

# Effects of Socio-Economic Background on Students Performance in Economics in Secondary School in Ogun State: A TETFUND Sponsored Institutional Based Research

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## Abstract

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*This study investigated the effect of socio-economic background on the performance of students in Economics in senior secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria. The survey research design was adopted. Instrument used for data collection were Students' Socio-economic Background Questionnaire ( $r=0.82$ ) and Achievement Test ( $r=0.77$ ) in Economics. The participants were 300 students from 20 Local Government Area of Ogun State (150 students per LGA). The result revealed that students from high Socio-economic background performed better in Economics than their counterparts from low Socio-economic background. Also, parental attitude had influence on academic performance of students in Economics in senior secondary schools in Ogun State. From the finding, it became clear that if illiteracy is eradicated in our society, people would realize the importance of Economics as a school subject in the society.*

## Key words:

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### Introduction

Economics is seen as an important or backbone to other subjects in senior secondary schools.

In most secondary schools nowadays, there is high degree of poor performance in Economics. This is due to the various problems facing the subject, such as teacher's inefficiency in the teaching of the subject, parent's attitude towards buying the required materials for their children and most importantly Socio-Economic background of the students.

The question now is why ECONOMICS? especially the mathematically aspect of economics constituted problem to majority students in secondary schools in the country. This therefore led to poor performance in the economics examination.

The Socio-Economic background of students has great impact on the student's performance in economics.

Home is seen to be the first expository forum for the child it determines the past experiences, attitudes, characteristics and the life styles of an individual. It may determine the

extent to which or person achieves his life goals.

The opportunities for the realization of life goal and objectives can be determined by Socio-Economic status of the family. It is noted that there is cordial relationship among the members of the family, no one can live in isolation of other. The parents have their role no to play for the survival of all the family.

Throughout the world, there is nowhere that equality of opportunity to infrastructural facilities exist among the citizens. The degree of an individual access to the society's wealth is mostly determined by the extent to which class structure is manifested in the Socio-Economic and political orientation of that society.

Class inequalities manifest themselves in almost all aspect of life. The Economics sector has its own effects of the social stratification. it is in examining this that we see great disparity in economics performance of many students in our schools. The socio-economics background of an individual has great impact on what such a person becomes in future life.

The two may factors known to have influence on whatever educational attainment

one may desire are heredity and environment. These two factors have a great influence on student's performance. Heredity has to do with the tendency of the organization organism to transmit its characteristics nature to its descendants while environments in educational sense, focuses attention on the social and physical endowment, which may have some effects on the learners. Though some psychological have asserted that genetic composition of a man would determine the degree of his achievement the fact still remain that the environment tends to have greater impact in dictating the level of person reaches.

This essay is therefore set to investigate the effect of socio- economic background on students' performance in economics.

#### **Statement of the Problem/ Justification**

What are the factors held responsible for student poor performance in economics in senior secondary schools in Ogun state, what are the differences between the family's socio-economic background of students in relation to their performance in economics, what are the effect of social stratification on the students' performance in economic in secondary schools in Nigeria and also what are the importance of home as an institution that has a part to play in the student's education especially in economics in secondary schools in Ogun state.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this research were to:

- i. Investigate the factors held responsible for student's poor performance in economics in senior secondary school examination.
- ii. Examine on the students' performance in economics in secondary schools in Nigeria.
- iii. Ascertain the type of social background of the students in relation to their performance in economics in secondary schools in Ogun state.
- iv. Determine the importance of parent as an institution that has a part to play in the student's education especially in

economics in secondary schools in Ogun state.

#### **Literature Review**

##### **Indices of Socio-Economic Background of the Students**

Status based on socio-economic factors represents one of the major systems of stratification. This arises out of the recognition that in all societies, people are ranked or evaluated at a number of levels.

