities to win the battle against students' mass failure in external examination, are engaging in examinations malpractices just to make sure their children/students passed the external examination.

The situation is worst in most government schools to such an extent that, answers to question are written for students or sent to their handset to copy inside their answer booklets to pass the external examination. In private schools, questions will be answered on a sheet of paper and photocopies would be made for each student to copy. These trends have been happening for decades without adequate moves or intervention to stop it either from the government or private authorities. The end product of these examination malpractices is that student would graduate from secondary school with all the required number of subjects but they would not be able to defend their qualification. Despite the prevalence of examination malpractices in most the senior secondary schools today, students' performance in both WAEC and NECO is still poor. In the year 2018, out of the 1,579,172 candidates that wrote the examinations, only 197,459 got the mandatory 5 credits and above, including English and Mathematics. This implies that only 21% of the students who sat for the examination passed while 79% failed. Likewise, the WAEC result released in the year 2019 indicated that only 356,981 (25.99%) out of 1,373,090 candidates obtained five credits, including English and Mathematics. Labelling of students based on their school academic performance as successful or failure tends to suggest that intelligence and hardworking are not the sole basis for predicting good academic performance as revealed by some studies. This means that there are many variables influencing students' academic performance.

Furthermore, few of the earlier studies have taken a thorough approach to examine many other variables that affect students' academic performance in their studies. Moreover, if this poor student's academic success is not stopped or ameliorated, it would have an adverse consequence on national development. Therefore, to close the gap created because of poor students' academic success in their studies, the present study examined the relationship between socio-economic status and academic success among senior secondary school students in Sokoto Metropolis.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the research are:

- i. To find out if there is any relationship between socio-economic status and academic Success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

- ii. To find out if there is any relationship between attitude to school and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.
- iii. To find out if there is any relationship among socio-economic status and attitude to school is more-related to academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

### **Research Hypotheses**

In order to find the relationship between the variables involved in the research, the following null hypotheses were formulated

- Ho<sub>1</sub>. There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis
- Ho<sub>2</sub>. There is no significant relationship between attitude to school and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>. There is no significant relationship among socio-economic status and attitude to school is more-related to academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This descriptive survey involves direct contact with a population or sample that has characteristics, personality among other, which is relevant to a specific investigation. Descriptive survey method enables the researcher to obtain the view of the representative sample of the target population as to be able to infer the perception of the entire population. The population of the study comprises all the senior secondary school students SS II in Sokoto Metropolis, Sokoto State, as of January 2022, there were 32 Public Secondary Schools in Sokoto Metropolis Sokoto State Nigeria, with total population 9,648 of SS II students in Sokoto Metropolis. Data collected from Sokoto State Ministry of Education, Sokoto (January, 2022) revealed that the Sokoto Metropolis has a total 32 public Secondary Schools of this population, 7 public secondary schools were randomly selected. For these reasons a representative sample was selected using Research Advisor's (2006) table for sample size determination, 306 respondents were selected purposively out of 9,648 senior secondary school SS II students from 7 selected secondary schools to represent the entire population.

The researcher used all the senior secondary students SS II in the selected secondary schools in order to represent the whole population and the opinion of the respondents were reflects the feelings of the entire population. Schools and students therein were purposively selected because of the qualities that satisfied the interest of the researcher such as mixed schools (boys and girls), girls only, boys only, day and boarding schools. The reason of adopting purposive sampling techniques in the selection is that, both male and female students were involve because they are the target of the researcher. It also involves identifying and selecting individual or group of individuals that are essentially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest as well as willingness to participate and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner. A total of 306 secondary school students SS II were randomly selected in ballot form using yes or no.

The instrument for data collection was an adopted questionnaire by Bala, (2011); titled Socio-Economic Status, Attitude to school and Academic Success Inventory (SESASI). The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by two educational professors from the Department of Educational Foundations in the field of sociology, measurement and evaluation. They pointed out corrections, and the researchers used these in adjusting and instrument accordingly. The reliability and interval consistency of the tests were established through test-re-test method was employed on 40 students from public secondary school in another Local Government Area of Sokoto State that are not part of the study area. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used, and it yielded a value of 0.82. A modified Likert scale response pattern was used to obtain respondents' attitudes toward the content of each item in the questionnaire. The responses were given the following:

Strongly Agree = 4; Agree = 3; Disagree = 2; and Strongly Disagree = 1

Questionnaires were administered to the respondents with help of two trained research assistances who had the purposes of the study and the content of the questionnaire explained to them. The data was further collected, collated, scored and three research hypotheses one and two were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to find relationship between socio-economic status and academic success among senior secondary school students, also to find relationship between attitude to school and academic success among secondary school students inn Sokoto Metropolis, while hypothesis three were analysed used regression analysis to find relationship among three variable that's socio-economic status, attitude to school and academic success among using analysis Statistical tools at 0.05 significance level.

