



## Socio-economic factors affecting student's academic learning in tertiary institution (A Case Study of Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aliero)

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### Abstract

This study focused on the Socio-economic Factors Affecting Student Academic Learning in Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aliero. It aimed at finding out the socio-economic factors and the impact these factors have on learning. The design adopted is a descriptive survey. The population of the study comprises of 700 students from four faculties (Education, physical sciences, Engineering and Agriculture) using purposive sampling four (4) Departments were drawn (Science Education, computer Science, Animal Science and Civil Engineering). Thus, using solvers formula a sample size of 474 students was drawn. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire which was validated by experts from the four departments of Animal Science, Computer, Civil Engineering, and Educational Foundation KSUSTA. The reliability with an index of 0.70 was arrived at after the conduct of a test – re-test. Data was collected through personal administration of the instrument by the researchers to the respondents. It was found out that socio-economic factors impact on students' academic learning. It was recommended that presents should provide sustainable funding capacities so as to boast students learning.

**Keywords:** socio-economic factors, students, academic learning

### Introduction

The link between socio-economic and educational background of parents and children's educational process had been highlighted by number of studies in looking at the interaction between the children in particular and the household income and socio-economic status. All the studies agreed that children's enrolment, retention and completion can seriously be affected by the low socio-economic status and low educational level of the parents which resulted to poverty. (UNICEF, 2005; Cardoso & Varner, 2007; and Wang 2010) [24, 25].

Wang (2010) [25] also mentioned poverty as a contributing factor of children's dropout in rural areas of China. Children from better off households are more likely to remain in school, whilst those who are poorer are more likely never to have attended, or to drop out once they have enrolled. For example, a research conducted in rural China by Glewwe (2010) [14] saw poor and credit constrained children three times more likely than other children to drop out of school.

Poverty could be regarded as the most common primary and contributory reason for many children to be out of school. Glewwe (2010) [14] call poverty as a plausible explanation of school disruption. According to Dachi and Garrett (2003) [8] a series of questions were asked to parents and guardians about the financial circumstances surrounding children's school enrolment in Tanzania their answers was no more than financial problem militating against sending their children to school.

In African traditional societies including the study area, several studies indicated that the children's schooling has been found to have links with socio-economic factors. According to Barrera-Osorio *et al.*, (2008) [3] the most important of these factors include direct and opportunity

costs of schooling, limited employment opportunities, socio-economic status, parental and family investment behaviour, the economic value of girls, rural and urban residence, and the level of parental education. The major reasons parents offer for not educating their children or for removing those from the school are no more than the fees for registration and admission, examination, the cost of books and uniforms, the provision of other daily monetary demands to their children, and the cost of transportation to and fro school on daily basis. In determining access to education by children, household income is found to be an important factor; this is because there are many costs associated with schooling and educational process ranging from school fees, and the opportunity costs of sending a child to school. Household income is linked to a range of factors: when children start school, how often they attend, whether they have to temporarily withdraw and also when and if they drop out (Barrera-Osorio *et al.*, 2008; Glewwe 2010) [3, 14].

Abucay (2009) asserts that the student's difficulty in learning may be due to different factors including the following: intellectual factors (special intellectual disabilities), learning factors (lack of mastery of what has been taught, limited background of a certain topic or issue and faulty methods of work and study), physical factors (health, visual and physical defects, nutrition and physical development), emotional and social factors (kind of student-teacher relationships in the classroom, the social interaction of relationships among pupils, the relationships among members of the school staff, the physical characteristic of a classroom, social readiness, cooperation versus competition and students' attitudes towards teachers), mental factors (attitude), environmental factors (classrooms, textbooks, equipment, school supplied and other instructional

materials), teacher's personality (the vital tasks of the teacher should have the power to lead and to inspire students through the influence of his personality and example) and socioeconomic factor (the social and economic experiences and challenges) Schieman, S. (2005) [22].

