

**DIFFERENCES IN CHILDREN'S SCHOOL SUCCESS AND FAMILY  
BACKGROUNDS: A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF PUPILS' PERFORMANCE  
IN ENTRANCE EXAMINATION IN IBADAN, NIGERIA**

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<b>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</b> <p>This study reviewed the socio-economic backgrounds of pupils from various family structures (Monogamous, polygamous, single-parent and orphan children) against their academic performances in Ibadan North-East municipality of Ibadan, Nigeria.</p> <p>The diverse contending studies on how the socio-economic backgrounds of these family structures aid children’s academic attainments were examined.</p> <p>The data for this study was gathered in April, 2012. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection method. A total of two hundred and twenty pupils between the ages of 10 to15 in junior secondary schools were sampled, N=220 and 8 teachers were interviewed from the various pupils’ schools.</p> <p>Findings from this study revealed that no significant differences existed in the pupils’ levels of academic attainment and ethnic background, while a significant difference was found between the monogamous and polygamous pupils’ religions across the various family structures observed. However, majority pupils’ level of computer literacy was found to be poor. No significant differences were also recorded in the pupils’ parents’ educational achievement and occupational status, as the majority of the parents were found to be at the working class level.</p> <p>Based on the levels of the pupils’ academic achievement, this study recommends: the need for effective parental involvement with children’s academic activities, implementation of strategic initiative programme aimed at assisting children who are socioeconomically disadvantaged and to generally improve the pupils’ literacy levels.</p>	
<b>Asiasanat – Keywords:</b> academic performance; pupils; Family backgrounds, family structure, socioeconomic position.	

## Content

1 INTRODUCTION .....	5
2 FAMILY BACKGROUND AND SCHOOL SUCCESS .....	8
2.1 <i>Definition of terms</i> .....	8
2.1 <i>Education system in Nigeria</i> .....	9
2.2 <i>Reported examination outcomes in Oyo State Nigeria</i> .....	13
2.3 <i>Socioeconomic status and its related concepts</i> .....	18
2.4 <i>Socioeconomic position and educational attainment</i> .....	19
2.4 <i>Theories of socioeconomic position and child raising strategy</i> .....	21
2.5 <i>Socio-economic status, early literacy and factors contributing to academic performance</i> .....	26
3 FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT .....	30
3.1 <i>Parental education and children’s educational achievement</i> .....	31
3.2 <i>Parental occupation and children’s educational achievement</i> .....	32
3.3 <i>Family structure and educational attainment</i> .....	33
3.4 <i>Study conceptual framework</i> .....	36
4. RESEARCH METHODS.....	38
4.1 <i>The study research questions</i> .....	38
4.2 <i>Research design</i> .....	38
4.3 <i>Sample</i> .....	39
4.4 <i>Research instrument</i> .....	42
4.5 <i>Data analyses</i> .....	44
4.5.1 <i>Categorization of educational attainment</i> .....	44
4.5.2 <i>Categorization of occupational status and income</i> .....	45
5 RESULTS .....	48
5.1 <i>Comparison of pupils’ scores and family background</i> .....	48
5.2 <i>Parental academic supports and follow-ups</i> .....	50
5.3 <i>Pupils’ parents’ educational attainment</i> .....	56
5.4 <i>Parents’ occupational status</i> .....	59
5.5 <i>Pupils’ religions, languages and ethnic backgrounds</i> .....	61
5.6 <i>Teachers comments on pupils’ academic status</i> .....	63
6 DISCUSSION.....	67

6.1 Findings .....	67
6.2 Implications of the study .....	71
6.3 Limitations of the study.....	73
6.4 Recommendations for future research.....	73
Bibliography .....	75
APPENDICES.....	82
APPENDIX I .....	82
APPENDIX II .....	84
APPENDIX III .....	86
APPENDIX IV.....	88

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Recently, research has shown that family backgrounds which consist of family socioeconomic characteristics like parental education, family income, parents' occupation, single parenting, two-parent family and multiple spouse-family, parental attitude towards education and the general home environment, all constitute diverse contributions to the academic performance of children (Ajayi; Muraino; & Lawani 2011, 51-54).

Primary education serves as the first and most important educational foundation wherein the intellectual numeracy and literacy developments begin (Teboho 2000, 7). The need for quality primary education for all children irrespective of their family backgrounds and physical characteristics has been considered paramount by the United Nations in one of its development movements known as 'Education For All'. It has also been found as the second goal among the eight international development goals known as 'Millennium Development Goals' (MDGs) which the United Nations alongside with twenty-three international organizations have agreed to actualize before the end of the year 2015 (Justlists 2008, 1-2).

The Pupils in primary schools differ in family socioeconomic standings and access to socioeconomic resources that contribute to the level of their academic achievement to certain significant extent (Barry 2006, 21-25).

Over the years, there have been diverse contending qualitative and quantitative studies on the extent to which the socioeconomic positions of different family types aid children's academic success. Although, more studies are of the view that the socio-economic factors associated with certain family structures such as two-parent families, positively aid the progress of children's academic attainment in comparison to more than two-parent families, however, there is still a

high level of disagreement among researchers (Elbedour;Onwuegbuzie;Caridine;& Abu 2002, 264-266).

Nevertheless, few studies have been carried out comparing the differences in socioeconomic positions and academic success of primary school pupils from different family backgrounds in different subject areas in the sub Saharan African countries. This study is of great significance as it will reveal the similarities and differences in the academic and socioeconomic standings of the pupils from separate family backgrounds and; the situations of those pupils who are socioeconomically disadvantaged and, with poor academic growth.

This research mainly aims to compare and contrast the socioeconomic status and academic success of the pupils between the ages of 10 to 15 from different family backgrounds in junior secondary school one, in Ibadan North-East municipality, Oyo State, Nigeria. Ibadan is the capital city of Oyo State in Nigeria and it consists of six distinct municipalities among which is Ibadan North-East where the research was conducted.

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) launched in Nigeria by the President Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999 has really brought an immense development into the country's early education by providing all children with the free access to primary education. Nevertheless, it is essential to critically look into the academic achievement of these pupils at the end of their primary school education.

Aside from the government efforts to ensure the implementation of the Universal Basic Education, it is equally important to subject the levels of the children's school success to critical scrutiny at the end of their primary education in order to ascertain the actual levels of pupils' academic achievement.

According to the data supplied by UNICEF(2007, 1-2), 30% of pupils usually drop out of primary school while approximately 54% make it into secondary school and this situation has been due to socioeconomic difficulties. And this however lessens the possibility of attaining fully, Education for all before the end of 2015 in Nigeria as claimed by UNICEF.

Conclusively, since the aims of all education planners are to improve literacy at all levels, improve performance standard at schools and face out any prevalent case of pupils dropping out of school; it is accordingly necessary to seek sustainable solutions to the various academic problems encountered by the pupils; and to ensure sustainable improvement in the children's academic growth, educational attainment and access to quality education.

The focus of this study critically, is to review the actual socioeconomic standings of the pupils and their academic performance after the six-year primary school education. This mainly aims at revealing the actual socioeconomic positions of the pupils, basic socioeconomic needs of the pupils for their academics; including the existing connection between their academic achievement and their family background socioeconomic status.

## 2 FAMILY BACKGROUND AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

### 2.1 Definition of terms

This chapter discusses the theoretical frame work of socioeconomic backgrounds and educational achievement, factors that contribute to school success, previous research findings on the contributions of families' socioeconomic factors to academic achievement, the reported school success of the pupils and the Nigerian education system.

It is mandated for the purpose of this study to define these basic concepts due to their importance to this research work. These concepts include *academic performance, educational attainment, family background and its related terms*. These terms are used so often by educational researchers when discussing issues that concern the educational progress of the pupils and students generally. *Academic performance* or *academic achievement* refers to the score attained by an examinee in an administered standardized test. Academic achievement of students or pupils reveals the extent to which the learning objectives of the teachers and the institution as a whole are being realized (Melissa 2012, 1-2).

*Educational attainment* or *educational achievement* describes the topmost level of formal education a single individual has accomplished. Educational achievements are best ascertained through the administration of cognitive test, by usage of average grade point or national examination (Buchmann 2002, 154-155).

It is vital to note that both academic performance and educational achievement are both functions of the pupils' school effort; which is the amount of time and energy that the pupils expend in meeting the formal requirement established by their teachers and or school. (Carbonaro 2005, 27-34).



## **2.1 Education system in Nigeria**

Nigeria operates a former education system of 6-3-3-4 which can be described as a system that is consisted of four progressive institutional phases which are: 6 years of primary education, 3 years of junior secondary education, 3 years of senior secondary education and the minimum of 4 years of higher education from any tertiary institution which include the university, polytechnic, colleges of education and other higher institution of specialization. The language of instruction throughout the various levels of education in Nigeria is English. Furthermore, it is important to add that the private investors are also involved in the 6-3-3-4 education system in Nigeria. The State Primary Education Board (SUBEB) is responsible for the management of the government owned primary schools in their respective state.

The 6-3-3-4 education system is planned to guarantee the students' attainment of intellectual capability after the first nine years of basic education at the end of the junior secondary school which will enable the students that want to further their career in areas of apprenticeships or vocational training programmes to do so (Nick & Robert 2004, 1-4).

### ***Pre-primary education in Nigeria***

Nigerian government is not responsible for preprimary education usually referred to as nursery school education and day care services for preschool children. Parents who can afford to train their children in the nursery school before they attain the primary school age of six do so at their own expenses through private schools that run nursery education which usually comprises of daycare and nursery classes.

Recently in October, 2011, the Nigerian government has proposed to implement a new system of 1-6-3-3-4 of education which is going to include a one-year Early Childhood Education (ECE) for the children of five-year-olds. This can be considered as an attempt on the part of the

Nigerian government to intensify the adherence of its education system to the Universal Basic Education (Boco 2011, 1-3).

### ***Primary school education***

The State Primary Education Board (SUBEB) is responsible for the management of the government owned primary schools in their respective states. Primary school education in Nigeria is fee free while parents still have to take care of some expenses like buying of school uniform which is used by all pupils in primary schools all over the country, books and stationeries, and some other miscellaneous expenses associated with the schooling of the pupils. The school fees are totality taken care of by the government at the primary education level. This is tailored towards the commitment of the Nigerian government to the United Nations Education For ALL (EFA) movement and the Free Universal Basic Education that upholds the right of every child to compulsory, free and qualitative universal basic education which was launched in Nigeria in 2004 (UNESCO 2005, 10).

Children in Nigeria are expected to begin their primary school at the age of six and finish at age twelve. At the end of primary six which is the final class in primary school, the pupils sit for the annual Common Entrance Examination which is a prerequisite for entry into the junior secondary school and are finally awarded First School Leaving Certificate (BFFA 2012, 1-3).

