



## PARENTS' EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS AS PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN ESAN WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract:**

The home is the first place of contact with children, especially the child's parents which invariably has a way of influencing the children. This study, therefore, examined parent's educational achievements and occupational status as predictors of students' achievement in English. The sample for the study is 120 Senior Secondary II students randomly selected in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo state. Two instruments were used for the study. The first instrument is titled "Parents' Educational Achievement and Occupational Status Questionnaire (PEAOSQ)", while the second is the English Language Achievement Text (ELAT). These instruments were used to collect data. Findings revealed that parents' educational achievement significantly accounted for 12.9% of the variation in students' achievement in English language while parents' educational attainment and occupational status accounted for only 1.9% of the total variance in English achievement. Furthermore, both parents' educational achievement and occupational status significantly accounted for 11.2% of the total variation in English achievement. Based on the findings, it was recommended amongst others that parents should enhance themselves through the available adult education programmes in the local government area and state.

**Keywords:** parents, educational achievement, occupational status, predictors, students' achievement

### **1. Introduction**

The home can be described as the spring board for the child's adult life. The parents are the head of any home. They are the ones that nurture the physical, emotional and social

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development of the child. Parents have been described as the first agents of socialization for a child and they play an important role in the upbringing and socialization of children. This is because parents in the home are children's first teachers. The proper role of the parent(s) is to provide encouragement, support and access to activities that enable the child to master key developmental tasks in life. As children develop from infants to teens to adults, they go through a series of developmental stages that are important to all aspects of their personhood including physical, intellectual, emotional and social. A parent plays the role of his/her child's first teacher, and this role remains throughout life. Functioning as a coach, the parents expose a child to age appropriate challenges to encourage development as well as to experiences that allow the child to explore on their own and learn from interacting with their environment.

Over the years, child developmental specialists have learnt that from birth children are goal directed to experiment and learn from each experience. Therefore, the importance of parents in the lives of children cannot be over emphasized as parents will need to provide the necessary support for a child to allow the child safely and productively explore and learn from their environment, which in the formative years is the home. From the foregoing, it is pertinent to mention that parents need to provide the enabling environment which includes support, guidance and learning experiences necessary for their children to grow and develop according to their unique developmental blueprint.

The need to enhance students' achievement in a core subject like English language has led researchers into identifying factors that could be responsible for the observable low level of achievement. Majority of these researchers have considered teacher, student and school factors as predators of achievement in English language. Some of these researchers have also looked into areas such as socio-economic status of parents, like their income, type of home, and accommodation, marital status/stability etc. predict English language achievement. However, not much has been done on how other parental factors, such as parents' educational achievement and occupational status predict achievement in English language.

Parental educational achievement refers to the qualification of an individual, that is, level of education acquired by an individual for example, non-formal education, primary or secondary school certificate, Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) and National Diploma (ND), Higher National Diploma (HND), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Bachelor of Arts (B.A), Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) in arts or sciences, Masters of science (M.Sc), Masters in Arts (MA), Masters in Education (M.Ed) and PhD.

On the other hand, occupations are ranked into most prestigious occupation, and lower ranking occupation. The most prestigious occupations are Physicians, Surgeons, Lawyers, Chemical and biomedical engineers and communication analysts, Lecturers and Politicians while the lower ranking occupations are food vendors, counter attendants, cleaners, petty traders, messengers, labourers etc.

## 2. Literature Review

Over the years research has shown that greater parental involvement in children's learning positively affects the child's school achievement including higher academic achievements (Lin, 2003). In a publication done by Lamar University (2019), it was declared that parents' educational level has a significant impact on their children's success. According to this research the reason for this is that parents that are educated tend to place a high value on educational attainment. Karshen (2003) says that students whose parents are well educated get higher position in schools than those whose parents are not educated. This may be due to the fact that educated parents assist students with their studies at home. To drive this point home Good and Brophy (1997) opined that educated parents show interest in their children's academic performances, as they meet and cooperate with educational administrators to ensure children's seriousness in their studies. According to Rana, Nadeem and Saima (2015), high level educated parents to an extent, have more influence on their children to achieve and perform well in their studies at secondary school level. This view is also supported by the study of Norsuhaily, Ibrahim and Mudassir (2017) who declared that parents with high educational qualifications influence their children's academic performance. This same assertion was made by Ahmad and Naeema (2013) who declared that a parent with an educational background will be in a good position to be second teachers to their children.

Ayodele, Aremo and Aboyan (2010) discovered that higher educational attainment and income status of parents were essential factors contributing to high academic records of students.