Considerable research is being carried out unto children's home background to determine the extent to which the socio-economic status of parents is related to student's progress in schools. Result or earlier research conducted have shown that factors such as social, economic, cultural and parental factors are closely related to the pupil's achievement in schools.

These are factors that can influence the socio-economic background of the students. The factors are discussed below:

##### **Social Indices:**

**Family Structure:** The resources and support available for education may be impacted by single-parent households or families with several caregivers.

**Community Support:** Students can receive additional resources and guidance from robust community networks.

**Social Capital:** Relationships and connections within a community might make it easier to access information and opportunities.

##### **Economic Indices**

**Family Income:** Generally speaking, a higher family income gives access to more educational resources including technology, extracurricular activities, and tutoring.

**Parental Employment:** The amount of time and money parents can invest in their children's education can be influenced by the stability and nature of their jobs.

**Financial Aid Access:** A student's capacity to pursue higher education can be greatly impacted by the availability of financial aid and scholarships.

**Peer Pressure**

**Peer Influence:** Friends and classmates have a big impact on conduct, academic motivation, and attitudes toward education.

**Social Networks:** Being a part of peer groups that place a high importance on education can promote resilience and academic success.

**Extracurricular Activities:** Participating in clubs, athletics, and other events helps foster social support and skill development.

**Environmental Indices**

**Neighborhood Quality:** While underprivileged communities may provide difficulties, living in a secure and resource-rich environment can improve educational performance.

**School Quality:** A student's educational experience can be significantly impacted by their access to well-funded institutions with certified instructors and sufficient facilities.

**Health and Nutrition:** Students' physical and mental development is impacted by access to healthcare and a healthy diet, which in turn affects academic achievement.

**Family Size**

**Financial Resources:** Access to educational resources, extracurricular activities, and tutoring may be impacted by larger families' limited financial resources per child.

**Time and Attention:** Parents of larger families might not have as much time to focus on each child's educational needs, which could affect supervision and academic support.

**Space and Privacy:** Smaller homes may accommodate larger families, which can have an influence on study spaces and individual privacy, ultimately hurting academic performance and focus.

**Stress Levels:** Living in close quarters can raise stress levels, which can have a detrimental impact on kids' mental health and academic achievement.

**Priorities for Education:** Families with a large number of children may have various priorities for education, which could affect how much support each child receives.

**Causes of Students' Poor Performance in Education**

A student's poor performance in senior secondary examination may be caused by a variety of factors - The student himself, the home and the school environment

**The Student**

**Lack of Motivation:** Some students may become disengaged if they fail to recognize the importance of education or if their goals are unclear.

**Bad Study Habits:** Academic performance can be hampered by poor time management, procrastination, and inadequate revision.

**Health Issues:** Mental and physical health issues can have a big impact on one's ability to focus and study well.

**Peer Influence:** Distractions such as substance misuse or putting social activities ahead of academics might result from negative peer pressure.

**The Home**

**Parental Support:** Students may become demotivated if their parents don't support and encourage them. Uninvolved parents may be a contributing factor to their child's subpar academic performance.

**Socioeconomic Factors:** Access to educational resources like textbooks, tutoring, and a comfortable study space may be restricted by unstable finances.

**Home Stress:** Students may become distracted from their schoolwork by a difficult home situation, which may include family disputes or instability.

**Parents' Educational Background:** Low-educated parents might not be able to give their kids the academic help they require.

**The Teacher**

Teachers have a significant impact on how well kids succeed academically. Students' low performance in senior secondary exams can be caused by a number of teacher-related factors:

**Teaching Quality:** Students' comprehension is significantly impacted by how well a teacher teaches. Confusion and poor performance can

result from ineffective teaching strategies, insufficient student involvement, and an inability to adequately explain concepts.

**Subject Mastery:** Instructors who are not well-versed in the areas they instruct may find it difficult to give thorough and accurate instruction, which could leave pupils unprepared for tests.