### ***Secondary school education***

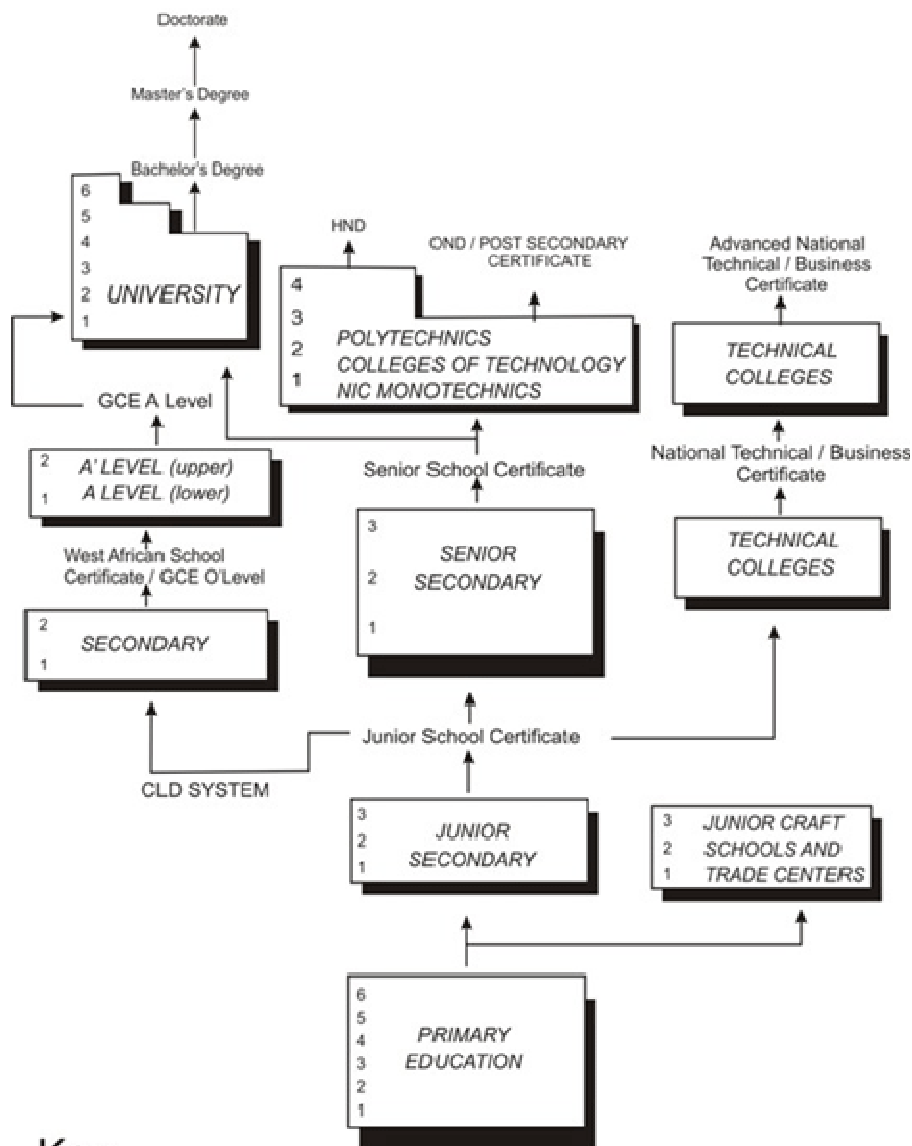
The State Ministry of Education is legislated to be responsible for the administration, funding and management of all the state owned secondary schools in Nigeria. The secondary education is being divided into three years of junior secondary and three years of senior secondary. The pupils who are successful in the Common Entrance Examination and have acquired the Primary School Leaving Certificate proceed into the junior secondary school. The government secondary

schools are tuition free with minimum or no levy being paid by the students to cover the cost of school maintenance (Teboho 2000, 4-5).

At the successful completion of the junior secondary school known as the basic education, the students are accorded the opportunity to engage in the three-year junior secondary education. Students are obliged to write the Junior Secondary School Examination (JSSE) as a prerequisite for the Junior Secondary School Certificate (JSCE) and to progress into the senior secondary school. The first nine years of the Nigerian education system is planned to guarantee the students' attainment of intellectual capability which will enable the students that want to further their career in areas of apprenticeships or vocational training programmes at technical colleges, commercial schools or private business organizations to do so besides proceeding into the senior secondary school. The senior secondary school one to three consists of three classes of specializations which are science, art and commercial and the successful completion of senior secondary school guarantees the eligibility to matriculate into the higher institutions if the students are being successful in the senior secondary school certificate examinations and the higher institution matriculation examinations (Nick & Robert 2004, 1-4).

Onyukwu (2011, 1-2) the Educational Advisor, Education USA Nigeria describes the educational system in Nigeria with the framework drawn below:

Figure 1:



Key

- 3
  - 2
  - 1
- = Study in years

## **2.2 Reported examination outcomes in Oyo State Nigeria**

All pupils graduating from the primary schools in Nigeria and want to further into the State Junior Secondary Schools are obliged to sit for the State Common Entrance examination in the various provincial States where their primary schools are located.

The Nigeria State Junior Secondary National Common Entrance Examination is usually organized by Ministry of Education in every State throughout the confederation. The State Common Entrance Examination is likewise considered to be the Primary School Leaving Certificate.

In the registration process, the pupils are meant to choose junior secondary schools of they wish to attend. And in order to be admitted into their chosen junior secondary schools, they must meet up with the cutoff points.

It is crucial to mention that different National Common Entrance Examinations are usually written by graduating pupils in Nigerian primary schools in order to get admitted into Federal Junior Secondary Schools, State Secondary Schools and Private secondary school of their choices. Thus, each type of Junior Secondary Schools whether Federal or State, have their required certified Common Entrance Examinations (ToscanyAcademy 2013, 1-3).

The analysis of the result of Common Entrance examination conducted for the primary school graduating pupils that proceeded into the state junior secondary school in Oyo State, Nigeria in 2009 reveals that the cut-off mark out of the total of 100% in all the six municipalities of Ibadan metropolis was 40%. It is essential to state at this juncture that some pupils who scored below

but close to the cut-off point had been found to be admitted into some Junior Secondary School in exceptional circumstances.

While in all other 28 local governments the cut-off mark was 30%. These cutoff points were being determined by the extent to which the pupils passed the common entrance examination.

This analysis further shows that 103188 pupils applied for the exam, 102689 pupils eventually sat for the exam, 499 pupils were absent; 101506 pupils passed the exam and were qualified while 1183 pupils did not meet the cut-off points in their respective local government areas (TESCOM 2009).

This is however academically not good enough. The academic and educational achievement inequality gaps between pupils should be closed and their general academic performance and educational attainments should be improved if the nation is to produce skillful and well educated individuals that will be highly instrumental to the achievement of sustainable future growth and development of the country.

Any nation wherein the pupils' academic performance and educational attainment are low at the primary school level is much likely to face a potential threat of intellectual backwardness. As the pupils' literacy and numeracy performances drop, the situation could however lead to difficulties in coping with the demands of further formal education and might consequently result into the pupils dropping out of school. This eventually will increase the size of illiterate population in the nation with a negative multiplier effect of increase in the percentage of unskilled and semiskilled labour force.

Additionally, high level of illiteracy and low level of numeracy contribute to persistent poor academic performance and low educational attainment which will rather render the pupils

deficient to compete with their future counterparts with high academic standing and educational attainment both nationally and internationally. Since studies have shown that illiteracy is highly associated with poverty, poor health, and unemployment that appear paramount among the challenges which the United Nations and notable International Nongovernmental Organizations are striving hard to assuage mostly in the developing and underdeveloped countries as they serve as severe hindrances to sustainable growth and development. Despite a remarkable increase in the enrollment rate of pupils in primary school in Nigeria, large number of children at the primary school level lack basic human and material needs to earn successfully their primary education (UNESCO 2010, 44-50). According to the World Bank report published in 2011, “*School enrollment; primary (% gross) in Nigeria*” it was stressed that less than 84 percent of the primary school age children were actually enrolled in school while the remaining fifteen percent were actually not enrolled at all or were being dropped out of school.

Hence, it becomes necessary beyond all reasonable doubt to call for an intensive investigation of other out-of-school factors which can contribute to the academic performance of the pupils at this early stage of education. Most importantly, family’s factors which have earlier been mentioned will be the most appropriate to be fully considered as the family serves as the first children’s agent of socialization.

### ***Factors contributing to school success***

More importantly, it would be helpful to review the factors which have notable contributions to the pupils’ school success. ***School success*** can be referred to as the successful completion of an education programme with an earned certificate. Successful schooling signifies the students have been equipped with the knowledge, attitude, and other problem solving skills entailed and

expected to be inculcated into the student during the course of the education programme (SSBA 2000, 2-5).

Studies have shown that the following factors need to be well taken cognizance of in order to facilitate improvement in the levels of children's school success:

***Parental involvement:*** findings from the study carried out by Harvard Graduate School of Education shows that the consistent parental educational assistance rendered to their children goes a long way in aiding their academic success at school. They noted that persistent communication with the children based on their academic achievement, shared reading activities with the children, being present in their children's school parental occasions and parent-teachers association meetings. In this study, the findings strongly support that involvement of parents with the children's education both within and out of school usually have great positive contributions to the children's academic success (Thurston 2005, 235-237).

This findings have also been replicated in Nigeria, Adeniji & Omale (2010, 5) in their study, "teaching reading comprehension in selected primary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria," maintains that besides government and teachers, parents need to get themselves highly involved in assisting their children to develop their reading skills which will help their academic performance in every other subject.

Parental efforts aimed at assisting their children to attain good academic grade is highly important and cannot be over emphasized. Pupils' learning starts from home far before being registered at the primary school and effective parents should encourage inculcating into their children the reading and writing skills apart from the learning activities which they are being exposed to while at school. It is essential to note that due to the present situation in Nigeria, the government cannot meet the various material academic needs of the pupils and there is the need



for conscious assistance on the part of the parents in providing their children the needed material academic needs. According to the EFA report it was found that:

*National budgets in poor countries are under pressure. Sub-Saharan Africa faces a potential loss of around USD4.6 billion annually in financing for education in 2009 and 2010, equivalent to 10% reduction in spending per primary school pupil (2010:4)*

Beyond the primary school level, parental involvement in assisting their children academically has been found influential. According to the report of Oludipe (2009, 101-102) it was maintained that parts of the factors found to be responsible for the students' poor academic performance in sciences in Nigeria was the home environment which is to a large extent determined by the parents. In the same study of early literacy acquisition and parental involvement in Osun State, Nigeria, findings revealed that out of 360 sampled parents less than 21% was found to be actively involved with their children in literacy acquisition.

***Having enough rest:*** research of the Sleep Institute, Spring Hill, Florida has confirmed that it is important for children to observe a more elongated time to sleep than the adults. It is being claimed that poor academic achievement in certain cases have been due to inadequate duration of sleep and this situation is mostly unknown to the children. The social knowledge, attitudes, minds, attentiveness, retention levels and grades are all usually aided by the extent of sleep observed by children and teens. The institute doctors advice that children should have a sound sleep of not less than nine hours at night to ensure bright levels of thinking for them to be fully productive at their studies (Downey 2007, 1-4).

***Time management:*** it has been deemed essential for children to balance their time between school and out of school activities. Findings from research carried out in Groningen Institute for

Educational Research, University of Groningen, Nederland, on the direct relationship of student success to time management show that children that balanced their time effectively both between in school and out of school undertakings tend to meet up with the demands of their school works and assignment which result in good grade while those with unbalanced time management with most of their time diverted towards out of school engagements are likely to achieve lower grades. Also, it is being stated in the findings that time management while studying for test and exams tends to have the same outcome (Clark 2002, 1-5).

***Quality of school district:*** school regions that have diverse extracurricular activities usually avail the children the opportunity to be motivated than the districts characterized with lesser activities of such. Also, the presence of highly dedicated, experienced and educated teachers and other staffs provides the children the opportunity to grow academically at a faster pace than those without such skilled personnel around them. Thus, the quality of available human resources in schools greatly determines the level at which the pupils will be impacted (Cunningham 2013, 2).