### Statement of the Problem

It is envisaged that the findings of this study may expose some socioeconomic factors that might be responsible for student's learning performance. The identified areas where government at different levels could come in will be brought into focus in order to bridge the gap of educational attainment of children of low and high income earners in the society. The importance of achieving the objectives of education programmed among the general populace cannot be over emphasized. It is in view of this challenges that the researchers put forward to carry out this research on the, "Socio-economic Factors Affecting Students Learning in Tertiary Institutions.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are;

1. To find out the socioeconomic factors affecting students in academic learning in Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aliero, Kebbi State.
2. To find out the impact of socio-economic factors on students' academic learning in Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aliero, Kebbi State.

### Research Questions

In order to accomplish the objectives of the study, the following research questions were put forward to guide the investigation:

1. What are the socioeconomic factors affecting students' academic learning in Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aliero, Kebbi State.?
2. How do socio-economic factors impact on students' academic learning in Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aliero, Kebbi State.?

### Research Hypotheses

The alternative hypotheses were formulated to facilitate the analysis of data and the findings:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is significant impact of socioeconomic factors on students' academic learning in Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aliero, Kebbi State.

### Review of Related Literature

A study which deals with problems or factors, or causes and effects of socioeconomic factors affecting student's academic learning in tertiary institution entails a lot of challenges due to the level or background of parent and students. In Nigeria today, parents are the key to the education of their children irrespective of their status. Whether their parents are of upper class socioeconomic status or middle class, low class or poor to success of a child in learning depends on the parent's background.

### Theoretical Framework

Conflict theory sees the purpose of education as maintaining social inequality and preserving the power of those who dominate society. Thomas and Stockton (2003) [23]. Conflict theorists see the educational system as perpetuating the

status quo by dulling the lower classes into being obedient workers. The theory agreed that the educational system practices sorting, and argue that schools sort along distinct class and ethnic lines. According to the theory, schools train those in the working classes to accept their position as a lower-class member of society. Conflict theorists call this role of education the "hidden curriculum."

### Socio-Economic Factors and Students Academic Learning in Tertiary Institutions

It was observed that lots of researches have been conducted on factors that affect academic performance which include socio-economic factors (Muhammed and Akanle 2008) [2], (Bayat, Louw, and Rena 2014) [1] and (Olayiwola, Oyenuga, Oyekunle, Ayansola and Agboluaje 2011) [17]. Among other factors, the effect of socio-economic factors on students' academic performance has really gained prominence. Socio-economic status has been expressed from different perspectives in the literature since there is no accepted conceptual meaning for it (Bornstein and Bradley 2003) [18]. From a social point of view, Tomul, and Polat (2013) [10], described socio-economic status as a high quality work force, equal opportunity, social development of civil awareness and community attainment. Also, economically, it is seen as innovation and the ability to increase the country's economic power.

Tomul and Savasci (2012) [9] stated that socio-economic status of a student can be described as a factor that could determine the secondary school a student can attend, influence the chances of being accepted in the University and the potential income earning in life. In order to analyse and create proper awareness on the effect of some socio-economic factors on students' academic performance a lot has been presented in the literature.

### Impact of Socio-economic Factors on Students Academic Learning

Thomas and Stockton (2003) [23] discuss the impact of socio-economic factor, ethnic and gender on student achievement. The authors argue that since Coleman's (1996) assertion of the significant influence of student background on school activities, socio-economic status is seen as a strong predictor of student achievement. Payne and Biddle (1999 as cited in Thomas and Stockton 2003) [23] commented in their study of data obtained from the Second International Mathematics Study (SIMS) poverty interfaces with other factors like ethnic and ethnicity as a strong predictor of educational attainment. Harkreader and Weathersby (1998) [15] found the influence of ethnic and ethnicity to be a less than economic factors.

