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## **Home Variables And Academic Performance In Mathematics Among Public Senior Secondary Schools Students 1 In Ikwerre Localgovernment Area Of Rivers State.**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigated home variables and academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. Three hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted all the students in public senior secondary school 1 in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State totalling 2,300. Stratified random sampling technique was used for the study. Fluid survey online calculator was used to select 247 students for the study. Students' Academic Performance Test in Mathematics (SAPTM) was used to collect data. Experts validated the instrument. The instrument was subjected to Crombech Alpha method which yielded the reliability index of 0.70. The researcher administered the instrument to the respondents with the help of two research assistants. Independent sample t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that parents' socioeconomic status, parents' educational level, and family size does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that; parents who are not educated should ask their children about their homework, and assignments. Parents should also control the size of their family so that they would be able to give their children adequate education for a brighter future ahead of them.

**Key words:** Home Variables, Academic Performance, Mathematics, Public Secondary School Students.

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### **Introduction**

Secondary education is the highest learning level that prepares one for university or vocational training. In this regard, education at secondary level is critical in strengthening economic growth within the framework of global perspective as key component of human quality that is essential for generating high incomes and socio-economic development. Education is characterized as an essential ingredient in poverty eradication, and it is through education that skills, knowledge and values are transmitted across generations of a country with the aim of insuring social, economic, political continuity and advancement in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

A home is a place where one lives permanently, especially as a member of a family or household. It is a place of residence or refuge. A home is not a mere transient shelter. Its essence lies in the personalities of the people who live in it. Home variables have been of great importance in shaping the performance of students in schools across board. Academic performance is usually as a result of motivation that student get from the people they interact with in their initial stages of life. A study conducted in the United States of America (U.S.A) by Rouse and Barrow (2022) showed that years of schooling completed and educational achievement of students, varied widely by family backgrounds. They found out that students who came from less disadvantaged families had higher average test scores and were more likely to have never been held back a grade as compared to students from the more disadvantaged families. However they highlighted that it was not clear to reflect the causal effect of home variables on the student's educational performance which creates a gap that study sought to fill by finding out the influence of home variables on students' academic performance.

Jeynes (2022) posited that socioeconomic status of a student is usually determined by parental occupational status and income level, and the environment in which the student is brought up. It is also affected by parents' involvement in learning activities and effective parent- teacher relationship. It is cleared that low economic status negatively and depressingly affects students' performance due to high additional stress and tension at home. Suresh (2022) in his study on the impact of parents socioeconomic status on parental involvement at home for high achievement Indian students of Tamil school in Malaysia, showed that students from parents with high socioeconomic status performs high in school. Saifi and Mahmood (2021) postulated that socioeconomic status has been shown to override other educational relationships such as parental involvement in their children's schooling.

Socio-economic status refers to the economic fortunes in terms of income, wealth, social status etc., to which a family is disposed. It indicates how well-to-do and capable a family is, in providing for the educational needs and academic performance of their children and words (means individual belief that one is cared for, loved, esteemed, valued, education, financial status and belong to a network of communication and mutual obligation in the family. It is the assistance and socioeconomic relationship that exists between members of a family, socioeconomic support network refers to the structural or instructional dimension connected with an individual. Example of network are the neighborhood, religious organization, the health, finance and the school system.

Socioeconomic status is found in the personal dimension and constituted by members of this social network who are actually important to the families. Socioeconomic status is of relationship that links up different individuals with social and economic bonds (Uka, 2020). Trusty (2020) explained in his work on the role of

socioeconomic relations in “health promotion” that lack of socioeconomic relationship among family members are related to mortality rate and because of its psychological effects on the children while their academic lives are hampered.

Zajonc (2012) opined that social support and other factors with family system such as socio-economic of parents, religion and intellectual ability of family members if it is at low grade affects children’s academic negatively. Students who are from good socio-economic, background are always provide with good study materials such as books, instructional material, funds, toys, conducive environment, and other resources that will always aid them in the teaching and learning process. The author accelerate their attendance to school and make them have good social and psychological balance in the school and positive academic achievement becomes a sure process. The researcher believed that Ikwerre Local Government Area children from high socio-economic status family may perform better at school, hence, their parents should be able to supply them with more opportunities to learn those things which will aid learning in school. Their parents provide them with appropriate learning experience, having gone to school themselves. High socio-economic status families are becoming smaller in size, so parents have more time with their children. This can help to develop their language faster. High socio-economic status parents have symbolic aspiration regarding schooling for their children

High socioeconomic status, middle socioeconomic status and low socioeconomic status determines the obligation of training a child by the parents, this is harmoniously with the regular attestation sociologist that education can be an instrument of social change which is being taught from home is important in this discussion. It is not strange to envision that parental socioeconomic foundation can positively or negatively affect the academic performance of children in school. Socioeconomic status of parents do not only affect the academic performance, but also makes it possible for children from low background to compete favorably with their counterparts from high socioeconomic status under the same academic environment, education is a tool of development, it widens minds, recognizes good and bad, makes us to segregate well from terrible and uses out environment to the best of our ability for the enhancement of a person (Agu,2021).