### **2.3 Socioeconomic status and its related concepts**

Socioeconomic background is one of the key issues which are being majorly considered by researchers whenever factors which have influence on the children's academic performance are being discussed. Socioeconomic backgrounds of parents have been said to have intellectual credibility in terms of its contribution to educational attainment of the children (Gary;Julie;Frank;& John 2000, 7-8). There are different aspect of socioeconomic background which are said to be indispensable to the growth and development of children's academic attainment.

These socioeconomic terms are conceived in different manners as follows:

*socioeconomic position* according to Gary et al (2000:9) is defined as ' the relative position of a family or individual in a social structure, based on their access to scarce and valued resources such as wealth, educational and occupational prestige.

*Socioeconomic background* is said to be understood as the socioeconomic position of an individual's family of origin. Furthermore, it is maintained that the children's socioeconomic background can be attributed to the socioeconomic situation of their family and more specifically to their parental socioeconomic position. For this reason and in the case of school students, socioeconomic position and socioeconomic background refer to characteristics of a family in terms of educational achievement, occupational status and wealth (Ajayi;Lawani;& Muraino 2011,243-249 ).

*Socioeconomic status* is a multi-dimensional concept and it is being defined as the hierarchy used in describing an individual's social rank or position as shown by the level of certain conceptual factors such as employment, occupation, educational attainment, income and wealth. Thus, socioeconomic background and socioeconomic position can therefore said to be synonymous and thus can be used interchangeably (Gary;Julie;Frank;& John 2000, 9-10).

*Disadvantage* in socioeconomic term is used to describe individuals who are systematically badly off in respect to social (educationally) outcomes (Gary;Julie;Frank;& John 2000, 11).

#### **2.4 Socioeconomic position and educational attainment**

It is of great concern to educators, researchers and policy makers to acknowledge the extent at which students of low socioeconomic positions appear to be disadvantaged or badly off their counterparts from higher socioeconomic background in areas of academic performance, educational attainment, including acquisition of post-secondary school certificate.

According to the United Nations programme known as 'Education For All movement (EFA),' which is intensively committed to the achievement of six main goals by 2015 which are: early childhood care, primary education, literacy, gender equality and provision of quality education for children, youth and adult (UNESCO 2010, 41-94). These goals widely support the acquisition of quality education and desirable learning outcome for all children irrespective of the status of their family socioeconomic background; as it is contained in 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights' that every child and adult is entitled to education.

However, it is affirmed that when a relationship between educational attainment and socioeconomic position exists, those pupils who appear to be from low socioeconomic background encounter certain level of unfavorable situations while at school and thereafter in adulthood and this situation has been claimed to result into problems of human resource wastage, inefficiency of required occupational capabilities and consequently economic inefficiencies (Gary et al 2000, 7).

Research has shown that socioeconomic background of children has a correlation with the level of their academic attainment and for that reason the issue should be paid sufficient attention by the policy makers in any nation (Barry 2005, 25 -26).

Thus, they all together aid the growth of children academic attainment without each factor having a specific defined influence on the children's academic performance. The collaboration of different socioeconomic factors like adequate financial support, parental academic assistance, availability of educational facilities at home, parental and children's value for education; are all jointly influencing the children's academic growth and performance (Lareau & Weininger 2006, 10 -15).

## **2.4 Theories of socioeconomic position and child raising strategy**

These theories discuss the different ways through which parents of different social classes train their children and the outcome of their child raising strategy on the children's academic attainment.

### ***Social capital and educational achievement***

This research work critically looks into the sociological theory of social and cultural capital and how they apply to pupils' educational attainment. Studies have established that social class is to a large extent reproduced by parents' ways of training their children (Lareau & Weininger 2006, 11 -16).

It is noteworthy need to have a clear understanding of how children are provided with the backup resources which contribute significantly to their academic success and educational achievement right from their inception family. And this in turn contributes to the kind of career opportunities and varieties available to them.

This study adopts the Annet Lareau theoretical views of “***concerted cultivation***” practices of the middle class and upper class parents in child rearing and “***the accomplishment of natural growth***” which dominates the child rearing patterns of the working class families and poor parents. Annette Lareau and a number of other researchers from other fields of study like sociology and psychology have confirmed the necessity of ***concerted cultivation*** which characterizes the middle class way of child rearing to be fully beneficial for the children's sound intellectual activeness in interacting in a defined social institution. Annette Lareau has conceived ***concerted cultivation*** as the act of training the child by means of a structured way of life characterized by organized critical and essential thinking in order to get them prepared and fit for

interacting and to cope with the demands of human interpersonal relationship. While the *accomplishment of natural growth* involves bringing up a child under a life pattern wherein the child is being provided the necessary physical means to grow, opportunity to interact and with less emphasis on fostering intellectual and critical thinking growth (Bodovski 2007, 6-10).

Parents at different levels of social class on social strata adopt different methods of training and interacting with their children such as linguistically, encouraging the children to inculcate certain values and develop certain interest which these parents attach high values to. According to the work of Bernstein( 1975, 73-84) it is claimed that working-class parent predominantly make use of “*restricted codes*” which involves speaking lesser vocabulary to their children, having lesser discussion and interrogation on continuous basis comparatively with middle-class parents that usually adopt “*elaborated code*” in the process of bringing up their children. The middle class parents tend to use more vocabulary discuss and interrogate their children more often and generally have closer intellectual interaction with their children. In the research of Bodovski (2007, 8-9) he concludes that children from professional homes most probably acquire double the amount of words that are known by children of working class or children from poor background. This notion is also supported in the analysis of Annette Lareau wherein she asserts that children from middle class homes frequently have more knowledge of vocabulary words and consequently attain higher score in standardized and achievement tests aimed at assessing verbal capability.

According to Annette Lareau (2003, 3-5) in her elaborated theories, she describes how these parents’ attitudes towards the general academic growth of their children vary. Lareau holds that the distinct parenting styles are usually responsible for the differences in the level of

reproduction of cultural attitudes and knowhow of their children. She championed that though all parents take care of their children, however the degree to which they consider certain kinds of care important for their children vary among parental social class. In her theory, she categorizes the poor and working class parents as those who consider the provisions of basic needs which include clothing, food and shelter paramount for their children. And she states further that the working class children usually reserve lesser time to study and they often devote most of their free time for pleasurable recreational activities like playing games and the likes. On the contrary, the researcher affirms that the middle and upper class parents predominantly focus on their children's intellectual, aspiratory and attitudinal growth and improvement.

To support this view, these practices perpetuate the intellectual development in children; with the children of middle-class parents having to attain faster, and at the same time, higher intellectual growth than their contemporaries from working –class parents. This can however be said to be highly beneficial to the children at the primary school level in helping them develop a strong and a flying start academic foundation which will enable them cope faster with the demands of further education as they go higher on the education ladder.

For instance, according to the work of Adeniji & Omale (2010, 5) in some selected primary school in Oyo state, Nigeria, it was established that when the pupils are supplied with the necessary stationery and text books in an appropriate milieu with competent teachers they will develop proficient reading and writing skills which will greatly assist them to excel in every subject especially English language.

### ***Cultural capital and educational attainment***

Aside from the value which the parents on different social strata encourage their children to internalize which influence their chances of succeeding educationally, the cultural

capital of the family also goes a long way in assisting the children to be quiet successful academically. In the conceptual approach of cultural capital, postulated by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986, 241-258) he described three kinds of cultural capital. He explained the *embodied state* which conglomerates the dispositions or personalities, attitudes or manners, preferences and behaviors which the children imbibe in the course of socialization.

Thus, parents who train their children in the similar way of the middle class parents who are for instance used to the adoption of *elaborated code* when speaking to their children tend to encourage them to be well disposed to academic life, develop a positive related attitude towards succeeding academically, have prioritized preferences for their academic attainment and it can also be presumed that it will help the children to integrate and socialize easily with their teachers and fellow students at school and this will subsequently assist them in their academics. As regards the views of Bourdieu which he added that family that adopts an inclusive, upright and well-structured cultural capital does a great favour to the children by equipping them to cope with the demands of their academic work at school.

The second type of cultural capital postulated by Bourdieu is known as the *objectified state*, which is synonymously categorized as the *cultural goods* and it consists of the facilities that can aid learning processes of the children. These facilities include the availability of educational material resources such as text books and computers, computer games,



access to room conducive to study, provision of extramural lessons, and other educational items that aid students' educational achievement.

It should be deemed an undisputed fact that the availabilities of educational materials at the disposal of children can really assist them to study better and learn more which will consequently enable them to grow scholarly and intellectually. For instance, items like games have been proven recently in *Gamification* concept that the implementation of game-kind method in designing teaching and learning processes to improve pupils cognitive, emotional and social conduct (Lee & Hammer 2011, 1-5). Hence, parents that cogitate it is necessary to make available these educational items at the disposal of the pupils create a plus to their capability to study harder and with convenience, as being described by Bourdieu.

Bourdieu described the third type of cultural capital as the *institutionalized state* which mainly consists of the attained educational and academic qualifications. Bourdieu sees the possession of educational qualifications as an avenue to accruing certain social advantages in the course of social struggle for resource benefits. Bourdieu states further that possessing the *institutionalized* cultural capital is highly advantageous in social competition as the possession of known technical knowhow, skills, speech pattern, and mannerism partly aids an individual's rank in the social strata.

Bourdieu affirms the educational system is partly a remote instrument of assigning the greater ranks to educated individuals in the society. He believes upper class teachers always reward pupils that exhibit know-how, conduct and approach that are characterized by the middle and upper class backgrounds. This regular rewarding act of the teachers sequentially benefits pupils

from the upper class families. Thus, it keeps them focused and encouraged to study harder and attain better academic grade than their counterparts from working class homes.

Bodovski( 2007, 7-8) upholds that the middle class children are usually compelled by their parents to acquire the creative expertise and attribute which are necessitated for the occupations that dominate the middle class career. On the contrary, they assert that working class children are mostly trained to be respectful by their parents and the stress on innovative competence is poorly maintained.

Table 1. Annette Lareau Child- Raising Strategies and Unequal Childhood (2003)

	<i>“Accomplishment of Natural Growth”</i>	<i>“Concerted Cultivation”</i>
Perception of parental responsibilities	Parents provide for the physical needs of children.	Parents foster their children’s talents, opinions and skills
Leisure time	TV and playing with siblings and neighbors	Organized extracurricular activities
Language use	Directives	Reasoning and negotiation
Institutions	Dependence, sense of powerlessness	Criticism and intervention on behalf of the child
Result	Sense of constraint	Sense of entitlement

Source: Bodovski K. (2007, 9). *Concerted cultivation, students’ behavior, and unequal achievement in elementary school.*

## **2.5 Socio-economic status, early literacy and factors contributing to academic performance**

Literacy is a fundamental educational tool which is highly instrumental to children’s academic success most especially in the early stage. Studies have shown that early literacy is a momentous precondition to pupils’ academic achievement and it also helps by serving as a strong backing when they begin their early education at school (Kennedy et al 2012, 13-20). Thus, prevalence of

any problem during the process of early literacy acquisition may stand as a stumbling block to their later academic motivation and achievement

In view of the report of National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) in University of Columbia, New York, which points out that pupils from working class or low-income background start their school attendance far –off behind their counterpart pupils from the upper class family. Their findings states as follows:

- *Prior to preschool enrolment, the topmost socioeconomic class children surpass the children from the least socioeconomic category with a regular reasoning grade of 60 percent.*
- *During the age of 4 years, the working class children who mostly live beneath the poverty line usually lag 18 months behind in their reasoning and general behavioral exhibition standard for their age group. While at the age of 10 years, the gap however remains and it grows wider in the case of children living in the most deprived families*
- *Middle class children who have highly educated parents usually have knowledge of thereabout 12,000 words during their third grade while their counterparts from the working class homes whose parents are less educate and communicate less with their children typically know about 4,000 words.*

The above findings appear to be consistent with the findings of Bernstein (1975, 73-84) and Laureau (2003, 3-5) theories of *concerted cultivation* and the *accomplishment of natural growth* discussed earlier.

