

**INFLUENCE OF HOME BACKGROUND FACTORS ON
ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE OF SECONDARY
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN DALA EDUCATION DIRECTORATE KANO
STATE, NIGERIA**

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Astract

The study examined the influence of home background factors on achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate Kano state, Nigeria. Four research objectives, four research questions and four null hypotheses guided the study. An Ex-post-facto research design was adopted. The population of this study comprised of 6,526 secondary schools students in Dala Education Directorate, from which 357 students were selected as sample using multi-stage sampling procedure. Data were collected using two instruments Parental support and Family size Questionnaire (PSAFSQ) and Socio economic status scale (SES-Scale). The instruments were revalidated via face, content and construct validity. The reliability of internal consistency of these instruments were established using split half procedure of PPMC and later applied Spearman Brown Prophecy formula and obtained 0.92 and 0.91 as the reliability of the instruments respectively. Also, English Language Qualifying Examination results of 2023/2024 was used as measures of achievement in English language. Data was collected using on-spot mechanism and was analyzed using inferential statistics of t-test for independent and multiple regression analysis. Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 were tested using t-test for independent sample while hypothesis 4 was tested using multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that family size do not influence achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate (p-value, 0.069, > 0.05). However, both parental support and socio economic status have significant influence on students' achievement in English language (Parental support p-value, 0.000, < 0.05, SES p-value, 0.000, < 0.05) with students receiving higher support and from higher socio economic status performing better. It was concluded that family size, parental support and socio economic status interactively influence students' achievement in English language in the study area (F=162.952, P = .000). Based on these findings, the study recommended that Educational policies and school programs should adopt a holistic approach that considers family size dynamics, strengthens parental support, and improves socio economic conditions to effectively support students' academic Achievement.

Keywords: Home background factors, family size, parental support, socio-economic status, achievement in English language, secondary school students

Introduction

Achievement in English language refers to the minimum level of proficiency students demonstrate in reading comprehension, writing skills, grammar, vocabulary, and effective communication. Proficiency in English language enables students to engage meaningfully with academic content and participate successfully in educational and professional settings (Yusuf & Adigun, 2010).

In Nigeria, English language occupies a central position as the official and the primary medium of instruction at all levels of education. It also serves as the language of administration, science, technology, and international communication. Consequently, proficiency in English language is essential for students' academic success, career advancement, and social mobility. Poor achievement in English language has been associated with low performance in other school subjects, since most academic content is taught and assessed using the language (Olanrewaju, 2012).

Despite its importance, students' achievement in English language in public secondary schools has remained a major concern. Persistent poor performance in English language examinations may limit students' access to higher education and employment opportunities, thereby reinforcing cycles of disadvantage and social inequality (Adepoju & Fabiyi, 2007). Researchers have suggested that several factors may be associated with students' achievement in English language, including school-related factors, learner characteristics, and home background variables.

Home background factors such as family size, parental support, and socio-economic status have received considerable attention in educational research due to their potential influence on students' academic achievement. Family size, for

instance, may affect the amount of parental attention, supervision, and resources available to a child. Students from smaller families may have greater access to learning materials and individualized support, while those from larger families may experience limited resources and reduced parental attention, which may affect their academic outcomes (Umar, 2019). However, empirical findings on the influence of family size on academic achievement remain inconsistent. While some studies have reported a significant relationship between family size and academic performance (Tsagem *et al.*, 2023; Ene, 2021), others have found no significant influence (Gabriel, 2013; Cobb-Clark & Moschion, 2013).

Parental support is another important home background factor that may be associated with students' achievement in English language. Parental support may include provision of educational resources, monitoring of academic progress, encouragement, and assistance with schoolwork. Previous studies suggest that students who receive adequate parental support tend to demonstrate higher academic achievement, as supportive home environments foster motivation, confidence, and positive study habits (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Werang *et al.*, 2024). Nonetheless, some studies have reported no significant difference in students' academic achievement based on levels of parental support, indicating the need for further investigation (Alhaji, 2024).

Socio-economic status (SES) of parents has also been widely examined as a factor that may influence students' academic achievement. Students from higher socio-economic backgrounds often have access to better educational resources, stable learning environments, and parental guidance, which may enhance academic performance (Lucky & Shola, 2022; Garba, 2024). In contrast, students from lower socio-economic backgrounds may face challenges such as inadequate learning materials, overcrowded classrooms, and limited academic support, which may hinder achievements in English language (Idris & Oni, 2021). Empirical studies have consistently reported significant difference in academic

achievement based on socio-economic status, although the magnitude and nature of this influence vary across contexts.