Asikhia (2020) noted that there is a direct relationship between parental financial and human capital and the successful learning experience of their children. However, he explained that while both of these factors are important predictors of children academic success, there remains a substantial proportion of variation in educational success, which was unaccounted for by these variables alone. Asikhia (2020) further noted that this variance by what he called the social capital which mediates the relationship between parents’ financial and human capital, on the one hand, and the development of the human capital of their children on the other. A research carried out by using a sample of low income minority families, found that mother with higher education had higher expectations for their children’s academic performance and that these expectations were related to their children’s subsequent performance in mathematics and reading.

Brown (2019) carried out a study on the influence of parent level of income on students’ academic performance in Ghana new city province. The result concluded that the utility and wisdom of using socio-economic status in conjunction with academic performance depended largely on the unit of analysis and the validity of the

way in which it was defined based on income level. Agu (2021) argued that parents who experienced income loss become more rejecting of their children and that their children were at risk for developing feelings of inadequacy associated with parental rejection. Johnson further explained that single motherhood generally reduces the economic resources available to families due to non-custodial fathers contribute far less to their children's household than they otherwise would. In fact, only a minority of children with non-custodial fathers receives any child support payments, and the amount is typically very small. This means that by reducing income and necessitating greater paid work by mothers, single motherhood increases the time children must spend doing housework and working for pay, which might negatively affect educational performance and progress.

Bullock (2020) explained that family income also affected children's educational aspirations, their status among their peers, their neighborhood quality, the stability of their lives, and insecurity within their family, any or all of which may influence child outcomes. Igwe (2019) investigated the socio-economic status of parents and academic performance of students using correlation research design. The result revealed that, socio-economic status of parents have a high influence on students' academic performance. Students who are from good socio-economic, background are always provide with good study materials such as books, instructional material, funds, toys, conducive environment, and other resources that will always aid them in the teaching and learning process. This according to him, in no small measure accelerate their attendance to school and make them have good social and psychological balance in the school and positive academic achievement becomes a sure process.

The effect of parents' socio-economic status (SES) on children's educational outcomes may be neutralized, strengthened or mediated by a range of other contextual, family and individual characteristics. Parents may have a low income and a low-status occupation, for example, but nevertheless transmit high educational aspirations to their children. What family members have (material resources, for instance) can often be mediated by what family members do (for example parental support, family cohesion). The social and the economic components of socio-economic status, in other words, may have distinct and separate influences on educational outcomes, while both components are important, social factors (for instance, parents).

Parents' educational aspiration and expectations affect their children's aspiration and expectations of themselves and this in turn affects their children's achievement. For example, when students perceive that, their parent value education, they are also more likely to feel competent and motivated in their school work (Krieder et al, 2020). Sutor et al. (2020) studied isolated the variable of mother's education and its impact on her children. Thirty-five women in this sample were followed for a decade to determine the constituency effects of their return to school and the consequence their academic achievements had on children's educational goals and orientations. The researchers found that return to school was consequential on children's aspirations only when mother's completed their degrees.

Uka (2020) opined that parents who are either illiterates or have no formal education, do not provide their children with an atmosphere that is conducive for formation of good study habits, and this could be applicable to in Ikwerre Local Government Area hence, the urge to learn appears to be lacking. Children of teachers, lecturers gain advantage by receiving extra lectures from their literate

parents at home, and those that do not have extra time to teach their children employ part time teachers to groom them. Educated parents have skill to build supportive cognitive and emotional environment for their children. Okujagu, (2019) observed in his study that, parents with some form of formal education are more motivating and have higher achievement aspiration. They are more prone to be aware of the benefits and importance of educational, and as such, more likely to support and encourage or motivate their children to study hard.