Research in early education studies have proven that literacy stands as one of the most influential determinants of pupils' educational success. The literacy acquisition activities carried out at home by the pupils' parents in assisting them to develop their cognitive competence in advance of their nursery education goes a long way in improving their proficiency in reading and writing which tacitly assist them in other subject areas (Knitzer & Klein 2007, 1-3).

These findings have also been substantiated by the study of Lee & Burkam (2002, 1-2). They verify that the level of the pupils' literacy development prior to beginning preschool is largely based on the social and economic milieus under which the pupils are being nurtured. And the differences in the level of the children's literacy usually account for their academic and intellectual capabilities. They prove that there exists above 60% difference in the level of cognitive and intellectual competence between the middle class and poor family children most especially in the pupils' language understanding and communicative proficiencies. They attribute this situation to be the remote consequences of inadequate intelligent communication between the pupils and their parents.

Irrefutably, it becomes obvious that the early literacy and the level of academic aiding assistance derived from home by the children deeply hinge on their home background social and cultural capital (Laureau 2003, 3-5; Buchmann 2002, 378-382; Adeniji & Omale, 2010, 5).

The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), University of Columbia, New York, USA, has also found certain risk factors which are associated with the socioeconomic background of most poor families and which have distinct negative contributions to children's outcomes at school by means of *Young Child Risk Calculator* tool.

These risk factors as described by the NCCP are detailed below:

- i. ***Households without English speaker***: this is described as the home wherein the members above fourteen years of age do not speak English language.
- ii. ***Large family***: this is explained as a home which consists of over four children.
- iii. ***Low parent education***: this risk factor refers to parents without high school certificate.
- iv. ***Residential mobility***: it concerns relocating from place of residence more than once in a year.
- v. ***Single-parent***: this has to do with children living in a home of a parent who is not married.
- vi. ***Teen mother***: this is a risk faced by children of teenagers.
- vii. ***Non-employed parents***: this involves the risk associated with children of unemployed parents in the preceding year.
- viii. ***Economic hardship***: economic hardship conglomerates ***low income, poverty*** and ***extreme poverty***.

All these risk factors described above are said to be connected to the children academic failure in schools and children improvised health. Above and beyond, economic hardship has been described as the most dangerous of all. Thus, children who face any of these risk factors stand an endangering tendency to regress in their academic attainment. The more the number of the factors children encounter the harder it becomes for them to perform academically (Taylor;Shannon;& Sheila 2012, 1-2).

### **3 FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

In this chapter, detailed analyses of family background, family structure such as one-parent family versus two-parent families, and their socioeconomic variables which include parental education, income and occupation against academic performance and the study conceptual frameworks will be critically reviewed.

Family background has been conceived as the conglomeration of the family socioeconomic factors which consist of the following three components: parents' education, parents' occupation and family income; and the family social and cultural capital, family structure and other family demographic features (Marjoribank 1996, 378-382). A better understanding of the distinct disparities of the pupils' family backgrounds against their academic attainments in schools and the connections between them could support the society at large to formulate a program of action that will assist in bailing out pupils from poor family backgrounds with low academic status.

This is strictly corroborated by the view of Buchmann that:

*“it is crucial to know how students in a population are distributed on a wide range of family factors that are themselves important predictors of achievement; only then can we assess the role of the school in achieving its social and economic objectives, most notably its efficacy in providing greater equality of educational opportunity (151, 2002).”*

Conclusively, all the family background factors mentioned above jointly contribute to the children's academic growth and it is weighty to note that they comprise the ultimate influence on the children's academic attainment and this fact cannot be over emphasized (Majoribank 1996, 378-382).

### **3.1 Parental education and children's educational achievement**

Parental educational attainment is being claimed to be the most positive influential socioeconomic factors to children's academic achievement. Highly educated parents have been proven to usually know the significance of educational attainment to their children and they tend to lay much emphasis on it by encouraging their children to study hard, provide them with necessary learning aid materials which Bourdieu refers to as the *cultural goods* like books, study desk and chair, interactive video disc, computers and other educational items (Merrill;Dubow;Paul;& Huesmann, 2009, 224–249).

Ajayi;Lawani;& Muraino (2011, 248-249) in their study of two thousand four hundred students sampled from sixty secondary schools in nine different municipalities in Ogun State, Nigeria invoke the same claim from their finding that children of parents with high educational status maintain high academic ambition and lay significant values on educational attainment due to the continuous and persuasive academic assistance derived from their family background.

In the same vein, the study concludes in his study that students who perform excellently well in their studies do usually have parents with highly educated backgrounds that provide high academic assistance and follow-ups for their children, and encourage them to learn.

Furthermore, maternal educational attainment has been linked to positive academic performance by the children. The children see their mother as their closest agent of socialization in the family and they tend to learn most from their mother in their early stage of life; and furthermore, educated mothers appear to be in better position to assist their children to improve academically. Children who have educated mothers in most cases have often been found to be provided

environment which is conducive for their academic development and this has been academically beneficial to them (Ara 2012, 86-87).

### **3.2 Parental occupation and children's educational achievement**

Occupations of parents have been claimed to usually determine to a certain considerable extent the level of resources which the parents will be able to invest into their children's education.

Parental occupation is thus considered to guarantee or determine access to learning opportunities and resources that plays significant role in learning outcomes (Akinsanya;Ajayi;& Salomi 2011, 248-249). In the same studies, it was concluded that students that usually attain high academic achievement often come from families with high occupational status. The Canadian PISA report (2006) also shows that parents' occupations appear to influence the level and direction of children's academic achievement (OECD, 2006).

It is highly significant to acknowledge that learning aid facilities serve as additional means of helping the children to develop their academic skills when they are being provided at home.

However, parents of low occupation status and low income level tend to lay little emphasis on the provision of facilities in the homes for children's learning and they tend to lay relatively less emphasis on organized learning activities (Laureau 2003, 25-26).

As it has been maintained that poverty is one of the formidable obstacles to educational achievement and general academic growth, it is worthwhile to pay weighty attention to the extent the children's educational material needs are being adequately supplied (UNESCO 2010, 19 - 22). Thus, from the claims of the previous studies on parental occupation, it is credible to state that the higher the occupational status of parents the richer their income and the more they are able to supply the educational needs of the children.



### **3.3 Family structure and educational attainment**

Family structure has been described as the demographic features of a family and has also found to be one of important predictors of the children's academic attainment (Douglas 1995, 746-750). Family structure is viewed in terms of the family's consisted number of children, and parents such as whether the family has one parent, two parents, or more than two parents (Buchmann 2002, 169-170).

Besides, family structure has been found to have been quiet influential on the mental growth and development of the children (Hamdan;Auerbach;& Apter 2009, 756). As this research work focuses on Nigeria, the family structures predominant in Nigeria will be briefly examined. They are:

***Monogamous family:*** is a family type that involves a man being married to only one woman.

***Polygamous family:*** this can be described as a family system wherein a man is married simultaneously to two or more women.

***Single-parent family:*** in this kind of family, children live with either the father or the mother but not both.

Parenting as a family background factor has been found to be very important because it has a lot of influencing contributions to the children's academic growth. For instance, it is also claimed that single parent household appears to be less effective when compared with two-parent households due to inadequate social and economic resources and it is also argued that children whose parents are divorced usually have worse academic performance than their counter parts from intact families (Jeyne 2002, 189-194). However, there have been an ongoing controversy on whether two parents family(monogamy) has more positive influence on children's academic

success than more than two parent family(polygamy) over a period of years

(Salman;Anthony;Corin;& Hasan 2002, 756).

Studies have shown that there exist negative relationship between family size and children's academic performance. One of the eminent claims which support this view is the "***resource dilution hypothesis***" which avows that the higher the number of children in a family the more diluted and lesser effective the academic aiding resources such as parental attention, finance and other educational aiding material resources become (Downy 1995, 748-750). This claim has been one of the findings against the suitability of polygamy for the children's academic growth.

Moreover, it is being observed that polygamous children encounter relatively more situation of marital conflict, financial stress and general family disruptions than the children of monogamous families and which usually contribute adversely to their academic performance at school (Eldedour;Bart;Hektner;Al-Kranawi & Lightman 2000, 258-264).

Findings from the study conducted in Oyo State, Nigeria, show that significant differences were found in the academic achievement of students from monogamous and polygamous families. The monogamous students outperformed their colleagues from polygamous family and it is added that parts of the reasons for the differences are the contributions of their home backgrounds and human relations (Adika 1987, 8-10).

On the contrary, some researchers disagree in speculation with the notion that children from monogamous family excel academically than their counterparts from polygamous homes by contending that where there is large family like the polygamous family, children would have a large number of exemplary and this situation is usually beneficial to their academic growth because they consider the polygamous family as the kind which gives the children more

excitement and love than their counterparts from the monogamous and single parent families (Swanson;Massey;& Payne 1972, 51-58). It is further championed that not all researchers agree that children from polygamous family do encounter academic problems due to the risk factors that have been claimed to be connected with polygamy (Eldedour et al 2000, 264-265).

Also, it is affirmed by Hassouneh-Phillips (2001, 743) that where polygamy is highly approved and esteemed by the culture the susceptibility of children to the family risk factors like family conflict, which could contribute negatively to the children's academic performance, is largely minimized.

By and large, there are more research findings which affirm the suitability of monogamy for children's academic growth than polygamy. However, there appears to be no general conclusion among researchers over the negative contributions which polygamy constitute to the children's academic growth hitherto (Elbedour;Onwuegbuzie;Caridine;& Abu 2002, 264-266).

Single parenting has also been attributed not to have as good contributions like to the children's educational achievement, like the case of two parenting due to certain reasons given by different researchers such as inadequacy of parental social and cultural capital (Taylor;Shannon;& Sheila 2012, 2).

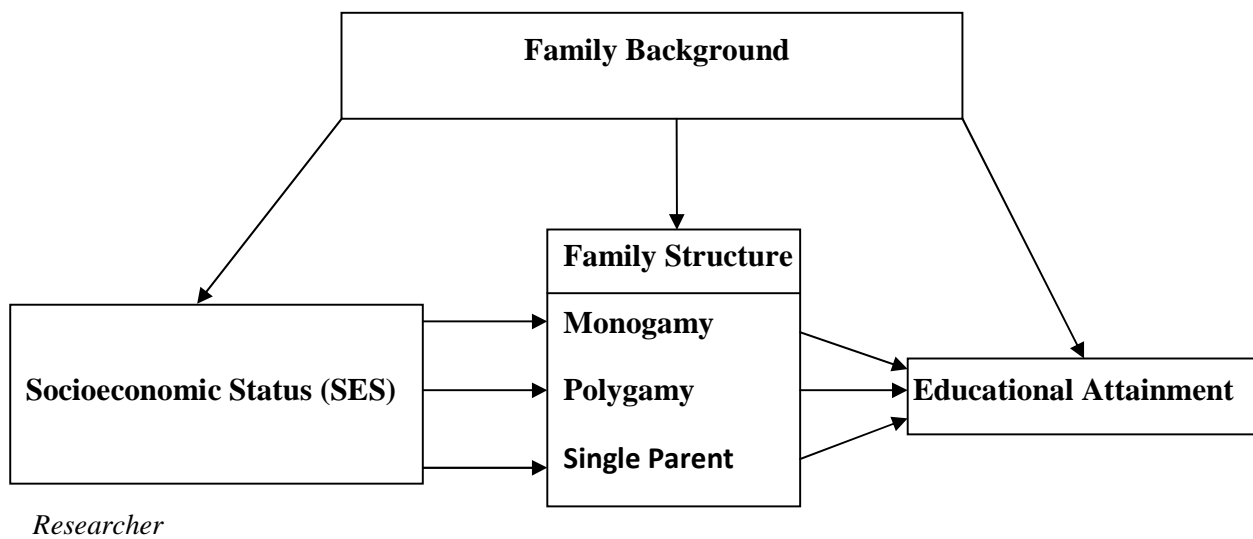
Single parents in so many cases have been claimed to always lack adequate financial support to cope with the demands of raising children alone. Besides, single parents are said to encounter more difficulties in terms of time and stress management in the course of taking care of the children and thus devote lesser time to encourage their children to develop academically than the children from two-parent family. Furthermore, it is being asserted that divorce to certain extent appears to constitute unfavorable influence on the children's grade in achievement test and the

reason given for this is that divorce most times results to inadequate socioeconomic resources and absence of parental cooperation necessary to boost the children's academic growth (Jeyne 2002, 191-192).