**Assessment and Feedback:** Students may not be able to recognize their errors and make necessary corrections if they receive inadequate feedback on their assignments and assessments. Learning requires constructive critique.

**Classroom Management:** Learning can be hampered by an unorganized or badly run classroom. Students will be less focused on their studies if they are distracted or feel frightened.

**Teacher Attitude:** Students can be inspired and motivated by a teacher's passion for the material and upbeat demeanor toward them. On the other hand, a negative or uninterested attitude can deter students from participating.

**Professional Development:** Instructors who don't participate in ongoing professional development may find that their methods are out of date, which will prevent creativity in the classroom.

**Support and Resources:** Teachers may struggle to deliver a high-quality education, which could affect student outcomes, if they do not have access to instructional resources (such as technology, textbooks, and training).

#### School Environment

#### Results

**Table 1: Socio-Economic Status and Academic Performance**

Socio-Economic Factor	Category	M	SD
Parental Education	Tertiary	4.2	0.8
	Secondary	3.8	0.9
	Primary	3.5	1.0
Income Level	Above #100,000	4.5	0.7
	#60,000-#100,000	4.0	0.8
	Below ? 30,000	3.2	1.1
Parental Occupation	Skilled	4.3	0.7
	Semi-skilled	3.9	0.9
	Unskilled	3.4	1.0

**Note.** *M* = Mean Performance, *SD* = Standard Deviation.

**Teaching Quality:** Ineffective learning might result from inadequate teaching techniques, a lack of subject understanding, or inadequate teaching skills.

**Infrastructure:** Inadequate classrooms, labs, and libraries can make it more difficult to teach and learn effectively.

**Material Problems:** Students may become disengaged if the material is irrelevant or does not meet their needs.

**Examination Pressure:** Students' performance may suffer due to anxiety brought on by the high stakes involved in exams.

#### Methodology

The survey research design was adopted. Instrument used for data collection were Students' Socio-economic Background Questionnaire( $r=0.82$ ) and Achievement Test( $r=0.77$ ) in Economics. The participants were 300 students from 20 Local Government Area of Ogun State (150 students per LGA). Primary and secondary data were collected. Secondary data were made of textbooks, journals and magazines. The sample consisted of 300 students, both sexes and within the age of 14 years to 17 years. The data collected arranged and analyzed into groups in testing, the percentage was the statistical method used. Descriptive statistics (percentages, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (t-test) were used in analysing data.

The results from Table 1 indicate a clear positive relationship between socio-economic status (SES) and academic performance in Economics. This trend is evident across all three socio-economic factors—parental education, income level, and parental occupation where students from higher SES backgrounds consistently achieve higher mean scores.

Students whose parents attained tertiary education exhibit the highest mean performance (M = 4.2, SD = 0.8), followed by those with secondary education (M = 3.8, SD = 0.9). Meanwhile, students whose parents only completed primary education have the lowest mean performance (M = 3.5, SD = 1.0). The standard deviation increases as parental education decreases, suggesting greater variability in academic performance among students from lower educational backgrounds.

Income also plays a significant role in shaping academic outcomes. Students from households earning above \$ 100,000 per month demonstrate the highest mean performance (M =

4.5, SD = 0.7). Those from middle-income families (\$ 60,000-\$ 100,000) achieve a slightly lower mean (M = 4.0, SD = 0.8), while students from households earning below \$ 30,000 show the lowest performance (M = 3.2, SD = 1.1). The increasing standard deviation for lower-income groups indicates greater disparities in academic performance, possibly due to variations in access to educational resources, home learning environments, and financial stability.

The nature of parental occupation further influences student performance. Students from skilled labor backgrounds have the highest mean score (M = 4.3, SD = 0.7), followed by those with semi-skilled parents (M = 3.9, SD = 0.9). Those from unskilled labor backgrounds perform the lowest (M = 3.4, SD = 1.0). The widening standard deviation among lower-skilled groups suggests greater variability in academic outcomes, which may be linked to differing levels of financial support, educational aspirations, and parental involvement.