Zahyah, (2008) [26], concluded that parent socioeconomic factors are related to adolescents' academic achievement his study was based on the rural area. He said that it is not so much of the geographical settings but more of the parents' economic status. The educational level and reading materials in the home to a certain extent do influence children's school performance. He further state that poor performance in school does not fully depend on location but more so on parents' socioeconomic status. The presence of reading materials in the home is found to be moderately associated with adolescents in purchasing the appropriate reading materials based on their own academic ability compared to parents with lower educational background. Also, Okioaga (2013) [17] reported the impact of Students'

socio-economic background on academic performance in Universities, using a case study of Students in Kisii University College. A proportional sampling method which targeted both male and female students of Kisii University College was used. It was reported that students' inability to afford good residential rooms, catering facilities and recreational facilities was based on their socio-economic status and this had adverse effects on their academic performance

According to the PISA study, the economic status of a student's family has an impact on academic success. The results of the PISA study show that this relationship is positive, although complicated. It can be said that those students with families who are financially in a good conditions are more successful compared to those who are not. The students with more affluent families obtain better grades compared to those with poorer families. (Blanden & Gregg, 2004) <sup>[4]</sup>.

However studies have habitually shown that socio-economic standing influences student results (Majoribanks 1996; Jeynes 2002; Eamon 2005). Students who have a low socio-economic standing attain less test grades and tend to be more prone to withdrawing from school. Low socio-economic standing students have been found to achieve grades about 10% lower on national assessment programmes than higher socio-economic standing learners

### **The Relationship between Social Factors and Students Learning**

A study carried out in Kenya by Nzyima, (2011), indicate that parental inputs such as coming to school to discuss the education progress of their children, interests in the education were some of the inputs considered as parental involvement. She further states that parental background influenced their involvement in the education of the children. For example parental level of education was a determinant of their involvement in their children's education. The parental level of education influenced their involvement in their children's education. Parents who were involved in their children's education encouraged them to work hard, supported and supervised their children's education.

Like economic factors, social factors are also extremely important to be influenced and met accordingly (Edward 2000) <sup>[11]</sup>. Social factors are like behavioural factors which have a real dominance on one's life. Family and school are considered as the two main social environments in which a child grows, so there is a harmony between the learner and his/her environment. The individual's socio-psychological perspective is determined by these two social environmental factors which cannot be overlooked. The social aspects of language acquisition culminate in the differences in language development and use among the learners from different social classes.

### **Influence of Socio-economic Status on Students' Learning Performance**

Socio-economic status is a critical issue in many African communities where illiteracy and poverty levels are high, thus limiting parental involvement in homework (Ogoye, 2007) <sup>[20]</sup>. In some cases learning and reference materials have to be shared among students, and not all parents are able to provide personal subject-specific text copies. More important is the fact that some parents expect their children

to help them after school hours, during the time the children are expected to undertake their homework assignments. Family income is one of the important factors that determine to some extent the duration that the child participates in education. Crosnoe *et al.*, (2002) <sup>[6]</sup> state that children from families who lack financial sources are less likely to graduate from high school or continue to university

High poverty levels lead to crowded homes where distractions and little opportunity for concentration are the norm. The net effect of distractions and lack of concentration is that Home Work is not guided, poorly done, incomplete or never done at all, and therefore precipitates conflicts at school and at home. "Parents of different occupation classes often have different styles of child rearing, 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. (Rothstein, 2004) <sup>[21]</sup>.

### **Research Methodology**

The research design for this study is a descriptive survey with the aid of adopting questionnaire in order to obtain information from respondents on existing conditions as regard to the challenges under study. This design is selected because it deals with the data that are essentially quantitative. It is designed to investigate the socio-economic factors affecting student's academic learning in tertiary institution. The population for this study consists of four departments from four Faculties (Department of Science Education (Faculty of Education) with a total number 166 of students from UG II to UG IV, Department of Computer (Faculty of Physical Science) with a total number 192 of students, Department of Animal Science (Faculty of Agriculture) with a total number of 256 students, and Department of Civil Engineering (Faculty Engineering) with a total number of 86 students and overall total population of seven hundred 700 students.

The total sample size of this study is 474 students taking from the population of the study using Slovene's formula (1960). Purposive random sampling was used to select the four departments from four Faculties. Simple random sampling was also used to draw out the sample size of the students. This is to enable each student to represents his/her department and the level he/she belongs.