### 3.4 Study conceptual framework

From the ongoing discussion, it is deemed fit for this study to recommend an all-inclusive framework which shows the interconnectivity of the various family background factors like socioeconomic background and family structure features which researchers have proven to contribute to children's academic attainment.

Figure 2: Conceptual Model



The socioeconomic background which consists of the parents' occupation, educational attainment and income level is said to have distinct contribution to the children's academic

attainment. All these socioeconomic features stand as significant factors to children's educational achievement.

However, family structural categories which have been described as monogamy, polygamy and single parent family have also been claimed to constitute different levels of socioeconomic fortress which aids children's academic development. No doubt, family structure is very important as well, due to the fact that the demographic features of the family such number of children in a family, whether the family has one or two parents or more, usually determine the level of socioeconomic resources that will be invested into the academic growth of the children. Furthermore, the attitude of parents towards children's education and the way the parents raise their children all have considerable contributions to the children's academic performance and educational achievement.

Therefore, this research work supports the deduction that the greater the level of the family socioeconomic resources the higher the level of the resources which the parents will be able to devote into their children's education in form of finance, home academic assistance, necessary child supervision of school work and ensuring the children's academic well being, including the provision of other academic aiding assistance as it is being explained in the "*conceptual model*" above (Figure 2). The prevalence of this situation will enable children of high socioeconomic status to academically outperform those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged. And conclusively, all the family background factors appear so important to the children's academic attainment.

## **4. RESEARCH METHODS**

This section clearly states the study research questions of this study, the method of data collection and analysis through which the study findings were made, interpreted and recommended.

### **4.1 The study research questions**

1. What are the rates of differences in academic performance of pupils in 2011 secondary school entrance examination in Ibadan North East local government?
2. What are the levels of parental academic supports and follow-ups received by the pupils?
3. What differences exist in the levels of educational attainment of the pupils' parents?
4. What are the levels of occupational disparities among the pupils' parents?
5. What differences exist in the pupils' religions, languages and ethnic backgrounds?

### **4.2 Research design**

This study adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection due to the nature of its objectives. The quantitative method was deemed significant because of its feasibility of making generalization from sample that can be attributed to the whole population and the need to gather information on the pupils' family background, religion and ethnic backgrounds, gender, academic achievement scores and other socioeconomic variables. And on the side of the qualitative method, the study aimed to seek further information on the pupils from their teachers through the medium of interview. Both methods gave substantial information on the differences in the pupils' family backgrounds and their general academic performance.

The data was collected from four different junior secondary schools in the municipality of Ibadan North-East local government area in Oyo State Nigeria. These schools were all state government owned secondary schools and they are regulated by the Ministry of Education. These schools all

have similar characteristics in terms of population, curriculum and every other school facilities.

The schools are listed below:

- Anwar-ur-Islam grammar school model school one, Eleyele, Ibadan.
- Anwar-ur-Islam grammar school two, Eleyele, Ibadan
- Eleyele secondary school, Eleyele, Ibadan.
- Oba Abass Aleshinloye grammar school, Eleyele, Ibadan

Before proceeding to these schools to gather data, a letter of “permission request” was sent to the Director of School Department, Ministry of Education, Oyo State for necessary approval. And after the Director approved the letter, it was forwarded to the Honourable Commissioner for Education for the final approval. After the final approval was granted by the Commissioner, a *“letter of introduction”* of the researcher from the Ministry of Education to the School Principals was issued to warrant the commencement of the data collection process and the data was finally gathered from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2012.

Throughout the data collection process, I was usually assigned with a teacher in each school who led me to the classes; helped distribute the questionnaires to the pupils and also assisted in coordinating the data gathering process. Thereafter, the Principals of the schools gave the permission to access the sampled pupils’ files in order to gather information on their scores in the junior secondary school entrance examination to complete the data collection exercise.

### **4.3 Sample**

A cluster sampling was employed by this study. This sampling method was adopted because it guaranteed the selection of the classes on equal chances and all the pupils in the class were taken as respondents (Muijs, 2004:38). Two classes from junior secondary school one were randomly

selected in each school and a total of two hundred and twenty pupils were surveyed. The age range of the selected pupils was twelve to fifteen years.

The total sampled respondents were two hundred and twenty pupils including four English and four mathematics teachers for junior secondary school one class. One English teacher and one mathematics teacher were selected from each school.

The number of pupils that were selected in each school is shown in the table below:

Table 2: Sampled respondents

Schools	Pupils	Teachers
AUIGS 1	60	2
AUISG 2	60	2
ESS	60	2
OAAGS 2	50	2
TOTAL	220	8

The pupils that supplied the requested information in the questionnaires were mainly between the ages of 12 to 15. The age distribution table of these respondent pupils is shown below:

Table 3: Respondents' age distribution

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
12	107	48.6



13	59	26.8
14	20	9.1
15	34	15.1

---

Reports on the sampled pupils' family background obviously revealed that over 70 percent of the sampled pupils came from monogamous family wherein their fathers are only married to one wife. On the other hand, more than 22 percent of the pupils lived in a polygamous family wherein their fathers have more than one wives. Less than 5 percent of these pupils lived with either their father or mother while less than 2 percent of the total sampled pupils have lost both of their parents and they lived with relatives.

Table 4: Respondents' family background

Family structure	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Monogamy	156	70.9
Polygamy	50	22.7
Single parent	10	4.5
Orphan	4	1.8
Total	220	100

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#### **4.4 Research instrument**

The data for this research was gathered through structured closed questionnaires which were administered to the pupils and a scheduled interview with the English and Mathematics teachers of the junior secondary school one.

##### ***Questionnaire administration***

Closed structured questionnaire characterized with rating scale responses was administered to the pupils due to its suitability for the study objective to investigate the extent of differences in the pupils' academic performance, socioeconomic background, academic assistance and their general family background (Muijs, 2004:47). The first sets of questions in the questionnaire section one were based on the pupils' personal information like age, gender, native language, religion and family background. While the other set of questions in section one focused on exploring their socioeconomic background like parental level of education and occupation. The section two of the questionnaire was centered on investigating the academic aiding facilities available to the pupils in their various homes and the extent to which they derive academic assistance from their parents and siblings.

##### ***Interview arrangement***

Structured interviews were organized for the junior secondary school one English and mathematics teachers. As Patton (2002, 339-350) claims that structured interview reduces to the minima, the influence of the interviewer and increases the level of research objectivity. Thus, the researcher considered this form of interview appropriate because there was the need for the teachers to supply information on certain predefined questions which were primarily based on the pupils' school attendance, academic performance, language communication skills, attitudes

and interest towards school, parents' active involvement, and possession of necessary learning aid materials like textbooks among others.

### ***Reliability and validity***

The *content validity* of the questionnaire items was ensured through detailed verification by experts and also by ascertaining their appropriateness to measure the variables defined in the theoretical framework which are necessary to answer the study research questions. The content validity entails the suitability of questionnaire items and method of their analysis for the purpose they are being designed.

The validity of this instrument is attested by the adequacy of the representation of the items contained by the instrument based on the review of literature of the study. These items addressed exploring due information on their family backgrounds, family socioeconomic status, the state of academic assistance and follow up the pupils received at home, their levels of computer literacy, academic difficulties encountered by the pupils and their general academic achievement. The information given on their family background will produce detail description of their family structures. Socioeconomic information of their family will elucidate their parents' levels of educational attainment and occupational status. Academic assistance and follow up the pupils received at home, their levels of computer literacy, academic difficulties encountered by the pupils and their general academic achievement will all together clarify the differences in the levels of their school success.

This explored information would give substantial insights in answering the research questions realistically. Furthermore, the questionnaire items were checked against those of similar studies for consistency.

The research adopted a test retest method to ensure the *reliability* of the questionnaire (Muijs, 2004:68-74). A smaller group of sampled respondents were given the questionnaires to fill a week before the questionnaires were finally re-administered to the same pupils and the *Pearson r coefficient* was recorded to be 0.682 (Muijs, 2004:142 -149). The whole analysis of the questionnaire was done through the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Two hundred and twenty questionnaires were successfully administered to the respondents and they were all returned.

#### **4.5 Data analyses**

The quantitative data collected via questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS and the qualitative data collected through the scheduled interview were analyzed and reviewed on the basis of the study subject matter. The socioeconomic variables which are parents' education, occupation and income were analyzed and classified in accordance with the United Nations International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).

##### **4.5.1 Categorization of educational attainment**

The pupils' parental educational attainment was being classified in accordance with the United Nations International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) which was officially ratified at the 29<sup>th</sup> General Conference assembly in November, 1997. ISCED was formulated by the Task Force instituted by the Director-General and it has remained an all-embracing world global standard (UNESCO 1997, 14-39).

The classification points for the specified educational attainment in the International Standard Classification of Education are described below:

- Level 0 – Pre-primary education

- Level 1 – Primary education or first stage of basic education
- Level 2 – Lower secondary or second stage of basic education
- Level 3 – (Upper) secondary education
- Level 4 – Post-secondary non-tertiary education
- Level 5 – First stage of tertiary education
- Level 6 – Second stage of tertiary education

#### **4.5.2 Categorization of occupational status and income**

This study classifies pupils' parents occupations according to the guideline International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) set by the International Labour Organization in 2008. The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ILO 2008, 12-13) contains the various jobs' definitions and their minimum formal educational prerequisites at different skill levels. These levels are briefly described below:

- **Skill level 1** – Occupations at this level mainly entails menial jobs and they require physical strength and routine exercise. They require the first stage of basic education as contained in International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 1. Examples of these jobs include: cleaners, labourers, kitchen assistance and other similar jobs.
- **Skill level 2** – The distinctive characteristics of occupations at this level involves duties like working with machines and electronic tools, driving, repairing and maintaining machinery and electrical equipment, data collection and storage. Examples of these occupations are: shop sales assistance, hairdressers, police officers, mechanics, electricians, secretaries, brick layers and tailors. Most of these occupations necessitate the possession of enhanced reading and writing literacy skills, with good interactive communication proficiency including the ability to carry out simple mathematical operation.

The educational achievement level required for the possession of these skills is the first phase of secondary school education which is equivalent to the ISCED-97 level two.