Although several studies have examined family size, parental support, and socio-economic status independently, fewer studies have explored their interactive effects on students' achievement in English language, particularly within Dala Education Directorate, Kano state. Given the persistent concerns about poor performance in English language examinations and the mixed findings in existing literature, it is necessary to investigate how these home background factors individually and jointly influence students' achievement in English language in the study area.

Statement of the problem

Achievement in English language remains a major concern in Nigerian secondary schools due to its central role as the medium of instruction and a prerequisite for further education and employment. In Kano state, particularly in Dala Education Directorate, persistent poor performance in the English Language Qualifying Examination (SSQE) has attracted the attention of parents, teachers, school administrators, policymakers, and researchers.

Available records indicate steady decline in students' performance in English language over years. For instance, in 2021, 99,754 students sat for English language SSQE but 82,975 (83.18%) passed while 16,779 (16.82%) failed. In 2022, 104,266 students sat for English language SSQE but 79,066 (75.83%) passed while (24.17%) failed. In 2023, 126,567 students sat for English language SSQE but 83,199 (65.74%) students passed while 43,368 (34.26%) students failed (Kano Educational Resource Department (KERD), 2024). This downward trend suggests that substantial proportion of students are not attaining the expected level of proficiency in English language.

Several factors have been suggested in the literature as possible contributors to students' poor achievement in English language, including

inadequate teaching, limited instructional resources, and learner-related challenges. In addition, home background factors such as family size, parental support, and socio-economic status have been identified as variables that may be associated with students' academic outcomes. However, empirical findings on the influence of these home background factors remain inconsistent, with some studies reporting significant relationships and others reporting contrary results.

Despite the growing body of research on students' academic achievement, there is limited empirical evidence on the individual and interactive effects of family size, parental support, and socio-economic status on achievement in English language among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state. This gap in knowledge makes it difficult for educators and policymakers to design targeted interventions that address students' challenges effectively.

Therefore, there is a need to investigate the influence of selected home background factors-family size, parental support, and socio-economic status-on students' achievement in English language in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state. Addressing this problem will contribute to a better understanding of the factors associated with students' performance in English language and provide empirical evidence to inform educational planning and policy decisions.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to determine:

1. Whether there is difference in Achievement in English language of students from large and small family size among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state.
2. Whether there is difference in Achievement in English language of students with high and low levels of parental support among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state.

3. Whether there is difference in Achievement in English language of students with high and low levels of socio economic status among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state.
4. The interactive effects of Family size, parental support, and parental socio economic status on Achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. Is there any significant difference in Achievement in English language of students from large and small family size among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state?
2. Is there any significant difference in Achievement in English language of students with high and low levels of parental support among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state?
3. Is there any significant difference in Achievement in English language of students with high and low levels of socio economic status among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state?
4. Is there any significant interactive effects of Family size, parental support, and parental socio economic status on Achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of family size (small or large) on Achievement in English language among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in Achievement in English language between secondary school students in Dala education Directorate who come from low and high levels of parental support.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in Achievement in English language between secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate who come from low and high socio economic status.

H₀₄: There is no significant interactive effects of family size, parental support and socio economic status on Achievement in English language among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate Kano state.

Methodology

The study employed Ex-post-facto research design. The population of the study was 6,526 secondary schools students in Dala Education Directorate, out of which 357 students were selected as sample using multi-stage sampling procedure involving purposive, stratified, proportionate and simple random sampling technique. The data were collected using two instruments: Parental support and Family Size Questionnaire (PSAFSQ) and Socio economic status scale (SES-Scale). Also, English Language Qualifying Examination results for 2023/2024 academic session was used as measure of English language academic achievement of students. The instruments were validated through face, content and construct validity by experts in Educational psychology, tests and measurements, and guidance and counselling in the faculty of Educational foundations Bayero University Kano. The reliability of the instruments was established using split half procedure of PPMC and got half reliability. Spearman Brown prophecy formula was applied and obtained the full reliability coefficients 0.92 for PSAFSQ and 0.91 for SES-Scale. The researcher supported by two research assistants administered the instruments to the respondents. The completed copies of the questionnaire were collected and analysed using t-test

for independent sample and multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The analysis was done using SPSS version 21.