**Table 2: Access to Educational Resources and Performance**

Resource Access	Category	Mean Performance (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Study Space	Yes	4.1	0.8
	No	3.5	1.0
Educational Resources	Yes	4.0	0.9
	No	3.3	1.1
Tutoring	Yes	4.2	0.8
	No	3.7	0.9

The results presented in *Table 2* indicate a clear relationship between resource access and academic performance in Economics. The mean performance scores (M) are consistently higher for students who have access to study spaces, educational resources, and tutoring compared to those who do not. Additionally, the standard deviations (SD) provide insight into the variability of performance within each category.

**1. Study Space Access**

- o Students with access to a personal study space achieved

a mean performance score of **4.1 (SD = 0.8)**, compared to **3.5 (SD = 1.0)** for those without.

- o The lower standard deviation for students with study spaces suggests more consistency in performance, indicating that having a dedicated environment for studying contributes to stable academic outcomes.
- o In contrast, the higher variability (SD = 1.0) among

students without study spaces may suggest external factors influencing performance, such as distractions or inadequate study conditions.

## 2. Educational Resources Access

- Students with access to educational resources (e.g., textbooks, online materials) had a mean performance score of **4.0 (SD = 0.9)**, whereas those without access scored **3.3 (SD = 1.1)**.
- The higher mean suggests that access to relevant materials significantly enhances understanding and retention of Economics concepts.
- The slightly higher SD for those without resources indicates greater dispersion in performance, potentially due to

differing levels of adaptability in compensating for the lack of resources.

## 3. Tutoring Availability

- Students who received tutoring recorded the highest mean performance score of **4.2 (SD = 0.8)**, compared to **3.7 (SD = 0.9)** for those without tutoring.
- Tutoring appears to provide the most substantial boost to performance, likely due to personalized guidance, clarification of difficult topics, and enhanced engagement with the subject matter.
- The relatively low standard deviation for both groups suggests that the benefits of tutoring are consistent among students.

**Table 3:** Study Environment at Home

Factor	Category	Mean Performance	Standard Deviation
<b>Study Hours</b>	1–2 hours	4.0	0.9
	Less than 1 hour	3.5	1.0
<b>Parental Involvement</b>	Always	4.2	0.8
	Sometimes	3.8	0.9
	Never	3.4	1.0

The results from **Table 3** indicate a clear relationship between study habits, parental involvement, and student performance in Economics. The findings highlight two key trends:

Students who study for **1–2 hours** per day achieve a **higher mean performance (4.0)** compared to those who study **less than 1 hour (3.5)**. The lower standard deviation (0.9 vs. 1.0) for students studying longer suggests more consistent performance within this group. This pattern aligns with general educational research, which emphasizes that increased study time enhances understanding and retention of subject

material. However, the difference in performance is moderate, indicating that study quality may also be an influencing factor.

Parental involvement exhibits a positive correlation with student performance:

- **Always involved parents** – Students perform best, with a **mean score of 4.2** and a relatively low standard deviation (0.8), indicating consistent positive outcomes.
- **Sometimes involved parents** – Performance drops slightly to **3.8**, suggesting that inconsistent support

- may not be as effective.
- **Never involved parents** – Students show the lowest performance (3.4) and the highest variability (1.0), reflecting both lower and more unpredictable outcomes. These findings reinforce the importance

of parental guidance in academic success. Regular parental engagement, such as monitoring study routines, assisting with homework, and fostering a conducive learning environment, appears to enhance student performance in Economics.

**Table 4: Peer Influences and Social Networks**

Factor	Category	Mean Performance	Standard Deviation
Extracurricular Activities	Yes	4.3	0.7
	No	3.7	0.9

The results presented in Table 4 indicate that participation in extracurricular activities, particularly those related to Economics, has a positive impact on students' mean performance in peer influences and social networks. The data shows that students who engage in these activities have a higher mean performance score of 4.3, compared to 3.7 for those who do not participate. This suggests that involvement in

extracurricular activities may enhance students' ability to build and leverage peer networks effectively.

