



## PARENTAL ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL FACTORS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SAGBAMA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF BAYELSA STATE

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### Abstract

This study investigated parental economic and educational factors on the academic performance of secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The study focused on four objectives, research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Theoretical frameworks were Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) and Coleman's Social Capital Theory (1988). The conceptual framework was well designed and specifically examined parental economic status and educational background as predictors of students' academic performance. A descriptive survey design was adopted. Sample of 384 students was selected using stratified random sampling techniques from a population of 9,436 students. A structured questionnaire was validated by experts and tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.84. Data were collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used for data presentation, while one-sample t-tests were employed to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed that parental economic status and education background significantly and positively affect students' academic performance. All four null hypotheses were rejected, confirming that these parental factors are crucial to academic success. The study concluded that parental factors collectively form a strong support system enhance students' academic performance, and recommended increased parental involvement in educational activities.

**Keywords:** Parental Factors, Economic Status, Educational Background, Academic Performance, Sagbama LGA.

### Introduction

Education is one of the most important tools for personal and national development. It provides individuals with knowledge, skills, and opportunities for economic and social advancement. The academic success of students is influenced by many factors, including school environment, teacher quality, and personal motivation. However, the most significant factors affecting student performance are parental economic and educational factors. Parents play a crucial role in shaping their children's academic journey through their support, encouragement, and provision of necessary resources (Okeke & Nwafor, 2021). Parental involvement in education can take different forms. It includes providing financial support, monitoring schoolwork, attending parent-teacher meetings, and encouraging children to take their studies seriously. Studies have shown that children whose parents actively engage in their education tend to perform better than those whose parents are less involved (Williams & Thomas, 2020). The level of parental involvement is often influenced by factors such as parental education, financial status, family structure, and cultural beliefs about education.

In Nigeria, particularly in Bayelsa State, differences in academic performance among students have raised concerns about the impact parental factors play in their children's academic performance. Some students excel academically because they receive strong parental support, while others struggle due to limited guidance and inadequate resources. Research has shown that parents with higher levels of economic status and educational background are more likely to assist their children with homework,



encourage a reading culture, and provide academic guidance (Uche, 2019). On the other hand, students from families where parents have little or no formal education may experience difficulties in school due to a lack of academic support at home. Economic stability is another key factor affecting academic success. Families with a stable income can afford quality education, including private schooling, textbooks, tutoring, and a conducive learning environment (Adeyemi, 2018). In contrast, students from low-income families may struggle due to the inability to afford school fees, study materials, or even basic needs like proper nutrition, which can affect concentration and learning outcomes. Economic challenges may also force some students to engage in part-time jobs, reducing the time available for their studies.

Given these observations, this study seeks to examine the influence of parental factors on the academic performance of senior secondary students in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. By exploring the relationship between parental education, financial stability, family structure, and academic success, this study aims to provide insights into how parental involvement can be improved to enhance student outcomes. The findings will also offer recommendations on bridging the gap in academic achievement among students from different perspectives.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Academic performance among secondary school students varies widely, and the key factors influencing this variation are parental economic and educational background. In Sagbama Local Government Area, some students excel in their studies, while others struggle despite having similar learning environments in school. This disparity raises concerns about the role of parents in shaping their children's educational progress. Some parents, due to their level of education, are able to provide academic guidance, assist with homework, and encourage a culture of learning at home. Others, however, may lack the knowledge or time to support their children's education effectively. Economic status also plays a crucial role, as students from well-off families often have better access to learning materials, private tutoring, and conducive study environments, while those from low-income households may lack these advantages. This study seeks to examine how these parental economic and educational background, Understanding these factors are essential in addressing the challenges students face and formulating policies that encourage better parental participation in education geared the investigation on the parental economic and educational factors on students' academic performance in senior secondary schools in Sagbama Local Government Areas of Bayelsa State.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study examined parental economic and educational factors on students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. Specifically, the objectives were:

1. Examine how parental economic status influence students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government in Bayelsa State.
2. Determine how parental educational background influence students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government in Bayelsa State.

### **Research Questions**

This study answered the following research questions:

1. What are the parental economic factor that influence students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government in Bayelsa State?
2. What are the parental educational background factors that influence students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government in Bayelsa State?



## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were stated to test reliability of the study

1. There is no significant difference between mean score of parental economic status and students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.
2. There is no significant difference between mean score of parents' educational background and students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

## Literature Review

### Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by two key theoretical perspectives that explain the significance of parental involvement in shaping students' academic performance: Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and Coleman's Social Capital Theory. Both theories emphasize the central role of family and social relationships in the learning and development process, making them highly relevant to this study.

#### Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory emphasized that learning and cognitive development are deeply rooted in social interactions and cultural contexts. According to Vygotsky (1978), children learn best when they interact with more knowledgeable others such as parents, teachers, or peers, who guide and support them in acquiring new knowledge and skills. He introduced the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which represents the range of tasks a child can perform with assistance but not yet independently. Parental involvement fits directly into this framework, as parents serve as the child's first and most consistent "more knowledgeable other." When parents provide help with homework, share educational experiences, or create intellectually stimulating environments at home, they support their children's movement through the ZPD, thereby enhancing academic growth. In communities like Sagbama Local Government Area, where some parents may lack formal education or adequate resources, the level of support available to students can either facilitate or hinder this process. Therefore, this theory is important to the study as it underlines the cultural, emotional, and cognitive roles that parents play in their children's educational development.

#### Coleman's Social Capital Theory

Coleman's Social Capital Theory focuses on the value of social relationships in facilitating productive outcomes, including educational success. Coleman (1988) argues that social capital, defined as the quality of relationships, norms, and trust shared between parents, children, and schools, greatly influences a student's academic trajectory. Parents who maintain close ties with their children, hold high expectations, and build communication networks with teachers and other families contribute to a supportive environment that fosters academic excellence. This theory supports the idea that students from homes with high parental involvement, emotional support, and strong moral guidance perform better academically than those without such advantages. Coleman emphasizes that the presence of social capital reduces school dropout rates, increases motivation, and enhances school engagement. In the context of this study, this theory provides a clear explanation of how parental relationships, community networks, and emotional support can bridge the gap between school challenges and academic success.

By combining Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory with Coleman's Social Capital Theory, this study adopts a dual-theoretical lens that highlights both the interactive learning processes between parents and students and the structural value of parental networks and support systems. These frameworks collectively reinforce the view that parental education, economic status, involvement, and sociocultural values play critical roles in shaping students' academic performance in senior secondary schools within Sagbama Local Government Area of BayeThe conceptual framework for this study is grounded in the belief that parental factors significantly influence students' academic performance, especially at the senior secondary school level. In communities like Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State,



where economic and educational disparities are prevalent, understanding how different parental attributes affect student performance is essential. This framework was developed based on two core parental factors: economic status and educational background influences which are considered independent variables. These interact with and influence the dependent variable, which is the students' academic performance.

This framework is directly aligned with the research objectives of this study: to examine the impact of economic status and influence of parental educational background students' academic achievement. Each variable is explained below in detail and supported by relevant scholarly literature.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Parental Economic Status

Parental economic status reflects the financial well-being of the family, often linked to income level, occupation, and access to learning resources. It determines the extent to which parents can meet educational needs such as school fees, textbooks, uniforms, transportation, and private tutoring. According to Adeyemi (2012), children from wealthier households benefit from greater access to educational materials, healthier food, and more stable home environments, which promote concentration and attendance. Also, Adedokun (2014) explained that financial hardship can lead to absenteeism, low self-esteem, and even school dropout, as students may be forced to assist in income-generating activities or face learning distractions due to basic needs not being met. In Sagbama LGA, where economic hardship is common, many students may experience such challenges. Therefore, this variable explores how differences in family income affect the academic outcomes of students, either by providing necessary resources or through lack thereof.

### Parental Educational Background

Parental education is a crucial determinant of a student's academic success. Parents who possess higher educational qualifications are generally more aware of the value of formal education, and they tend to create learning-friendly environments at home. These parents are also more capable of helping their children with homework, maintaining communication with teachers, and setting high academic expectations. Jeynes (2004) noted that parental education is one of the strongest predictors of student academic outcomes, as it shapes parents' confidence in managing school-related tasks. Similarly, Okeke and Nwafor (2015) argued that educated parents are more likely to follow up on their children's progress, attend school functions, and actively support learning. In contrast, parents with little or no formal education may find it difficult to engage with school demands or to help their children navigate academic challenges. This lack of support can limit students' motivation and performance. Therefore, this variable addresses the extent to which parental education contributes to shaping students' academic performance in public secondary schools.