The differentiation of level of education from the other variables used in determining socio-economic status is important because sometimes high level of education may not be a very prominent factor since, income and wealth also has influences in child's up-bringing. The influence of the level of education of parents on the children's academic performance of is evident in all nations. Uka (2020) stated that those children whose parents have a tertiary level of education perform, on average, significantly better in tests of science, reading and mathematical ability than those whose parents have only basic schooling. Across those three disciplines, the average grades achieved by students with well-educated parents ranged from 7% higher than those achieve by students with poorly educated parents in developing nations to 45% higher in most developed nations, and believed that Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State is not an exception.

Ekeh (2015) conducted a research on parents' academic background and students' academic performance in English Language in secondary school in Etche local government area of Rivers State. The finding showed that students whose parents have good education makes adequate educational preparation for children education in terms of provision of textbooks, instructional materials, conducive home environment and other necessary material that will enable them to do well in their studies than children of illiterate parents. Some research finding strongly indicated that parents with higher educational level are more engaged in working directly with their children on learning activities at home, supporting their homework (Mapp, 2021). On the other hand, other research findings suggested that, parents sometimes become less involved with their children's school work as their children grow older, reasons been that curriculum is more sophisticated, each student has several teachers, and students are beginning to establish some sense of separation and independence from their parent.

Mosby (2019) hypothesized that parental level of education and care primarily influences children's attributes and behaviors, which in turn affect academic performance. Similarly, the theoretical framework provided by Mapp (2021) suggests that parental education and care (involvement, concern and support) enhances children's academic self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation to learn, self-regulatory use, and social self-efficacy, which in turn operate to enhance performance. Ogundele (2020) postulated that a conglomeration of factors (parental education/involvement, home involvement, school involvement, parent— teacher communication) was predictive of children's school engagement and socio-emotional adjustment. If parental involvement does indeed buffer the effects of children's academic anxiety on children's academic performance, the importance of supporting positive parental care initiatives becomes even more evident. Mapp (2021) carried out a study on parents' educational background, academic facilities and college graduation in South City of America. Result showed that student parent's educational background, was by far the most important determinant of student's access to college education in America.

Parents' educational level has significant relation on students' academic performance. The researcher believed that a parent in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State with an educational background would be in good position to be second teachers to their children. And even to guide and counsel the child on the best way to perform well in education. The researcher also believed that the blame from lack of good performance has been as a result of neglect and care free attitude towards academic work by students and parents. Home is the first school for a student where he /she is taught the basic norms and values by the parent before the child leaves for the formal education.

Size of the family influences academic performance. Family size is regarded as the number of children from the same parents in a family. Large family often have a negative, influence on academic performance but when the children are few in the family, there will be greater interaction between parents and children and the need can also be provided for adequately(Fun & Williams, 2019).Family size can be defined in various ways. It may be defined such that all individuals within a household are included. This may include parents and children, but it may also include members of the extended family for instance, aunts, uncles, grandparents and sometimes people who are not related by genes, as well as foster parents or stepparents living with children .

Anukowa and Karnu(2022) postulated that family size exerts an extremely strong and broad influence on development and academic performance. The influence is strong in the sense that the effects are long-lasting. It is broad in the sense that it has an impact on many aspects of academic activities, including both cognitive ability and extra cognitive for instance, personality tendencies. The influence of family size is especially remarkable in comparison to other influences on academic performance. In Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, the school, culture, economic background, and similar factors are notable influences, but the influence of family size is the most direct and probably the more robust. In many ways, those other influences are moderated by the family decisions, and they may grow up thinking that their perspective is relatively unimportant.

Mosby (2019) explained that family size determines what experiences and resources, education a child will have and receive, and those in turn influence academic performance. They are strong influences because the experiences determined by family size are repetitious. The effects on cognition, education and personality are for this reason said to be over determined. Trusty (2020) conducted a study on family size and students' academic performance in Sudfra City of Sudan. The result revealed that family size significantly influenced students' academic performance, but low performance in school can have a strong barrio effect as well regardless of parents' negative attitude for not assisting their children academically. Brown (2019) noted that family size is in some ways a non-shared family influence. It is non-shared in the sense that the different siblings do not share the same family size. A first born, for instance, is the only child for a period of time, at which point he or she is in a small family, but only until the next sibling is born. Mapp (2021) postulated that second born child is never an only child but always has at least one sibling. In that fashion, the siblings do not share the same kinds of experiences. The same thing can be said about each birth-order position and family size. Other non-shared influences on academic performance include socioeconomic status (SES) and parental age. Typically, the first-born child is raised early in life, in the lowest SES.