In a study carried out in Punjab, India on 1000 students to find out the academic achievement of school students having illiterate and literate parents revealed that students having literate parents scored higher than students having illiterate parents. Literature abound on the fact that educated parents positively impacted on the academics of their children more than the uneducated parents. However, it is pertinent to mention that these illiterate parents have a way of participating and encouraging their children in their academic achievement by providing the needed educational resources and even participating directly and indirectly in the academic achievement of their children. This opinion is backed up by Hawkes (1995) who declared that students' performance does not necessarily depend on parents' professional competency or educational attainments. This assertion was supported in the findings of Korir (2018) who declared that parental level of education had no effect on students' academic performance.

On the issue of occupational status of parents on the academic achievement of students, occupation according to Marmot (2004) are ranked into more prestigious occupation and lower ranking occupation. The most prestigious occupation can include medical doctors, lawyers, engineers, lecturers and recently politicians while the lower ranking occupation could include, housekeepers, messengers, cleaners of all kind, office clerks, teachers (primary/ secondary), the rank and file force men/women etc. In a study

carried out in the Gujarat district by Saifuhalli (2011), it was revealed that parents' occupation significantly influenced students' academic achievement, as children whose parents worked in government establishment with better pay did better than children whose parents worked in private establishments where little or nothing is paid as remuneration. Also, studies of Ahmad & Naeema (2013), Farkhada and Esteshan (2013) and Faisal (2014) all declared that parental status significantly influenced students' academic achievement. In consonance with the findings of the above mentioned researchers is the study of Usaini and Abubakar (2015) who carried out their study in Kuala Terengyanu, Malaysia on 377 schools and their finding was that parental occupation has a significant influence on students' academic performance. This was also the declaration of Korir (2018) who carried a study on 210 form four secondary school students in Kenya and the results revealed that Parental occupation significantly influenced students' academic achievement. Odoh, Ugwanyi, Odigbo and Chukawuani (2017) discovered in their study that students' parental occupation, parental education level and parental income level are major factors that determine higher academic performance.

However, the study of Farooq, Chaudry, Shafiq and Berhanu (2011) opined that parental occupation had little effect on the children's performance than their education. A study was carried out in Nigeria (Kwara state) on 180 students randomly selected from three secondary schools using the t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), pair-wise turkey test comparison at 0.05 level of significance on parental socio-economic background, parental educational background, parental educational qualification and students' health status, it was found that parental socio-economic status and parental educational background did not have significant effect on the academic performance of the students (Ogunyhola, 2012). The study of Oludipe (2009) declared that the combination of parents' educational attainment and occupational status predicted students' achievement in physics. So far, one can say that parental educational achievement and occupational status can affect students' educational achievement. However, the focus of this is to find out whether these two parental variables will predict students' achievement in English language.

### **3. Research Questions**

- 1) To what extent does parents' academic attainment predict students' achievement in English Language?
- 2) To what extent does parents' occupational status predict students' achievement in English language?
- 3) What is the relative contribution of the two variables towards students' achievement in English language?

#### 4. Research Methodologies

The population for the study was made up of the 2735 senior secondary school students in the Esan west local government area of Edo state. The random sampling technique was used to collect a sample of 120 students.

Two instruments were used for the study. The instruments were developed by the researcher. The first instrument is a questionnaire titled "Parents' Educational Achievement and Occupational Status Questionnaire" (PEAOSQ). PEAOSQ was made up of a section which sought information from students on their parents' highest level of educational achievement and their current occupational status. The second instrument for the study is titled English Language Achievement Test (ELAT). ELAT was made up of 20 multiple choice questions with 4 options A-D.

The validity of instrument was done by two English language teachers and a language educator from the University of Benin. The instruments were validated based on the appropriateness and clarity of each item. For the reliability of ELAT, a group of 54 students from the neighbouring Delta state were used. Using the Split half method, the score of the 54 students were correlated. A reliability value of 0.75 was obtained.

##### 4.1 Administration of the Instrument

The instruments were administered personally by the researcher with the aid of four research assistants, (the students' teachers) and the instruments were later collected scored and analyzed.

#### 5. Results

**Research Question 1:** To what extent does parents' educational achievement predict students' achievement in English language?