- **Skill level 3** – This level consists of occupations characterized with carrying out of complicated and difficult applied duties which call for technical skills and expertise attained in a specific discipline. These duties involve: human and material resource management, health and safety regulation activities, accounting, organizing, administrating and other related specialist tasks.

The knowledge and technical skills needed for these professions include advanced literacy skills, competence to function properly under pressure, skills to handling complicated task and good oral communication skills. To acquire these skills, it is mandated to study in the higher institution for duration of one to three years of study which is equivalent to the ISCED Level 5 which is the first stage of tertiary education.

Furthermore, vocational training and in-service training may in certain situations replace the official educational training.

Examples of occupations at this stage include computer technicians, medical laboratory technicians, radiographers and other jobs at this level.

**Skill level 4** – The main features of occupations at this level comprise of undertaking highly complicated assignments, policymaking and innovative activities which are centered on specific academic area of knowledge. Activities which dominate these occupations involve research and exploratory study to broaden the knowledge base of different fields, identifying the right cure for ailments, manufacturing of machineries, lecturing and so on.

These occupations require the attainment of highly advanced and outstanding literacy and numeracy skills including excellent interactive skills. These required skills and knowledge consist of the ability to comprehend complicated written concept and oral statement, articulate and present ideas in written and oral forms coherently.

To attain these skills required for these occupations, there is the need to successfully study in the higher institution for the minimum duration of 3 to 6 years to acquire the first degree or above and this is equivalent to the ISCED – 97 level 5 and above. In addition, in-service training may be taken in place of formal education or may be required in addition to formal education to fully qualify to take up the occupations.

The occupations at this level include engineers, bank managers, medical practitioners, financial analysts, lawyers and other high level specialists.

Apparently, from the occupational classification levels discussed above, it is evident that the higher the status of occupations on the International Standard Classification of Occupations the higher the level of income earned from them by labour. This study thus ranked income according to the hierarchy of occupations depicted in the International Standard Classification of Occupations.

## 5 RESULTS

The pupils' academic performance was assessed based on their scores in Junior Secondary School Entrance Examination. Score from the 2011 State Common Entrance Examination was on a scale of 100 percent. These scores were accessed from the pupils' files in their various schools and they were entered into SPSS for analysis.

### 5.1 Comparison of pupils' scores and family background.

In comparing the scores attained by the pupils from diverse family backgrounds, their scores were grouped into four different groups: Monogamous family, polygamous family, single parent family and orphan. Scores achieved by these pupils are represented in the table below:

Table 5: Pupils' examination scores (*N*: 220; *Mean*: 50.55; *Std. Deviation*: 7.99).

Pupils score	Family structure of the pupils				Total
	Monogamy	Polygamy	Single parent	Orphan	
0 - 40	26	12	3	0	40
41- 50	45	11	6	2	65
51- 60	69	21	1	0	91
61- 70	16	6	0	2	24
70- 100	0	0	0	0	0
Total	156	50	10	4	220

The scores depicted by the above table can be classified into their corresponding grading scales used in Nigerian secondary schools (ForeignCredits, 2012). Scores between 0 – 39: Fail; 40 -49: Pass; 50 – 59: Good; 60 -69: Very good; 70-100: Excellent.



From the table above, it is vivid that over 41% of the sampled pupils scored below the average grade of 50 and almost 6% of them attained scores of grade 40 and below, which is the passing grade. Based on this analysis, it is obvious that a substantial proportion of these pupils are lagging behind in terms of academic performance.

Despite the fact that the cutoff point was grade 40, approximately 6% of the sampled pupils actually had scores below the grade of 40. The highest score attained by the sampled pupils was grade 67 and about 5% of the pupils achieved it. It is also worthwhile to note that none of these sampled pupils was able to attain the score in the grade level of excellent. The modal score among these pupils was grade 40 as it is the grade mostly attained by the pupils. Almost 13% of the sampled pupils had this score.

From the score distribution, the population, standard deviation and average scores of the pupils grouped into their family structures were as follows: monogamous pupils' scores: N: 156; Mean: 50.68; Std.:7.97; Polygamous pupils' scores: N: 50; Mean: 50.76; Std.: 8.12; Single parent pupils' scores: N: 10; Mean: 45 .70; Std.: 6.24; Orphans: N: 4; Mean: 55.00; Std. : 8.91.

From the analyses of ANOVA using *f-test* no significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) was found in the scholastic achievement of the pupils from monogamous, polygamous, and single parent families including pupils who are orphans.

Based on this result, it is necessary to acknowledge that from the sampled distribution of the pupils' entrance examination scores, none of the family groups can be said to be academically better off significantly.

### ***Genders' scores comparison***

From the perspective of gender scores comparison using t-test for independent samples in there appeared to be a significant difference (measured at  $p < 0.05$ ) in the level of the attained mean scores (mean score for male: 51.75 and mean score for female: 49.25) with male scoring significantly higher than the female in general. This information is depicted in the table below:

Table 6: Genders' exam scores

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Both	220	50, 5500	7, 98756	2, 343	218	, 020
Male	114	51, 7544	7, 92282			
Female	106	49, 2547	7, 88979			

The male pupils were seen to be more successful at school than their female counterparts based on the scores which they attained in the common entrance examination.

### **5.2 Parental academic supports and follow-ups**

The parental academic support and follow-ups received by the pupils were tested in three categories:

- i) the level at which the parents supply the pupils with the needed books and other materials they needed at school and
- ii) the pupils access to computers at home
- iii) the level of difficulties of the pupils in coping with studying mathematics and English language

iv) *Provision of academic materials*

From the univariate results revealed by ANOVA in examining the difference between the levels at which the pupils from the four family backgrounds were being supplied the books and other needed materials at school, in the subjects of math and English, no significant difference was found among the pupils irrespective of their family backgrounds as  $p < .078$ . As it was being reported by the pupils, the level at which their parents provide them with the needed books and materials was above average. From this survey, it cannot be categorically stated that some pupils from the various sampled family groups had access to more academic materials significantly than their counterparts. The responses were ranked on a scale of 1 to 5 (1: Always, 2: Often, 3: Sometimes, 4: Rarely and 5: Never). Over 95 percent of the total respondents recorded scores of 1 – 3.

*Access to computers*

A significant different was not found in the extent of the *pupils' access to computers at home* from various sampled family backgrounds, where  $p < .497$  from the result of ANOVA. This is represented below in tabular form:

Table 7: Pupils access to computers

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Families	, 365	3	, 122	, 796	, 497
Within Families	32, 994	216	, 153		
Total	33, 359	219			

Furthermore, it is noteworthy to know that the pupils' general access to computers is still very low based on what they reported. Availability of computer facilities was reported to be very poor among the pupils. The statistics of pupils with and without access to computers is being depicted in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Pupils with and no access to computers

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	41	18, 6	18, 6
No	179	81, 4	100, 0

Accessibilities of computer facilities among the majority of the pupils still remained problematic. Reports of the sampled pupils however showed that over 81 percents of the total respondents did not have access to computers at home.

Besides, the analyses further showed no significant differences in the pupils' levels of computer knowledge across the various family structures. Asides their poor accessibility to computer facilities, the sampled pupils were not significantly different in their capabilities to operate

computers. The respondents' reports showed that, over 70 percent of the pupils could not use computer at all.

Interestingly, from the *t-test* analysis, a significant difference was found between the exam score of pupils who could use computers against those who could not use computers. Those who were able to use computers score significantly higher than their counterparts with no computer knowledge at  $p < .002$  as it is clearly spelt out in the *t-test* table below.

Table 9: Scores of pupils with and without access to computers

Computer Accessibility	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Both	220	50,5500	7,98756	3,140	154,349	,002
Yes	66	52,8636	6,57942			
No	154	49,5584	8,34469			

From this analysis, the pupils who were computer literate can be said to be more academically upright than the computer illiterate pupils due to this distinct significant differences in their academic performance scores. It can thus be assumed that being computer literate partly aided the cognitive capabilities of the pupils to perform better academically. In addition, none of the orphan pupils was able to operate computers and they had no access to computers in their various homes.

### *Learning difficulties*

A significant difference was found in the pupils' levels of reported encountered difficulties in mathematics between the various family groups at  $p < .002$ . This information is depicted in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Pupils' difficulties in mathematic

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Families	13, 692	3	4, 564	4, 987	, 002
Within Families	197, 667	216	, 915		
Total	211, 359	219			

However, further investigation on where exactly these differences lied among these family groups became important. From the *Post Hoc Tests*, there were significant differences between pupils from monogamous and polygamous pupils at  $p < .023$ . No significant differences were found between pupils from other family backgrounds when compared. The table of multiple comparisons of levels of difficulty in mathematics among all pupils from diverse family groups is also detailed below.

Table 11: Pupils' difficulties in mathematic multiple comparisons among family structures

(I) Family structure of pupils	(J) Family structure of pupils	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Monogamy	Polygamy	, 4844*	, 023
	Single parent	, 1244	, 984
	Orphan	1, 2244	, 097
Polygamy	Monogamy	-, 4844*	, 023
	Single parent	-, 3600	, 758
	Orphan	, 7400	, 530
Single parent	Monogamy	-, 1244	, 984
	Polygamy	, 3600	, 758
	Orphan	1, 1000	, 289
Orphan	Monogamy	-1, 2244	, 097
	Polygamy	-, 7400	, 530
	Single parent	-1, 1000	, 289

The mean difference between the reported level of difficulties of sampled monogamous and polygamous pupils is .4844 revealing that the monogamous pupils encountered more difficulties in mathematics than their polygamous counterparts. However, approximately 50 percents of the total sampled respondents claimed they sometimes found learning mathematics difficult for them.

Considering the levels of reported learning difficulties by the pupils from diverse family backgrounds, the pupils in general did not differ significantly in their levels of reported learning

difficulties in English language irrespective of their family backgrounds. Using the analyzed result of ANOVA the difference between the levels of difficulties encountered by all the sampled pupils was insignificant at  $p < .051$ .

This is clearly spelt out in Table 12 below.

Table 12: Pupils' difficulties in English language

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Families	7, 031	3	2, 434	2, 636	, 051
Within Family	199, 444	216	, 923		
Total	206, 745	219			

Furthermore, over 51 percent of the total respondents found it sometimes difficult to understand English language. Thus more than half of the sampled pupils could be said to sometimes have difficulties in understanding English language which was the language of instruction in the school. It can thus be presumed that the reported level of difficulty in understanding the language of instruction had important contributions towards the grade attained by the pupils.

### 5.3 Pupils' parents' educational attainment

The respondents' parents' level of educational attainment was reviewed across the various family structures in reference to the United Nations International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and later against their academic scores attained in their entrance examinations into the junior secondary school.



### *Fathers' level of educational attainment*

According to the comparison analyses of the entire fathers' educational achievement of the pupils from diverse family backgrounds, almost seventy percents of the fathers did not attain more than post-secondary non-tertiary education which is equivalent to **Level 4** in the United Nations International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Moreover, no significant difference was also found among the fathers' levels of educational attainment across the various family structures. This information can be viewed from the table below:

Table 13: Fathers' levels of education

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Families	1, 124	3	, 375	, 233	, 874
Within Family	336, 603	209	1, 611		
Total	337, 728	212			

No significant difference was also found when fathers' levels of educational attainment were compared against the obtained scores of the pupils. It is important to note that the orphan pupils were not able to supply any information on educational attainment levels of their deceased fathers and also the single parent pupils who have lost their father could not also supply the same information. From this analysis, it appears vivid that the majority of the pupils' parents across the family groups had similar educational attainment levels.