Results

Hypothesis one (H₀₁): There is no significant influence of family size (small or large) on Achievement in English language among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate.

Table 1: t-test for Differences in academic Achievement Due to level of family size

Academic Achievement	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-value	df	P-value (2-tailed)
Small Family size	153	42.72	20.338	-1.822	355	.069
Large Family size	204	46.58	19.441			

Source: Field Work (2025)

Table 7 presents the t-test results for differences in achievement in English language due to family size among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate. The results show that the mean academic achievement scores of students from small families ($M = 42.72$, $SD = 20.338$) and large families ($M = 46.58$, $SD = 19.441$) are not significantly different ($t = -1.822$, $df = 355$, $p = .069$). Therefore, no significant difference exists in achievement in English language between students from small and large families in Dala Education Zone (p -value, 0.069 , > 0.05).

Hypothesis Two (H₀₂): There is no significant difference in Achievement in English language between secondary school students in Dala education Directorate who come from low and high levels of parental support.

Table 2: t-test for Differences in academic Achievement Due to level of parental Support

Parental Support	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-value	Df	P-value (2-tailed)
Low	256	42.14	19.719	-4.316	355	.000
High	101	51.99	18.634			

Source: Field Work (2025)

Table 8 presents the t-test results for differences in achievement in English language due to parental support among secondary school students in Dala

Education Directorate. The results show that the mean achievement in English language scores of students with low parental support ($M = 42.14$, $SD = 19.719$) and high parental support ($M = 51.99$, $SD = 18.634$) are significantly different ($t = -4.316$, $df = 355$, $p = .000$). Therefore, a significant difference exists in achievement in English language between students with high and low levels of parental support in Dala Education Zone (p -value, 0.000 , < 0.05). In favour of those with high parental support.

Hypothesis Three (H₀₃): There is no significant difference in Achievement in English language between secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate who come from low and high socio economic status.

Table 3: t-test for Differences in academic achievement Due to level of Socio-economic Status

Socio-economic Status	N	\bar{x}	SD	t-value	Df	P-value (2-tailed)
Low	255	35.37	12.900	-22.062	355	.000
High	102	68.81	13.034			

Source: Field Work (2025)

Table 9 presents the t-test results for differences in achievement in English language due to socio-economic status among senior secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate. The results show that the mean achievement in English language scores of students with low socio-economic status ($M = 35.37$, $SD = 12.900$) and high socio-economic status ($M = 68.81$, $SD = 13.034$) are significantly different ($t = -22.062$, $df = 355$, $p = .000$). Therefore, a significant difference exists in achievement in English language between students with high and low levels of socio-economic status in Dala Education Directorate (p -value, 0.000 , < 0.05) in favour of those from high socio economic status.

Hypothesis Four (H₀₄): There is no significant interactive effects of family size, parental support and socio-economic status on Achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate Kano state

Table 4: Model Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.762 ^a	.581	.577	12.937

a. Predictors: (Constant), Socio-economic Status, Family Size, Parental Support

A multiple linear regression analysis was performed to investigate the interactive effect of family size, parental support, and socio-economic status on achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano State. From the results in the table above, the R value was found to be 0.762, indicating a strong positive relationship. The adjusted R-squared (R^2) revealed that 57.7% of the variation in achievement in English language can be explained by variations in family size, parental support, and socio-economic status.

Table 5: Regression Table

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	81821.362	3	27273.787	162.952	.000 ^b
	Residual	59082.744	353	167.373		
	Total	140904.106	356			

a. Dependent Variable: Academic achievement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Socio-economic Status, Family Size, Levels of Parental Support

Table 11 presents the ANOVA results for the multiple regression analysis. The calculated F-value (162.952) with a p-value of 0.000 is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that family size, parental support and socio-economic status jointly have a statistically significant effect on achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state. When combined the three independent variables significantly explain the variation in achievement in English language of students. The total sum of squares (140904.106) is largely accounted for by the regression sum of squares (81821.362), which reflects the joint influence of the predictors. The result confirmed that home background

factors when considered together, play an important role in determining students' achievement in English language.