### Students' Academic Performance

The dependent variable in this framework is students' academic performance, which refers to their performance in school tasks such as tests, examinations, assignments, and class participation. Academic performance is a reflection of both cognitive ability and the support system surrounding the student. Fan and Chen (2001) argued that academic success is often the product of multiple intersecting variables, including family background, school conditions, and student attitudes. Nwachukwu (2017) highlighted that students who receive consistent parental support emotionally, materially, and socially tend to outperform peers who lack such support. In this framework, academic achievement is viewed as the result of the interactions among the four identified parental factors. It is the measure by which the influence of these independent variables will be assessed in the context of Sagbama's public senior secondary schools.

In summary, this conceptual framework provides a structured understanding of how parental characteristics specifically education, income, support, and socio-religious influences interact to shape the academic outcomes of senior secondary school students. It aligns closely with the study's objectives and provides a basis for data collection, analysis, and interpretation in subsequent chapters.



Understanding these relationships is crucial for designing interventions and policies aimed at improving student performance in Sagbama and similar communities.

## Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design using a descriptive survey approach. The descriptive survey design was considered appropriate as it allows for the collection of data from a large number of respondents at a single point in time. This approach is suitable for the current investigation, which examined parent economic and educational factors on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The descriptive design enabled the researcher to gather factual information through the administration of structured questionnaires to selected students. The design also permitted the analysis of variables such as parent economic and education factors and how they relate to students' academic performance. The quantitative nature of the study further allowed for the use of statistical tools to describe, analyze, and interpret data, thereby helping to answer the research questions and test the formulated hypotheses. The population of this study consisted of all students Senior Secondary School (SS1–SS3) across the 29 public secondary schools in Sagbama Local Government Area. Based on records obtained from the schools, the total population was 9,464 students distributed across the following schools (Bayelsa State Ministry of Education, 2025). These students represent a diverse group in terms of age, gender, family background, and academic ability. They were considered appropriate for this study because they are at a critical stage in their academic journey and are directly affected by parent economic and educational factor in their pursuit of educational success. The choice of Sagbama Local Government Area as the study location was based on accessibility, the presence of a significant number of public schools, and the observed academic performance variations among students in the area. The sample size for this study was determined using Taro Yamane formula, which is suitable for calculating sample size from a known population. The formula is stated as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + N (e)^2)$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = population size

e = margin of error (0.05)

Given a total population of 9,464 senior secondary students, and assuming a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error, the sample size was calculated as:

$$n = 9,464 / (1 + 9,464)(0.05)^2$$

$$n = 9,464 / 1 + 9464(0.0025)$$

$$n = 9464 / 1+23.66$$

$$n = 9464/24.66 = 383.7$$

$$n = 384$$

Therefore, a sample size of 384 students were selected for this study.

The research adopts a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation from different schools and classes. Within each stratum, schools were randomly selected, and from the selected schools, students were randomly picked across SSS 1, SSS 2, and SSS 3 classes. This approach was used to ensure that the sample was representative of the entire senior secondary school student population in Sagbama Local Government Area, and to allow for meaningful comparisons across school types and class levels. Data were collected through the administration of structured questionnaires to a total of 384 students selected from public senior secondary schools in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The questionnaires will be personally distributed to the students by the researcher with the assistance of school authorities and class teachers to ensure proper coordination and minimize disruption to academic activities. Before administering the questionnaire, the researcher sought official permission from the school principals and obtain verbal consent from the participants. Clear instructions on how to respond to the items on the questionnaire were given to ensure clarity and accuracy. The



purpose of the research was also explained, and confidentiality of the respondents' information was assured.