The parents may achieve seniority of some sort at work, and increase their income, so that siblings born after the first born actually are raised in families in higher SES, and the parents of a second-born or subsequent child are always older and more experienced parents than the parents of first-born children.

Academic performance has been a common concept used on daily bases by students, teachers, and other significant individuals to either know the overall performance of individual students or if a school has achieved its curriculum objectives. Academic performance to mean the successful attainment of some goals, requiring a specified effort in a discipline or subject or the degree of success attained in an academic pursuit or endeavor. Iwundu (2001) stressed that academic performance has three dimensions such as high, average and low academic performance. Asuru (2006) explained that it can be measured by teacher made test in each subject area, by grade-point average, by students performance on tests designed by school dis-curriculum objectives or by standardized test designed to compare the performance of one group of students in relation to other.

Academic performance helps to determine student's current level of academic functioning as well as the extent to which the individual has acquired the skills than his counterparts of the same age. It also furnishes the educationist with a global index of academic skill and development that may be used to identify individual student for whom educational intervention would be required for either in form of remediation or in form of environmental manipulation. It provides communities schools board and parents with an index of the quality of education offered. The method of determining the degree of success attained by an individual student has provided a positive platform on which academic decision about a child is taken more especially, in the counselling and placement of students on the basis of their high or low academic performance in our educational setting. But recent development, based on observation indicated that, there is much low academic performance among students especially in our secondary schools (Hassan, 2019).

Akinade (2022) opined that low academic performance or failure represents situation where students in our schools perform below average and this can lead to school drop-out. Iwundu (2001) outlined the following as the factors that can influence either positively or negatively the academic performance of students and they include Home variables, school, peer influence, teachers' attitude, infrastructural facilities, interest, motivation, students' health status etc. Vellymalay (2022) defined academic performance as what the student have learned or what skills the student has learned and is usually measured through assessments like standardized tests, performance assessments and portfolio assessments. Academic performance, which is measured by the examination results of a given subject, is one of the major goals of a school and students.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Education generally is a continuous process of enculturation, which begins from cradle to grave and the type of education one receives determines his future potentials, Poor academic performance of students has been of great concern to educationist, parent, guidance, psychologist and counsellors. Despite all guidance programmes and counselling strategies mounted in schools to improve the students' academic performances, poor performances are still recorded. What they do eventually is to call

the teachers to questions the students' poor performance. Little do they know that other factors apart from teacher's abilities such as home variables do influence students' academic performance.

Family being a primary unit of socialization and where most of children learning takes place cannot be single or left out in identifying course of poor academic performance of a child. Parent's involvement has been associated with other indicators of school success, including lower rates of retention in grades, lower dropout rates, higher on time high school graduation rates and higher rates of participation in advanced courses. Students' academic performance in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State has long been a concern due to students' poor academic performance. These children are from low income areas of a single ethnic origin. As a result, some students come to school with dirty uniform and without breakfast, while some have disciplinary problems at school. Therefore, there is the need to study home variables such as parents socioeconomic status, parents educational level, and family size that influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses guided the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Parents' socioeconomic status does not significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.
2. Parents' educational level does not significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.
3. Family size does not significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. Kpolovie (2010) defined descriptive survey research design as a study that depict the participants in an accurate way or it describes people who take part in the study through a survey method, observational method and a case study method since the students' academic performance scores in Mathematics have already been given, and cannot be manipulated, the research design was to find out the influence of home variables on students' academic performance among secondary school students in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State.

The population of the study consisted of all the students in public senior secondary schools 1in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State, totaling of 2,300 .(source: Rivers State Post Primary Schools Board). Fluid survey was used to determine the sample size of 247) students for the study. The stratified random sampling technique was used for categorization of the population into groups which

helped reduce bias in sampling of teachers and also help the researcher to determine whether there are variations in the variables being studied. A self-made questionnaire titled “Students’ Academic Performance Test in Mathematics (SAPTM)”, were divided into two sections ‘1’ and ‘2’. Section ‘1’ reflected the demographic data of the respondents and Section 2 consisted of 30 item multiple choice test of Mathematics with four options (letter A - D). The 30 item multiple choice of Mathematics, were designed for students’ academic performance using students’ performance test scores in Mathematics for senior secondary school 1 students.