Summary/Discussion

1. Family size does not have a significant influence on Achievement in English Language among secondary school students in Dala education directorate (Small F.S M = 42.72, while Large F.S M=46.58, p-value, 0.069, > 0.05).
2. A statistically significant difference exists in Achievement in English Language between students who come from low and high levels of parental support in Dala Education Directorate (Low parental support M=42.14, while High parental support M= 51.99, p-value, 0.000, < 0.05).
3. Also, a significant difference exists in achievement in English language between students who come from low and high socio-economic status in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state (Low SES M=35.37 while High SES M=68.81, p-value, 0.000, < 0.05).
4. There is a significant interactive effect of family size, parental support, and socio-economic status on achievement in English language among secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano State (p-value of 0.000 < 0.05). Family size, parental support, and socio economic status jointly have a statistically significant effect on achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state (F=162.952, P=.000).

A finding from hypothesis one revealed that there is no significant influence of family size on achievement in English language of secondary school students in the study area. Despite many students came from large families, this did not appear to negatively affect their achievement in English language. This may suggests the presence of compensatory factors such as school support, peer influence, or personal motivation. This finding did not agree with the finding of

Tsagem *et al.* (2023) and Ene (2021) who concluded that positive significant relationship exist between family size and academic achievement of the respondents. However, on the contrary, the findings of this study agree with the Gabriel (2013) and Cobb-Clark and Moschion (2013) whose findings revealed impact of family size on students' academic achievement.

The finding of the study from hypothesis two which sought to find out whether there is a difference in achievement in English language of students who come from low and high level of parental support indicates that there is a significant difference in achievement in English language of students with high and low level of parental support in favor of those with high parental support. Students receiving higher parental support had better academic outcomes. This emphasizes the motivational and emotional reinforcement that supportive parents provide, even in low-resources settings. The findings of this study does not agree with that of Alhaji (2024) who concluded that no significant difference exists in academic achievement of students based on the level of parental support. However, the finding of the study agree with that of Werang *et al.* (2024) and Umar (2019) who concluded that a significant positive relationship exist between parental support and academic achievement of student.

The findings of the study from hypothesis three revealed that there is a significant difference in achievement in English language of students who come from low and high socio economic status in favor of those from high socioeconomic status. This was based on the obtained result from t-test analysis which shows that students from parents with high level of parental socio economic status possess a significantly higher level of achievement in English language than their counterparts with low level of parental socioeconomic status. Higher SES students tend to perform better due to access to quality materials, stable environments, and educated guardians. The findings of this study is in agreement with the study conducted by Garba (2024), Baffa (2024), Lucky and

Shola (2022), Aliyu (2021) and Idris and Oni (2021) their findings revealed that students from high socio economic status perform better academically than their counterparts, there is a significant relationship between parental socio economic status and educational achievement of secondary school students; students' academic achievement significantly differs on the account of parental socio economic status

The finding of this study also indicated a significant interactive effect of family size, parental support and socio economic status on achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate. Meaning, based on this study, family size, parental support and socio economic status interactively affect the academic achievement of students in the study area. The interaction among these factors reveals that achievement in English language is influenced by a web of interconnected conditions. For example, the negative effects of low SES may be reduced if strong parental support is present. The findings of this study agreed with the study conducted by Florence and Rose (2022), Olukayode (2019), Garba (2024), and Baffa (2024) and concluded that family size and socio economic status interactively influence students' academic achievement, there is a strong positive relationship between family background and academic achievement of senior secondary school students, socio economic status and family size interactively influence students' academic achievement and parental involvement and socio economic status interactively influence students' academic achievement.

Conclusion

Based on the research finding and discussions the following conclusions were made:

Family size do not influence students' achievement in English language in Dala Education Directorate. However, a significant difference exist in achievement in English language of students based on both the levels of parental support and

socio economic status in favor of those with high parental support and higher SES; students with higher level of parental support and from higher SES have better achievement in English language than their counterparts. Likewise, family size, parental support and SES interactively influenced achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate. That is, Family size, parental support, and socio economic status jointly had a statistically significant effect on achievement in English language of students in Dala Education Directorate. Lastly, it was concluded that, Home background factors had a significant influence on achievement in English language of secondary school students in Dala Education Directorate, Kano state.

Recommendations

1. Parents should support their children's education regardless of family size.
2. Schools should strengthen home-school collaboration by involving parents in learning activities, workshops, and regular communication to boost student performance.
3. Educational stakeholders should address educational inequality by ensuring equitable funding and resource allocation, especially to students in schools serving low-income communities.
4. Educational policies and school programs should adopt a holistic approach that considers family size dynamics, strengthens parental support, and improves socio economic conditions to effectively support student academic Achievement.

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