## Findings

### Hypotheses Testing

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto Metropolis

**Table 1: Relationship between socio-economic status and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto Metropolis**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	p-value	Decision
Socio-economic Status	346	13.4	1.1	-.46	.00	Ho Rejected
Academic Success	346	22.5	6.4			

Sources: SPSS 21.0 version

From the result of table 1, students' socio-economic status recorded a mean of 13.41 (SD=1.14) and students' academic performance recorded a mean of 22.56 (SD= 6.44) at Pearson's r (315) =-.469, p= .000. This indicates a negative and significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of senior secondary school students because of the p-value < .05 level of significance. Although negatively related, therefore, Hoi which states that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis was rejected. This implies that socio-economic status is negatively related to academic performance of students.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Attitude to school and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto Metropolis

**Table 2: Relationship between Attitude to school and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto Metropolis**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	p-value	Decision
Socio-economic Status	346	3.7	.42	.416	.000	Ho Rejected
Academic Success	346	22.5	6.4			

Sources: SPSS 21.0 version

From the result of table 3, students' attitudes to school recorded a mean of 3.78 (SD=.428) and students' academic performance recorded a mean of 22.56 (SD= 6.44) at Pearson's  $r(317) = .416, p = .000$ . This indicates a significant relationship between attitude to school and academic performance among senior secondary school students because of the  $p$ -value  $< .05$  level of significance. Although positively related, therefore, H<sub>02</sub> which states that there is no significant relationship between attitude to school and academic performance among senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis was rejected. This implies that attitude to school is related to academic performance of students.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: Socio-economic status and attitude to school are not better predictor of academic success of senior secondary school student in Sokoto Metropolis.

**Table 3: Regression Analysis on Students' Academic Success**

Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	SE	F	B	T	P.value
SES	.033	.001	-.003	.137	.298	.345	2.51	.676
ATS	.003	.000	-.004	.079	.002	.010	.123	.902

Dependant Variable: Academic Success

A look at the squared part correlations revealed that Socio-economic status accounted for 0.3% of the variance in academic success  $R^2_{adj} = -.003, F(1, 344) = .298, p > .05$  and attitude to school accounted for 0.003% of the variance in academic success  $R^2_{adj} = -.004, F(2, 344) = .002, p > .05$ . Thus, the significant results of the procedure indicated that the predictor variables were able to account for a significant amount of variance in the dependent variable. Although socio-economic and attitude to school were explanatory variables of academic success, analysis of regression coefficients indicated that attitude to school,  $-.004, t = .902, p < .05$  emerged as the significant predictor when all variables were in the model. This indicated that attitude to school is better related to students' academic success than socio-economic. Thus, it was concluded that attitude to school was more related to academic success than socioeconomic.

## Discussion

Hypothesis one stated that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. The finding of this hypothesis revealed that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic success. This finding is following the study of Osei-Owusu, Ampofo, Akyina, Ampomah and Osei-Owusu (2018), they think that parents have a profound influence on whether a home provides intellectual stimulation, physical



and psychological safety, an appropriate degree of structure and supportive relationships. Children with more opportunities at home to build academic skills tend to be better. The argument was that students with higher socio-economic status possess materials that aid their academic success more than students with lower socio-economic status.

Hypothesis two stated there is no significant relationship between attitude to school and academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. The finding of this hypothesis revealed that there was a significant relationship between attitude to school and academic success of students. This finding concurs with the study of Pant (2020), who infers that there is a significant relationship between attitude to school and academic success. This is consistent with the findings of Tambawal in Ovansa (2017), who agreed that attitude, is a determinant of learning achievement. However, Ovansa (2017) identify other related significant factors such as teacher related factors' and parents attitude towards school. Ovansa (2017) notes that attitude is a basis for motivation in academic achievements. Therefore, a desirable attitude which enhances students' academic success should be reinforced by teachers in the classroom and parents at home.

Hypothesis three stated that socio-economic status and attitude to school are not a better predictor of academic success of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis. The result of multiple regression analysis of socio-economic status and attitude to school shows that attitude to school has a beta value than socio-economic status. This indicated that attitude to school is better related to students' academic success than socio-economic status. This supported the findings of Abubakar, Mustapha and Abdullahi in Qasem (2018) which showed that student's self-concept was a better predictor of academic performance. This finding did not agree with that of Miftahu and Melaiye (2021), who reported that socioeconomic status of parents influence the academic performance of their children in senior secondary schools.

Because of the above findings, it is recommended among other things that Parents and teachers need to encourage students on how to improve their intrapersonal and interpersonal relationship in school regardless of their parental socio-economic status as this could improve their academic performance. Students should be encouraged by teachers and sociologist to develop a healthy attitude to school and school activities through motivation, as this can enhance students' academic performance. Also, teachers should assist students to gain self-awareness which can enhance their ability academically and affective components of learning should also be incorporated into school curriculum by curriculum developers since it is indicated from the research finding that attitude to school is related to academic success.

## **Conclusion**

From the findings of this study, it was concluded that socio-economic status was negatively related to students' academic success, attitude to school was significantly related to student academic success while attitude to school was more related to academic success than socio-economic status of senior secondary school students in Sokoto metropolis.

## **Recommendations**

- i. There is need for counsellors to interact with students about the academic success in which has attributed to their socio-economic status.
- ii. Secondary school teachers should advice students about their attitude to school in order to improve for better academic success.
- iii. Students should be encouraged to design better attitude to school in order to have better academic success since attitude to school is a better predictor of academic success than socio-economic status.

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