The instrument (questionnaire) is in form of 'Yes and No' options formulated to aid the researcher. This research instrument composed of two parts (A & B). Part A: is to collect background information of the respondents that is to help identify and categorize them with their level of responses. Part B: examined the statements or questions raised to be answered. The instrument was self-designed. It was validated by expert in the four Departments with much of the suggestion incorporated in the final draft. The reliability index of 0.70 was arrived at using test retest. Data was collected after personal administration of the questionnaire.

### **Results**

The data collected was treated in line with items in the questionnaire to address the research question. 117 questionnaires were distributed in the Department of Science Education (SE) in which they were collected

successfully for the interpretation, 130 in the Department of Computer (COMP) all were retrieved for analysis, 156 in the Department of Animal Science (AS) and no questionnaire were found missing, and also 71 in the Department of Civil Engineering (CE) with no one found

missing or damaged, therefore the total filled questionnaires that were successfully collected from the four Departments of the four Faculties of the University is 474 which were used for the analysis.

**Table 1: Socioeconomic Factors Affecting Students in Academic Learning**

S/No	Variable	Department (Freq. / %)																Total Response				Mean Score	
		SE				COMP				AS				CE									
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	No
1	Parents sponsor education	92	79	25	21	108	83	22	17	120	77	36	23	55	78	16	22	375	317	99	83	93.75	24.75
2	Parents Socio-economic status facilitate learning	82	70	35	30	90	69	40	31	112	72	44	28	49	69	22	31	333	280	141	120	83.25	35.25
3	Contentment with governments contribution towards Education	23	20	94	80	22	17	108	83	20	13	136	87	12	17	59	83	77	67	397	333	19.25	99.25
4	Schooling contributes to student socio-economic standing	113	97	4	3	128	98	2	2	153	98	3	2	71	100	0	0	465	393	9	7	116.25	2.25

**KEY:**

**SE:** Science Education Department

**COMP:** Computer Science Department

**AS:** Animal Science Department

**CE:** Civil Engineering Department

The independent variables on table 1 are four constructs that define Socio-economic Factors. Variable 1 indicates that out of 117 respondents from Science Education, 92 respondents (79%) agreed that, their parents sponsor their education, while 25 respondents (21%) said parent do not. Out of 130 respondents from Computer, 108 respondents (83%) said that, their parents sponsored their education, while 22 respondents (17%) said that, they do not. Out of 156 respondents from Animals Science, 120 respondents (77%) said that, their parents sponsored their education, while 36 respondents (23%) said they do not. Out of 71 from Civil Engineering, 55 respondents (76%) said that, their parents sponsored their education, while 16 respondents (23%) also said they do not. This implies that, out of 474 total respondents from the four (4) Departments, 375 respondents with total mean score ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 93.75 agreed that, their parents sponsored their education are the majority. Variable 2, indicates that out of 117 respondents from Science Education, 82 respondents (70%) agreed that, their parent's economic status is a contributing factors in their education, while 35 respondents (30%) they do not agree. Out of 130 respondents from Computer, 90 respondents (69%) say that, they are contended with the contribution of their parents towards their education, while 40 respondents (31%) said that, they are not. Out of 156 respondents from Animals Science, 112 respondents (72%) said that, they are contended with the contribution of their parents towards their education, while 44 respondents (28%) said that, they are not. Out of 71 from Civil Engineering, 49 respondents (69%) said that, they are contended with the contribution of their parents towards their education, while 22 respondents (31%) also said they are not. This implies that, out of 474 respondents from the four (4) Departments, 333 respondents have highest responses with total mean score ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 83.25 agreed that their parents economic status is a contributing factor towards their education.

Variable 3 indicates that out of 117 respondents from Science Education, 23 respondents (20%) said they have contentment with the contribution of government regarding their education, while 94 respondents (80%) said they are not. Out of 130 respondents from Computer, 22 respondents (17%) said they have contentment with the contribution of government regarding their education, while 108 respondents (83%) said they are not.

Out of 156 respondents from Animals Science, 20 respondents (13%) says they have contentment with the contribution of government regarding their education, while 136 respondents (87%) said they not. Out of 71 from Civil Engineering, 12 respondents (17%) said they have contentment with the contribution of government regarding their education, while 59 respondents (83%) also said they are not. This implies that, out of total 474 respondents from the four (4) Departments, 397 respondents with mean score ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 99.25 has highest respondents that said they have no contentment with the contribution of government towards their education.