Three experts validated the instrument “ Student Academic Performance Test in Mathematics (SAPTM).The reliability of the instruments was determined by administering SAPTM once to 30 public senior secondary school 1 students randomly selected in Emoha Local Government Area of Rivers State, who were not part of the study. The scores so obtained were then subjected to Crombach Alpha, and yielded reliability index of  $\alpha=0.70$  for the study. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire with the help of two research assistants with a clear instruction on what was expected of the respondents. After completion, copies of the instruments were retrieved for the analysis. The independent sample t-test was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significant using SPSS.

## Results

Table 1: Independent Samples Test on the Parents’ Socioeconomic Status and their Academic Performance in English Language

Parents’ Socioeconomic Status	N	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
High	29				Significant
		245	-4.123	.000	
Low	218				

$$\alpha = 0.05$$

In Table 1, the t-value of -4.123 and the significant value (p-value) of .000 at a significance level of 0.05 is  $.000 < 0.05$ . From the result, the p-value is less than the significance level; this means that the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, parents’ socioeconomic status does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.

Table 2: Independent Samples Test on the Parents’ Educational Level and their Academic Performance in English Language

Parents’ Educational Level	N	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Primary	14				Significant
		245	-5.012	.000	
Secondary	234				

$$\alpha = 0.05$$

In Table .2, the t-value of -5.012 and the significant value (p-value) of .000 at a significance level of 0.05 is  $.000 < 0.05$ . From the result, the p-value is less than the significance level; this means that the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, parents’ educational level does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.

Table .3: Independent Samples Test on the Family Size and their Academic Performance in English Language

Family Size	N	df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Large	121				
		245	2.390	.102	Significant
Small	126				

$$\alpha = 0.05$$

In Table .3, the t-value of 2.390 and the significant value (p-value) of .102 at a significance level of 0.05 is  $.102 < 0.05$ . From the result, the p-value is less than the significance level; this means that the hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, family size does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.

### Summary of Findings

Based on the results from the analysis of the study, the major findings of the study among others were summarized thus:

1. Parents' socioeconomic status does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.
2. Parents' educational level does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.
3. Family size does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State.

### Discussion of Findings

Result of hypothesis one revealed that parents' socioeconomic status does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State. This finding is similar to the findings of Brown (2019) and Igwe (2019). Brown (2019) conducted a study on factors affecting school performance among high school graduates in mid-west city of the United States. The result showed that, the socio-economic status of the parents to a large extent determines the socio-economic status of a child and has a relationship with the level of performance in school. The result also found that children from middle class families had more stimulating homes, performed better, in class work and stayed longer in school than children of low working class families. Igwe (2019) studied the socio-economic status of parents and academic performance of students. The study revealed that, socio-economic status of parents have a high influence on students' academic performance. also, students who are from good socio-economic, background are always provide with good study materials such as books, instructional material, funds, toys, conducive environment, and other resources that will always aid them in the teaching and learning process.

Result of hypothesis two revealed that, parents' educational level does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State. This finding corroborated with the findings of Uka(2020) and Mapp (2021). Uka (2020) conducted a study on the impact of parent educational level and the college plans of urban Canadian youths. Result

indicated that the higher the parents' educational level, the more likely students plan to go to school and perform better at school. Mapp (2021) carried out a study on parents' educational background, academic facilities and college graduation in South City of America. Result showed that student parent's educational background was by far the most important determinant of student's access to college education in America.

Result of hypothesis three revealed that family size does significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State. This finding is also similar with the findings Igwe (2019) and Trusty (2020). Igwe (2019) carried out a study on the impact of family structure among senior high school students academic performance in Fredbad new city of Uganda. Result indicated that parental influence, societal influence, Institutional influence, number of children, single parenting, and low income significantly influence the academic performance of students from both rich and poor homes. Trusty (2020) conducted a study on factors influencing students' academic achievement in Sudfra City of Sudan. The result revealed that there factors such as culture, peer influence, parental level of education, family size and school location significantly influence students' academic achievement. But low achievement in school can have a strong barrio effect as well regardless of family or individual educational level, income level.

### **Conclusion**

The result of this study showed that parents' socioeconomic status, parents' educational level, and family size does significantly influence students' academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school students in Ikwerre LGA of Rivers State. Therefore, the study concluded that home variables significantly influence academic performance in Mathematics among public secondary school 1 students.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents who are not educated should emulate the educated parents by asking their children about their homework, assignments etc. even if their level of education is not high. This monitoring could motive the child to go and do his/her homework or assignment, as a result of reminding the child.
2. Parents should control the size of their family so that they would be able to give their children adequate education for a brighter future ahead of them.

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