**Table 1:** Regression of Parents' Educational Achievement on English Language Achievement

R = 0.359 R <sup>2</sup> = 0.129 Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 0.123 Standard Error = 3.654						
	Sum of squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
Regression	233.443	1	233.443	17.486	0.000	Significant
Residual	1575.357	118	13.350			
Total	1808.800	119				

Table 1 shows that parent's educational achievement significantly accounted for 12.9% of the total variance in students' achievement in English language (R<sup>2</sup> = 129, P < 0.05)

**Research Question 2:** To what extent does parents' occupational status predict students' achievement in English language?

**Table 2:** Regression of parents' occupational status on English language Achievement

R = 0.136 R <sup>2</sup> = 0.019 Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> = 0.010 Standard Error = 3.879						
	Sum of squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
Regression	33.466	1	33.446	2.224	0.139	N.S
Residual	1775.334	188	15.045			
Total	1808.800	119				

Table 2 above shows that parents' occupational status accounts for only 1.9% of the total variance in students' achievement in English language (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.019, P < 0.05). This was not found to be significant.

**Research Question 3:** What is the relative contribution of the two variables towards students' achievement in English language?

**Table 3:** Relative contribution of parents' occupational achievement and occupational status to English language achievement

R = 0.377 R <sup>2</sup> = 0.142 Adjusted = 0.127 Standard error = 3.642						
	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig	Remark
Regression	256.783	2	128.369	9.677	0.000	Significant
Residual	1552.062	117	13.265			
Total	1808.800	119				

Table 3 shows that Parents' educational achievement and occupational status combined together significantly predicted 14.2% of the total variance in students' achievement in English language (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.142, P < 0.05)

## 6. Discussion of the Results

The findings of this study were based on the research questions addressed at the beginning of the paper and analyzed in the tables.

The results of Table 1 showed that parents' educational achievement significantly predicted student's achievement in English language. This finding is in line with Aboyan (2010), Ahmad (2013) and Mudassir (2017) who declared that parents' educational attainment significantly influenced students' achievement. However, this study is at variance with Korir (2018) who asserted that parental level of education had no effect on

students' achievement. Although the result of my study proved that parental education significantly predicted students' achievement in English language, the researcher is of the opinion that parents with very low and without educational achievement also play a very significant role in the educational achievement of their children, by providing the needed/necessary resources and moral support that will enhance the educational achievement of their children.

The findings of Table 2 revealed that parents' occupational status is not a significant predictor of students' achievement in English language. This result is in line with the findings of Farooq, Chaudry, Shafiq and Berhanu (2011) and Ogunshola (2012) who declared that parents' occupational status does not significantly affect the achievement of students. On the contrary however, a lot of researchers are at variance with the findings of this study. For instance Marmot, (2004); Saifullahi, (2011); Ahmad and Naema, (2013); Farkhada and Elteshan (2013); Faisal, Usaini and Abubakar (2015); and Korir (2018) who all declared that parental occupation significantly influenced the academic achievement of students. However, this researcher thought that children whose parents have high rated jobs would do better than students whose parents have low-rated jobs, but on the contrary, the result of this study, going by the data generated and analyzed is different from the researchers thought. One can therefore, conclude that students whose parents have low-rated jobs put in their best in their studies so as to do better and be better placed in the society and where possible, remove their parents from poverty.

In Table 3, the findings revealed that the combination of parents' educational achievement and occupational status significantly predicted students' achievement in English language. This finding agrees with the findings of Oludipe (2009) and Odoh, Ugwuyani, Odigbo and Chukawuani (2017) whose studies revealed that the combination of parental educational achievement and occupational status significantly influenced the academic achievement of students. The findings of this study are however contrary to the study of Ogunshola (2018) whose study revealed that parental socio-economic status, and parental educational background did not have significant effects on the academic achievement of students. It is obvious that a combination of parents' educational achievement and high-rated job can enhance the academic achievement of students, because a student from a home where parents are well educated with very good jobs (occupational status) will certainly have all the required support (that is moral, financial and emotional) that will enable such a student do well/achieve higher scores in English language or any other subject.

## **7. Conclusion**

The findings of this study in no doubt revealed that parental educational achievement predicts students' achievement in English language. Thus, the higher the level of parental education, the better the achievement of students in English Language. There is an adage

which says 'like Father like son'. Therefore, a child that is from a highly/well educated home will strive to do like or even better than the parents.

### **7.1 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1) Government should encourage parents with low level of education to enhance themselves by going back to school.
- 2) Students should strive hard to do better than their parents in terms of educational attainment.
- 3) Teachers/policy makers should encourage students to strive hard to do better and go higher than the educational level of their parents,
- 4) Parents with low educational level should open the eyes of their children to the benefits of higher educational level.

### **About the Author**

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