### *Mothers' level of educational attainment*

Similarly, no significant difference was found at  $p < .05$  in the levels of educational attainment of the mothers of the sampled pupils and from the outlook of their family backgrounds based on the result of ANOVA which was used to test the differences. Also, the difference found when mothers' levels of education was compared against the pupils' scores was insignificant. Three pupils from single parent family and one orphan pupil could not supply any information on their deceased mothers' occupation. The table below shows the general mothers' levels of educational achievement.

Table 14: Mothers levels of education

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Families	1,166	3	,389	,295	,829
Within Family	279,334	212	1,318		
Total	280,500	215			

As the pupils reported, almost 88 percents of their mothers in general did not attain above the post-secondary non-tertiary education which is equivalent to **Level 4** in the United Nations International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

Apparently, the educational attainment levels of the pupils' mothers signify that either they were quiet satisfy with that level of education or they lacked the economic means and social motivation to proceed beyond post-secondary non-tertiary level.

## 5.4 Parents' occupational status

In these data analyses, parents' occupational status was assessed in view of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) maintained by the International Labour Organization against the family structures of the pupils and their attained examination scores.

### *Fathers' occupational status*

Fathers' occupational status was examined throughout the entire family structures of the pupils using the test of ANOVA and no significant difference was found at  $p < .833$ . Though, the orphan pupils and some single parents' pupils did not supply any information on their deceased parents' occupations.

Table 15: Pupils' fathers' occupation

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Family	, 419	3	, 140	, 289	, 833
Within Family	100, 886	209	, 483		
Total	101, 305	212			

Besides, over 72 percent of the fathers of the sampled pupils were engaged in occupations at the Level 2 of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) (See page 40).

Moreover, the comparison of differences in fathers' occupational status and pupils' academic scores was insignificant at  $p < .478$ .

This occupation level is described as the type which does not require high level of educational attainment above the first stage of secondary education in Nigeria.

### *Mothers' occupational status*

Findings of the analysis regarding maternal occupational status of the pupils confirmed there were no significant differences in the levels of mothers' occupational status across the sampled groups of pupils from all family backgrounds with  $p < .621$ . More information is given in the table below:

Table 16: Pupils' mothers' occupation

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Family	, 708	3	, 238	, 592	, 621
Within Family	84, 552	212	, 399		
Total	85, 259	215			

The same situation held when mothers' occupational status were compared against the pupils scores, the result was insignificant at  $p < .882$ . More than 82 percent of mothers of the sampled pupils in general were engaged in occupations at skilled level 2 in International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) and approximately 87 percent of mothers did not go beyond occupations at this level.

Asides the high maternal occupational similarities, the maternal educational attainment levels of the majority in the United Nations International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) matched the required qualifications for their engaged occupations. And this to a great extent reflected the economic and social class of the pupils' mothers.

## 5.5 Pupils' religions, languages and ethnic backgrounds

### *Religion*

Analyses of the religious backgrounds of the sampled pupils showed significant differences in the pupils' religious backgrounds across the family types at  $p < ,000$  and this is clearly illustrated in the following ANOVA table:

Table 17: Pupils religions

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Family	6,626	3	2,209	8,807	,000
Within Family	54,174	216	,215		
Total	60,800	219			

However, these significant religious differences mainly lied between polygamous and polygamous pupils and also the monogamous and orphan pupils. The significant differences between the monogamous and polygamous pupils occurred at  $p < ,014$  while that of monogamous pupils against the orphan pupils existed at  $p < ,003$ . These differences are being spelt out in the multiple comparison *post hoc test* table below.

Table 18: Religions comparisons among family structures

(I) Family structure of pupils	(J) Family structure of pupils	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
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	Polygamy	-, 2736 <sup>*</sup>	, 08383	, 014
Monogamy	Single parent	-, 3936	, 16827	, 144
	Orphan	-, 9936 <sup>*</sup>	, 26120	, 003
	Monogamy	, 2736 <sup>*</sup>	, 08383	, 015
Polygamy	Single parent	-, 1200	, 17869	, 929
	Orphan	-, 7200	, 26803	, 068
	Monogamy	, 3936	, 26803	, 144
Single parent	Polygamy	, 1200	, 17869	, 929
	Orphan	-, 6000	, 30517	, 279
	Monogamy	, 9936 <sup>*</sup>	, 26120	, 003
Orphan	Polygamy	, 7200	, 26803	, 068
	Single parent	, 6000	, 30517	, 279

The religions' mean difference between monogamous and polygamous pupils is -0.2736<sup>\*</sup> with the mean for the polygamous pupils being higher. 78 percent of the sampled polygamous pupils were from Muslim background while almost 50 percent of the monogamous pupils were Christians. This shows the majority of the sampled polygamous pupils were Muslims while the religious backgrounds of the monogamous pupils equally consisted of both Christianity and Muslim.

### *Languages and ethnic backgrounds*

The pupils' languages and ethnic background were classified according to their mother tongues.

The pupils' mother tongues were represented in the dominant local languages widely spoken in Nigeria which are: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Other local minority languages spoken by the pupils were classified as others. All the pupils speak English as their official language which is also the language of instruction in their schools.

More than 83 percent of the pupils in general speak Yoruba language as their mother tongue and less than 12 percent speak Igbo and Hausa as their mother tongue. Though, the study was carried out in the western region of Nigeria where Yoruba is the dominant ethnic language.

### **5.6 Teachers comments on pupils' academic status**

The structured interviews held with the mathematics and English language teachers of the pupils were based on the following themes:

- i) Pupils rate of school attendance
- ii) pupils attitudes towards learning and their academic achievement
- iii) Pupils' parents academic follow up activities

#### ***Pupils' rate of school attendance***

From the comments received from the pupils' teachers on the pupils' general rate of school attendance, it was reported by the teachers that the pupils' rate of school attendance in general is quiet above average. As they commented, very few percentages of the pupils do play truancy in school. However, all the teachers maintained that majority of them are usually present at school throughout the academic terms.

#### ***Pupils' attitudes and academic achievement***

On the subject matter of the pupils' attitudes towards learning exercise the teachers' remarks appeared to be somewhat conflicting between schools. Some teachers stated that majority of the pupils are not motivated to learn in English language, only few of them are curious about learning deeper in the subject. Owing to the fact that English is the country's first official language and also the language of instruction, it would be totally disadvantaged to the pupils' learning and school success. However as the teacher stated, that those who were eager to learn the subject did ask questions in the class and they were motivated.

Concerning the pupils' levels of personal exercise, the teachers added the majority of them were so low and most of them usually failed to do their home assignments. However, they claimed the pupils' in general had lesser problems with mathematics than English language. They found the subject of mathematics more interesting than English language, and this had truly reflected in the academic performance in mathematics.

From the perspective of other set of teachers on the same theme, they declared over average of their pupils had very good attitudes towards English language and the general academic performance of their pupils in this subject was above average. These pupils were claimed to communicate more coherently in English language and they tend to cope with it being the language of instruction in the classroom. These pupils also were said to always complete their academic assignment often and as well coping with the subject of mathematics.

#### ***Pupils' parental academic follow up activities***

The comments made by the teachers over the extent of active participations of their pupils' parents in academic related activities vary between the teachers.

It was clearly stated by some teachers that only about 10 percent of the parents visited the school continuously to inquire about the progress of their children. The parents were claimed to be so



reluctant to visit the schools and most of them visited only upon the invitation of the teachers when there was the need for the teachers to advise the parents on the steps to be taken on the weak academic abilities of their children. Aside that, the teachers added most of the parents were not consistent in attending the parent-teacher association meeting. As they claimed, the parents' levels of interest in the schooling activities of their children were described as not being good enough to ensure the school success of the pupils.

The teachers reflected this in their dissatisfaction with the levels of provisions of needed learning aid materials like textbooks and other stationeries by the pupils' parents. The parents mostly did not consider it paramount as a necessity which will ensure the academic success of their children. Based on the statements of these teachers, they did enforce it sometimes before the parents supplied the pupils with these needed materials in the schools.

On the contrary, other teachers though fewer, described their pupils' parents as being consistent in their visit to schools to monitor the academic progress of their children regularly. They described the levels of their pupils' parental involvement to be satisfactory. The parents were conscious of the significance of their children's school success and they were highly dedicated. They added the parents were regular in attending the parent-teacher association meetings, they seek information concerning their children's academic progress and they always provided all the necessary textbooks and stationeries for the pupils.

### ***Differences in teachers claims on parental academic follow up activities***

Note worthily, it was found that those teachers who claimed the performances of their pupils were above average both in mathematics and English language also mentioned their parents were consistently active in monitoring the academic progress of the children while the reverse was the case for those teachers that reported the majority of their pupils to be below average in academic performance.

Vividly, those parents that were claimed to be observant of the factors which ensure the children's school success had pupils with satisfactory performance as described by their teachers. While the lackadaisically classified parents with little involvement in the school activities of their children had pupils who performed below average academically.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

This section comprises the overall and concise outcomes of this research work, discussion of the findings which focuses on the levels of pupils' academic achievement scores in the state junior secondary school entrance examinations, parental academic received by these pupils, parental educational attainment levels, occupational status and the pupils' religious and ethnic backgrounds.

### **6.1 Findings**

From the results of the data analyses, it is evident that greater proportion of the pupils scored below average in the entrance examination which depicted rather an unsatisfactory level of academic achievement. In retrospect however, this finding is to a considerable extent better than the report of Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) in the Ministry of Education, Ibadan, Nigeria over the 2009 junior secondary school entrance examination considering the average scores.

The result of this study also suggests no significant differences in the pupils' academic performance levels across the various family structures. On the other hand, the study reveals a significant gender inequality in the pupils' academic performance. In general, the male pupils performed academically higher than the female pupils. However, the level of academic attainments of pupils with access to more advanced educational resources like electronic computers is significantly higher than those with no access to computers and also bereft of knowledge of computer operation.

This finding supports the claims of Bourdieu (1986, 241-258) in his postulated cultural capital theory; the *objectified state* synonymously termed *cultural goods*. Cultural goods which are described as educational facilities which include: text books, computers, computer games, access to room conducive to study, provision of extramural lessons, and other educational items that aid students' educational achievement. Research from different sources also corroborates the claim that there exists a positive correlation between access to educational resources both within school and homes, and the levels of educational attainment (Adeniji & Omale, 2010, 5; Cunningham 2013, 2; Lee & Burkam 2002, 1-2).

This study further shows the majority of the pupils reported their parents usually provide for them the needed books and stationery at school which can be taken as a condition which aids the children's learning process, and this claim theoretically conforms to the Bourdieu *Objectified State* cultural capital theory.

On the contrary, finding from this study holds that majority of the pupils are computer illiterates. Both the pupils' levels of access to computers and knowledge of operating computers are very low. Based on this state of affairs, it appears that the majority of the pupils' parents do not attach much importance to the acquisition of computer literacy skills by their children. And thus, they have paid little attention to the procurement of computers for their children to support their computer literacy education.

Reports gathered by the study on the pupils' adjustment to the system of numeracy education in their schools, about average of all the pupils acknowledged that they somewhat found it difficult to cope effectively in learning mathematics.

In the same vein, more than average of the pupils also admitted that the official English language seemed difficult to understand for them to a considerable extent. They conceded the language of instruction was not easily understood during the teaching process and it thus usually made deep comprehension of the lesson themes mostly unattainable.

Information obtained from the data supplied on the parents' levels of educational attainment made it known that close to seventy percent of the fathers did not attain more than post secondary non tertiary education while greater proportion of almost ninety percent of the mothers also did not have educational qualifications beyond the same level.