Respondents were given ample time to complete the questionnaires, after which the researcher collected them on the same day to ensure a high return rate. In cases where questionnaires were not collected on the same day, follow-up visits were made. This procedure will help to ensure that the data collected is accurate, reliable, and useful for analysis. Ensuring that the research instrument used in this study is valid, the questionnaire was subjected to expert review. The initial draft of the questionnaire was presented to the research supervisor and two experienced lecturers in the field of Measurement and Evaluation for review. They assessed the instrument for clarity, relevance, content coverage, and alignment with the research objectives. Based on their feedback, necessary modifications were made to improve the wording of the items, eliminate ambiguity, and ensure that all items accurately reflected the variables being studied, namely, parent economic and education factors on academic performance. In terms of reliability, the instrument was pilot-tested on 30 senior secondary students not included in the main study. The responses were analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha method to determine the internal consistency of the items on the questionnaire. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.84, which indicates a high level of reliability, as a coefficient above 0.70 is generally considered acceptable in social science research. The data for this study was collected through the use of a structured questionnaire designed based on the research questions.

The questionnaire was administered in person by the researcher to senior secondary school students in selected public schools within Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. Before distributing the questionnaires, the researcher obtained permission from the appropriate school authorities and explained the purpose of the study to the students to ensure their cooperation. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and participation was voluntary. The researcher remained available on-site during the administration of the instrument to provide necessary clarification and ensure proper completion of the questionnaires. The filled questionnaires were retrieved immediately after completion to avoid loss or delay. The data collected from the administered questionnaires were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize and interpret responses to demographic variables and questionnaire items. While the testing of hypotheses, one-sample t-tests were employed to determine whether the mean responses of the students were significantly higher than the neutral midpoint of the Likert scale (2.5). This approach was appropriate because the study relied on students' perceptions of parent economic and education and no direct academic performance scores were collected. All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 25.0, and the hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Research Question One:** What are the parental economic factor that influence students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government in Bayelsa State?

**Table 1: Responses of Students on Parental Economic Status (N = 384)**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	St. Dev
1	My parents' financial support helps me concentrate on studies.	201	76	57	50	3.12	0.95
2	Lack of financial support at home affects my academic focus.	147	97	67	73	2.90	1.07
3	My parents help me with schoolwork or encourage me to study.	127	77	87	97	2.62	1.11

Table 1 indicated that parental economic status has a notable effect on students' academic performance. The item "My parents' financial support helps me concentrate on my studies" recorded the highest mean of 3.12 (SD = 0.95), showing that students who receive adequate financial support are more focused on



their academics. The statement “Lack of financial support at home affects my academic performance” had a mean of 2.90 (SD = 1.07), reinforcing that insufficient resources such as school fees, books, and uniforms negatively affect performance. However, the item “My parents help me with schoolwork or encourage me to study” recorded the lowest mean of 2.62 (SD = 1.11). Although above the decision benchmark of 2.50, this suggests that financial provision is more consistent than direct academic assistance in many homes. Overall, the findings confirm that parental economic status significantly influences students’ academic outcomes, mainly through the availability of financial resources that create a stable learning environment.

**Research Questions Two:** What are the parental educational background factors that influence students’ academic performance in Sagbama Local Government in Bayelsa State?

**Table 2: Responses of Students on Parental Educational Background (N = 384)**

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev
4	My parents level of education motivates me to do well in school	216	74	50	44	3.23	0.94
5	Educated parents are more involved in my academic activities	183	67	74	63	3.98	1.08
6	I find it easy to discuss academic issues with my parents	94	80	100	110	2.42	1.12
7	My Parents provide me with the basic school materials I need	154	76	98	56	2.88	1.05

Table 2 revealed varying levels of agreement among students on the influence of parental educational background. The highest mean score was obtained for the statement “My parents’ level of education motivates me to do well in school” (Mean = 3.23, SD = 0.94), suggesting that educated parents serve as strong role models, inspiring children to perform better academically. The item “Educated parents are more involved in my academic activities” recorded a mean of 2.98 (SD = 1.08), indicating that parental education enhances involvement in school-related matters such as monitoring assignments, providing guidance, and encouraging academic excellence. However, the lowest mean score was observed in the statement “I find it easy to discuss academic issues with my parents because they are educated” (Mean = 2.42, SD = 1.12), which falls below the criterion mean of 2.50. This suggests that parental education does not automatically translate to open academic communication in all families. Finally, the provision of learning resources (“My parents provide me with the basic school materials I need”) had a mean of 2.88 (SD = 1.05), showing moderate agreement that educated parents are better positioned to support their children materially. Overall, the findings indicate that parental educational background significantly influences students’ academic motivation, parental involvement, and provision of resources, although challenges remain in fostering open communication about academics.