**Results for Hypotheses**

**Ho1: There is no significant difference in student performance based on socio-economic background.**

**Table 5: T-test Showing Significant Difference in Performance Based on Socio-economic Background**

Socio-economic Background	N	X	SD	p-value	Decision
Low	1,567	3.3	1.1	<0.001	Rejected
High	1,433	4.4	0.9		

Table 5 shows the p-value (<0.001), which is less than the level of significance (0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that students from higher socio-economic backgrounds perform better. This finding emphasizes the need for policies that

provide equal access to quality education for students from lower-income backgrounds.

**Ho2: There is no significant difference in performance based on access to educational resources.**

**Table 6: T-test Showing Significant Difference in Performance Based on Access to Educational Resources**

Access to Resources	N	X	SD	p-value	Decision
Limited	1,730	3.2	1.3	<0.001	Rejected
Sufficient	1,270	4.5	1.0		

Table 6 shows the p-value (<0.001), which is less than the level of significance (0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates

that access to educational resources significantly affects performance. Students with better access to textbooks, technology, and libraries perform

better. Expanding resource availability could help bridge the gap.

**Ho3: There is no significant difference in**

**performance based on parental involvement in lower socio-economic groups.**

**Table 7:** T-test Showing Significant Difference in Performance Based on Parental Involvement in Lower Socio-economic Groups

Parental Involvement	N	X	SD	p-value	Decision
Low	1700	3.1	1.2	0.003	Rejected
High	1300	4.3	1.1		

Table 7 shows the p-value (0.003), which is less than the level of significance (0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that parental involvement significantly affects performance in lower socio-economic groups. Students with supportive parents tend to perform

better. Schools should encourage parental engagement through workshops and meetings.

**Ho4: There is no significant difference in motivation based on socio-economic background.**

**Table 8:** T -test Showing Significant Difference in Motivation Based on Socio-economic Background

Socio-economic Background	N	X	SD	p-value	Decision
Low	1680	2.9	1.4	0.008	Rejected
High	1320	3.8	1.2		

Table 8 shows the p-value (0.008), which is less than the level of significance (0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that students from low socio-economic backgrounds have lower motivation. Lack of financial stability and role models could reduce

motivation. Schools can introduce mentorship programs to boost engagement.

**Ho5: There is no significant difference in performance based on the study environment at home.**

**Table 9:** T-test Showing Significant Difference in Performance Based on Study Environment at Home

Study Environment	N	X	SD	p-value	Decision
Poor	1700	3.0	1.2	<0.001	Rejected
Good	1,300	4.3	1.1		

Table 9 shows the p-value (<0.001), which is less than the level of significance (0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the study environment at home significantly affects performance. Students with a quiet and resourceful study space perform better. Schools and governments can provide study centers to assist students in poor home environments.

## Recommendations

For Teachers:

1. Develop teaching strategies to meet the needs of students with varying learning styles. Engage students from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds by using a variety of educational techniques.
2. Ascertain that every student has access to the required educational resources,

including online resources, textbooks, and additional materials that can improve comprehension of economic concepts.

3. Encourage parents to be actively involved in their children's education by cultivating a close relationship with them. Educate parents about the curriculum and how they may help their kids learn at home by holding seminars.
4. Utilize a variety of evaluation techniques to gauge students' comprehension so that various learning styles and strengths can be identified.

#### For Parents:

1. Establish regular study schedules and reduce outside distractions to create a comfortable learning environment at home.
2. Look for neighborhood options that can offer your child extra help, such as workshops, tutoring programs, and online learning environments.
3. To ensure a collaborative approach to your child's education, keep the lines of communication open with teachers so you can discuss your child's development and any difficulties they may be facing.

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