Variable 4 indicates that out of 117 respondents from Science Education, 113 respondents (97%) said that, schooling contributes to student socioeconomic standing; while 4 respondents (3%) said it do not. Out of 130 respondents from Computer, 128 respondents (98%) said thatschooling contributes to student socioeconomic standing; while 2 respondents (2%) said it do not. Out of 156 respondents from Animals Science, 153 respondents (98%) saidschooling contributes to student socioeconomic standing; while 3 respondents (2%) said it do not. Out of 71 from Civil Engineering, all the respondents' saidschooling contributes to student socioeconomic standing. This implies that, out of 474 total respondents, 465 respondents with mean score ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 116.25 has majority of responses that agreed schooling contributes to student socioeconomic standing

**Table 2: Impact of Socio-Economic Factors on Learning**

S/No	variable	Department (Freq. / %)																Total Response				Mean Score	
		SE				COMP				AS				CE									
		Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	%	No	%	Yes	No
1	Financial challenges affect learning	73	62	44	38	102	78	28	22	138	88	18	12	68	96	3	4	381	324	93	76	95.25	23.25
2	Students contentment with parents financial	57	49	60	51	71	55	59	45	80	51	76	49	22	31	49	69	230	186	244	214	57.5	61



Gregg (2004) <sup>[4]</sup> studies that point out family income has an effect on children's educational gains. The per capita expenditure in the family is an indicator of the continuous income of the family. The amount of per capita expenditure has a positive effect on school achievement. For this reason, the increases in the continuous income of the family facilitate the increase in literacy and rise of school achievement in both boys and girls at all stages of education. According to the study conducted by PISA stated that, the economic status of a student's family has an impact on academic success. The results of the PISA study show that this relationship is positive, although complicated. It can be said that those students with families who are financially in a good conditions are more successful compared to those who are not. The students with more affluent families obtain better grades compared to those with poorer families. (Blanden & Gregg, 2004) <sup>[4]</sup>.

The information presented in variable 3 indicates that, out of 474 respondents from the four (4) Departments, 393 respondents with mean score ( $\bar{x}$ ) of 98.25 agree that, poor socioeconomic background affect student in academic learning has the highest responses. This shows that student academic learning is affected by their poor socioeconomic background. Looking at the study conducted by Lee and Madyun (2009) <sup>[16]</sup>. Reported that socio-economic status is correlated with a students' cognitive ability and achievements (determined in this case by IQ scores) since children coming from families who have a high socio-economic status tend to socialise their children in a way that betters their performance in IQ tests which also informs the way they perform academically. Also Rothman (2003) suggests that children from low socioeconomic conditioned families do not have a study environment in their homes to have a positive influence on their academic achievement at school. According to Eskicumalı (2000) <sup>[12]</sup>, the reason for failure among lower-class students with low school success rates is the absence of cultural background and lack of friends from the high-class.

### Conclusions

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that; socio-economic factors could be traced to many quarters; the government, school authorities, teachers, parents and the society as a whole. As it shown in table 1: on variable 1, the finding shows that, students are sponsored by their parents in their education are the majority. This concluded that parent socioeconomic status is a factor on student education. From the information presented in table 1, Variable 3 indicates that majority of the respondents said they have no contentment with the contribution of government towards their education. This is also became a factor on students education.

The researcher also made a conclusion on the finding on table 2 variable 3 indicates that, socio-economic factors have impact on student's academic learning since poor socio-economic background affect student in learning and socio-economic has influence on student academic learning.

### Recommendations

1 Parents should make efforts towards the education of their child by given advice, financial support and nurturing their children, Parents should make more effort by showing concern about the career of their children in learning, and students should be enlightened about their educational

career irrespective of their parent's economic condition.

2 Government should provide the basic needs of school and student for effective learning; it should make more effort by paying school fees, given proper allowance and sponsorship allowance for students to further their studies

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