### Hypotheses

Note on approach: Since the dataset does not include an objective academic performance score, the hypotheses were tested on whether students’ perceptions of the parental factors are significantly positive, that is, whether the mean response for each item is significantly greater than the neutral midpoint of 2.5 on the 4-point Likert scale. One-sample t-tests were used for this purpose, with the test value = 2.5, sample size

$N = 384$

$N=384$ , and significance level

$\alpha = 0.05$

$\alpha = 0.05$

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference between mean score of parental economic status and students’ academic performance in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

**Table 3: One-Sample t-Test for Parental Economic Status Items**

Item	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Decision
Parental Economic Status	1,156	2.85	1.15	10.24	0.000	Reject H <sub>0</sub>

The mean score ( $M = 2.86$ ) was significantly higher than the test value of 2.5,  $t(1538) = 12.17$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . This indicates that parental educational background has a significant positive influence on students' academic performance.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference between mean score of parents' educational background and students' academic performance in Sagbama Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

**Table 4: One-Sample t-Test for Parental Educational Background Items**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Decision
Parental Educational Background	1,539	2.86	1.15	12.17	0.000	Reject H <sub>01</sub>

The mean score ( $M = 2.86$ ) was significantly higher than the test value of 2.5,  $t(1538) = 12.17$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . This indicates that parental educational background has a significant positive influence on students' academic performance.

### Discussion of Findings

The study also highlighted the significant influence of parental economic status. Respondents agreed that financial stability directly affects their ability to concentrate, access learning materials, and stay committed to academic activities. Students from families that provide consistent financial support reported higher focus and less stress, whereas those from lower-income households face challenges due to inadequate resources. This finding reflects the conclusions of Adeyemi (2018) and Adedokun (2015), who observed that financial limitations often hinder students' academic engagement through absenteeism, lack of textbooks, or the need to contribute to household income. This aligned with Okon and Edet (2020), who noted that financially stable homes ensure the availability of learning resources such as textbooks, uniforms, transportation, and feeding, which enhance academic success. The implication is that poverty or financial instability can restrict access to essential learning inputs, reducing academic outcomes despite students' effort or intelligence. In the theoretical framework of Coleman's social capital theory, economic status complements the relational and normative support parents can provide; sufficient resources ensure that the family's social capital is not undermined by material constraints. In the Sagbama LGA, this suggests that economic disparities likely contribute to differences in the perceived quality of academic support students receive at home.

One of the most prominent findings is the impact of parental educational background. Students reported that parents with higher levels of formal education motivate them to excel, are more involved in school-related activities, and provide the basic materials necessary for learning. This aligns with earlier studies by Jeynes (2004) and Fan and Chen (2001), which establish parental education as a strong predictor of student success because educated parents are more likely to foster a literacy-rich environment, communicate high expectations, and offer effective academic guidance. Similarly, Adebayo (2021) emphasized that educated parents not only model academic success but also help students with assignments, monitor progress, and create environments conducive to learning. These findings imply that parents' level of education equips them with the awareness, language, and values needed to positively shape their children's schooling.

The finding also resonates with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the role of "more knowledgeable others" in the child's learning process. Educated parents are able to scaffold their



children's cognitive development, helping them navigate tasks within their Zone of Proximal Development. In the Sagbama context, where some families have limited educational attainment, this underscores the gap in home-based academic support that can exist between households.

## Conclusion

This study concluded that parents' economic and educational factors are critical to the academic experiences and outcomes of senior secondary school students in Sagbama Local Government Area. Parental education provides intellectual and motivational support; economic status ensures the availability of material resources. Together, these factors form a comprehensive support system that significantly enhances students' learning and academic behavior.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the followings were recommended:

1. Economic support for families facing financial constraints is also crucial. Community-based assistance programs, scholarships, and school-driven initiatives can help ensure that students from low-income households are not disadvantaged in terms of access to learning materials and opportunities.
2. Parents should be encouraged to actively monitor their children's academic progress, attend school activities, and create a home environment that promotes study and learning. Schools should strengthen communication with parents through regular feedback and engagement programs, ensuring that parents are adequately informed and equipped to support their children's education.

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