This level of educational attainment falls on *level four* in the United Nations International classification of Education (ISCED) which conforms to the rankings of educational achievement in Nigerian education system. In Nigeria, this level of educational achievement consists of Ordinary National Diploma usually attained after two years of study in the polytechnic, and Advanced National Technical/Business Certificate obtained from Technical colleges (Onyukwu, 2011, 1-2).

Analyses of this study also attest firmly that the pupils' parents had high similar occupational status. Both fathers' occupations were largely represented by the occupations at the level 2 of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). The mothers as well had the same occupational characteristics, and also to a higher degree than the fathers. While less than three quarter of the fathers were found to have their occupations at this stage, more than eighty seven percent of the mothers could not secure any occupational status beyond this level. The technical skills and educational qualification required for the eligibility of these jobs are quiet low and less demanding. The minimum educational requirement for occupations at the level two of

International Standard Classification of Occupations is the first phase of secondary school education, which is equivalent to level 2 in International Standard Classification of Education.

From these findings, it is vivid that the majority of the pupils' parents fall into the category of working class as being described by Annette Lareau (2003, 3-5) theory of *Accomplishment of Natural Growth*. Lareau classifies working class parents as those that see the provisions of basic needs like clothing, food and shelter paramount for their children and they usually devote lesser time for their academic growth than the middle or upper class parents that lay more emphasis on their children's intellectual improvement.

This claim was also corroborated by the comments made by the pupils' teachers that only few parents always endeavored to monitor the well being of their children and to get feed backs from their teachers consistently. As the teachers maintained that approximately only ten percents of the parents made regular visit to schools in regards of their children's educational improvement. Most parents were described as being unwilling to make enquiries over their children's academic progress and even to the extent of making adequate provisions for the pupils' needed materials at school. Previous study in Osun State, Nigeria by Oludipe( 2009, 101-102) sustains the same claim that large percentage of parents were not actively concerned about their children's academics and this inadequacy of parental involvement with children's education contributes to their poor academic attainment. Adeniji & Omale (2010, 5) upholds a similar stance in their study conducted in Oyo State, Nigeria that parents need to a large extent engage in helping their children develop sound reading skills which will assist them in all other subjects.

Large similarities also existed in the pupils' mother tongue and ethnic background as the majority of more than eighty three percent speak the same mother tongue which also reflects the

prevalence of homogeneous ethnic backgrounds among them while less than twelve percent of them came from other ethnic background in the country.

However, the pupils' religious backgrounds differed significantly into two different religious groups, Islam and Christianity between the monogamous and polygamous pupils. Large proportion of about seventy-eight percents of polygamous pupils were Muslims, and less than half of the total monogamous pupils were Muslims while others were Christians.

## **6.2 Implications of the study**

This study provides the prospect to critically review the socioeconomic backgrounds of the pupils and their academic performance status in order to intervene into the situations of the socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils. This will mostly be of great support to children struggling to study in economic hardship. The spotlight on the pupils' socioeconomic background is essential because of certain risk factors for children's academic stability which have been found to be associated with poor families in form of low parent education, economic hardship, and extreme poverty among others (Taylor, Shannon & Sheila 2012, 1-2).

Through a well formulated syllabus and systematically designed programme of early intervention which is continuously maintained by the government in various schools and with the support of devoted teachers, pupils of poor socioeconomic positions will have the prospect of prevailing over any form of setback which is constituted by their family socioeconomic backgrounds and which does not contribute positively to their academic success. This will thus ensure the pupils' accomplishment of effective early literacy and also facilitates success in their forthcoming educational activities.

This study justifies the need to critically assess and improve the pupils' levels of computer literacy. Pupils being computer literate will enable them to maximize the benefit of e-learning in pedagogy and also provides the avenue for the pupils to take charge of their learning activities (Collis 2008, 17-18). The emphasis on the application of ICT to enhance the teaching and learning processes can never be over emphasized and previous research has shown it prompts the students to study and also engage in autonomous learning activities (Soyemi;Ogunyinka;& Soyemi 2012, 703-705).

However, this study has shown that the majority of the pupils' parent are working class and the acquisition of computers for the children might appear to be quite expensive for poor parents, thus the government might need to look into the situation. Such initiative has been recently considered helpful by the Osun State government of Nigeria to supply 150,000 laptops to public school for e-learning purposes, to advance students learning and create a suitable academic atmosphere (OsunDefenders 2013, 1-2). Besides, the same policy of Information and Communication Technology development has been adopted by Ekiti State government of Nigeria. The government distributed 100,000 laptops to the students chosen from numerous secondary schools in Ekiti state (PUNCH 2012, 1-2).

It is also suggested from this study that there stands the need for efficient parental involvement with the children's academic activities and well being. It would be beneficial to the pupils' education at large if a strategic initiative programme is developed on how the parents can be informed over the importance of their effective involvement with their children's education. It has been found in earlier study that children's early literacy education is highly aided by parental involvement (Domina 2005, 245-246). Thus it should be deemed paramount for parents to be well informed on how best to go about it. This programme should be inculcated in the school



course of action and being centered on enlightening the parents on ways to effectively get involved with their children's educational progress.

### **6.3 Limitations of the study**

The findings and conclusions of this study were mainly drawn on the data that was gathered from four selected junior secondary schools among other junior secondary schools in one municipality, out of six municipalities in the capital city of Oyo State, Ibadan, and the State all together had 34 local government municipalities. This was due to inadequacy of time, fund and other resources. It can also be added that a more accurate and valid results could have been attained with larger samples.

Furthermore, all information gathered was supplied by the sampled pupils, teachers and the schools' vice principals administration excluding the pupils' parents and the areas assessed by the study as the benchmark of its claims cannot be taken as the absolute which the conclusions of this study can only be made. Thus, external validity of this study is inferred from the sampled respondents from which data was gathered.

### **6.4 Recommendations for future research**

Conducting this same study in the future will produce more insights on the extent of children's socioeconomic needs which aid the development of their early literacy and assist them in coping with the demands of further academic task by taking in the consideration of a more extended and important qualitative and quantitative features which like interviewing the parents and the pupils, in other to explore more information.

It would also be informative if the same study is carried out in the same schools and other schools in the municipality to ensure the consistency and changes that have taken place in the

pupils' socioeconomic positions and academic achievement status. This will produce more insights on the measures to employ by the schools and policy makers on the most effective educational policies to be implemented which will ensure the general academic growth of the pupils in various schools.

This has been found to be productive in earlier research. Slavin and Madden (2006, 390-391) recommend that compensatory programmes that are being strategically planned for socioeconomically disadvantaged children appear to be worthwhile so far.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

#### QUESTIONNAIRE (For Student)

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ ID \_\_\_\_\_

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Please, circle the option mostly applicable to you (ONLY ONE)!

Answer all the questions!

#### SECTION ONE

- I) What is your gender? (1) Male (2) Female
- II) What is your birth year? \_\_\_\_\_
- III) In which grade are you? \_\_\_\_\_
- IV) What is your religion? (1) Christian (2) Muslim (3) Other \_\_\_\_\_
- V) What is your mother tongue? (1) Hausa (2) Igbo (3) Yoruba (4) Other \_\_\_\_\_
- VI) How many wives does your father have? (1) One (2) More than one
- VII) Is your Father alive? (1) Yes (2) No
- VIII) Is your Mother alive? (1) Yes (2) No
- IX) Did your Father attend Higher Institution like University, Polytechnic, Colleges of Education or other similar institution? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Do not know
- X) Did your Father attend Vocational or Technical School? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Do not know
- XI) Did your Father attend Secondary School? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Do not know
- XII) Did your Father attend Primary School? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Do not know
- XIII) Did your Mother attend higher institution like University, Polytechnic, Colleges of

Education or other similar institution? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Do not know

XIV) Did your Mother attend Vocational or Technical School? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Do not know

XV) Did your Mother attend Secondary School? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Do not know

XVI) Did your Mother attend Primary School? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Do not know

XVII) What are your parents' occupations?

Father \_\_\_\_\_ Mother \_\_\_\_\_

## **SECTION TWO**

A. Do you have a computer at home? (1) Yes (2) No

B. Have you used a computer? (1) Yes (2) No If yes, where \_\_\_\_\_

C. Do you like mathematics? (1) Yes (2) No

D. When do you study mathematics?

(1) Everyday (2) Several times in a week (3) Once a week (4) Once a month (5) Never

E. I have difficulties in understanding mathematics.

(1) Always (2) Often (3) Sometimes (4) Rarely (5) Never

F. I do get academic tutoring assistance in mathematics from my parents and or siblings at home (1) Always (2) Often (3) Sometimes (4) Rarely (5) Never

G. When do you study English language?

(1) Everyday (2) Sometimes a week (3) Once a week (4) Once a month (5) Never

H. I have difficulties in understanding English.

(1) Always (2) Often (3) Sometimes (4) Rarely (5) Never

I. I communicate in English at home with my parents and others

(1) Always (2) Often (3) Sometimes (4) Rarely (5) Never

J. My parents and siblings assist me in learning English at home

(1) Always (2) Often (3) Sometimes (4) Rarely (5) Never

K. Do you have a private teacher for mathematics at home? (1) No (2) Yes

L. Do you have a private teacher for English at home? (1) No (2) Yes

M. I am usually provided with necessary textbooks in mathematics and English which are needed at school. (1) Always (2) Often (3) Sometimes (4) Rarely (5) Never

## **APPENDIX II**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS**

A) What can you say about the rate of school attendance of the pupils?

B) How eager and ambitious are the pupils to learn?

C) Do they generally ask questions in class?

D) In your opinion, to what extent do the pupils' personal study exercise reflects in their performance?

E) How often do the pupils complete their home works and assignments?

F) In your view, can you describe the general level of the pupils' interest in English language?

G) How can you describe the pupils' attitudes towards English language?

H) In your view, are there differences in pupils' academic performance in English language?

I) How effective is the level of the pupils' communication in English language?

J) How consistently do the pupils' parents visit the school to inquire the progress of their

K) Is there consistency in the levels of their parents' attendance in the parent-teacher association

meeting?

- L) Do the pupils possess the needed learning aid materials like textbooks and other stationeries adequately?

### **APPENDIX III**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MATHEMATICS TEACHERS**

- A) What can you say about the rate of school attendance of the pupils?
- B) How eager and ambitious are the pupils to learn?
- C) Do they generally ask questions in class?
- D) In your opinion, to what extent do the pupils' personal study exercise reflects in their performance?

- E) How often do the pupils complete their home works and assignments?
- F) In your view, can you describe the general level of the pupils' interest in mathematics?
- G) How can you describe the pupils' attitudes towards mathematics?
- H) In your view, are there differences in pupils' academic performance in mathematics?
- I) How consistently do the pupils' parents visit the school to inquire the progress of their
- J) Is there consistency in the levels of their parents' attendance in the parent-teacher association meeting?
- K) Do the pupils possess the needed learning aid materials like textbooks and other stationeries adequately?

## APPENDIX IV

### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS FROM DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL & SE

Ministry of Education  
Dept. of School & SE  
Ibadan, Oyo State  
Nigeria.  
8<sup>th</sup> March, 2012

The Principal

.....

.....

Ibadan.

Dear Sir/Madam,

#### Letter of Introduction

I am directed to introduce Mr. Bamgbade Olusanjo, a Master's Degree student who needs to collect data for his project work from your students.

2. Kindly permit him to administer his questionnaire to Junior Secondary School students in your school.
3. I thank you for your cooperation.

Director of School & SE

For: Honourable Commissioner for Education