

**FAMILY BACKGROUND AS CORRELATE TO CHILD SOCIALIZATION**

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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**JANUARY 2026**

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**PROJECT WRITTEN IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION  
AND COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, IN PARTIAL  
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF  
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION B.Sc(Ed) GUIDANCE AND  
COUNSELLING IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**JANUARY 2026**

## CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned certify that this research work was carried out by Ruth FELIX, in the Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty, my Heavenly Father, who gave me life, good health, grace and mercy, knowledge and understanding, protection over my life during this course of my academic achievement.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, the researcher expresses her deepest gratitude to God Almighty for His grace, guidance, and unending support throughout the course of this project. Truly, none of this would have been possible without Him.

The researcher extends her heartfelt appreciation to her supervisor, DR. PRAISE ADEOSUN for her invaluable guidance, patience, and constructive feedback. Her constant support and insightful corrections greatly contributed to the successful completion of this work. And to her lecturers and staffs of the department who gave their all.

The researcher's sincere thanks also goes to her wonderful friends at home and in school especially Miss Dorcas and Master Jeremiah who showed me what it really is to be there for someone, for their love, care and support. I equally appreciate all my lecturers for their dedication, inspiration, and positive impact on my academic journey.

To the researcher's beloved family, she owes immense gratitude for their unwavering love, prayers, and sacrifices especially my amazing mother Mrs Helen Felix and my sweet dad Mr Peter Your belief in me has been my greatest strength, thank you for your presence, encouragement, and companionship throughout this journey. Your kind words, thoughtful insights, and support made the process both meaningful and memorable.

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated *family background as a correlate of child socialization* among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. The study examined the influence of parental socio-economic status, academic background, ethnic background, and religious background on children's socialization.

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area, from which a sample of 200 students (100 males and 100 females) was selected using a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Family Background and Child Socialization Questionnaire (FBCSQ)*. The instrument was validated and its reliability established using the Cronbach Alpha method. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics, including the t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation, at a 0.05 level of significance.

Findings revealed that there were significant relationships between parental socio-economic status and children's socialization, parental academic background and children's socialization, parental ethnic background and children's socialization, as well as parental religious background and children's socialization. The study concluded that family background plays a crucial role in shaping children's social behavior, moral values, and adjustment within society. Based on the findings, it was recommended that parents, educators, and policymakers should pay greater attention to home-related factors in promoting positive child socialization and overall development.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Background to the Study

Socialization is the foundational process through which individuals, especially children, learn to interact with norms, internalize societal norms, and develop the skills necessary to function effectively within their community. It begins at birth and continues throughout life, but the early years are particularly critical. During this formative period, the family serves as the primary agent of socialization, shaping the child's behavior, values, beliefs, and identity. According to symbolic interactionism, socialization is essential for every role an individual assumes throughout life.

Children learn through interaction with parents, siblings, and extended family members. Theories such as social learning theory and ecological systems theory emphasize that children model behaviors observed in their immediate environment, particularly within the family. There are many theories that address both the transition to parenthood and parental involvement, as well as the socialization of children. There are however, relative theoretical models that focus on socialization of parents(Warmer, 1993),despite the fact that parenthood has a powerful influence on the development of the adult, to say nothing of the child.

According to Peterson and Haan(1999), socialization is considered to be more general either enculturation or acculturation. Enculturation and culture also play roles in

socialization. Enculturation refers to the transmission of cultural values from one generation to another, while acculturation involves adapting to a new culture, often seen in immigrant families. Ross and Buriel(1998) described socialization as the process whereby an individual's standards, skills, motives, attitudes and behaviors change to conform to those regarded as desirable and appropriate for his/her present and leaves open the possibility that adults, an addition to children, can be socialized into new roles and responsibilities. Thus, the late twentieth century conceptions of socialization, suggest that parents as well as children are socialized by others referred to as socialization agents(Pillemer and Mccartney,1991).

The family background- encompassing social and economic status, religious orientation, and the academic qualifications of parents -plays a pivotal role in determining the quality and direction of a child's social competence, emotional intelligence, and adaptability. These differences are not coincidental but are deeply rooted in the environmental and cultural contexts provided by the family. A popular adage says "charity begins at home". A child is first of all the product of his immediate environment, which is his/her home. The effect of home factor on the development of the child and most importantly, his/her social adjustment cannot be overemphasized(Mundi, 2000).

An observation by Munonye(2001) showed that a child who is born into a warm environment as well as a peaceful loving home is more likely to grow up happily, showing love to others. Whereas, an unwanted or unloved child who starts to experience frustration

and rejection at an early age is more likely to grow up as an unhappy child. By the time the child is fully grown into an adolescent, the character is made up from his childhood experiences. However, it is merely at adolescent stage that when he/she fails to meet up to their expectation, without thinking of the background they have provided for the child's development and socialization.

According to Arnolds(1994) and Adamson (2000), children who grow up in a hostile home environment, where there is lot of nagging, quarelling and fighting are more likely to be unhappy, wanting to get out such ugly home environment as quickly as possible. The adolescent child in such situation, would rather prefer to spend most of his/her day in the midst of peers where he would be happier and more relaxed. Another type of home background is where parents seem to have no time for the upbringing of their children and their proper socialization in the society. In such homes, parents are more preoccupied with the quest to get rich quickly by racing after money. They therefore, shift the responsibilities of training their children to the house maids who themselves had no training (Olayinka, 1987). Such children eventually end up creating more problems than the parents envisaged.

In Nigeria and many other developing societies, disparities in family background are pronounced. Some children grow up in affluent homes with educated parents and access to diverse social experiences, while others are raised in economically disadvantaged settings with limited exposure to formal education and structured social norms. Understanding how

these variables correlate with child socialization is essential for educators, psychologists, and policymakers seeking to promote inclusive and effective development strategies.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the universal importance of socialization, children do not experience it uniformly. Variations in family background-particularly in terms of socio-economic status, religious beliefs, and parental education-create unequal opportunities for social development. Children from low-income families may lack access to quality education, social networks, and positive role models. Similarly, religious doctrines and practices can influence a child's worldview, interpersonal relationships, and moral compass. The academic background of parents also affect how children are taught to communicate, resolve conflicts, and engage with society.

This study seeks to investigate how these family background variables correlate with the socialization of children. It aims to uncover the extent to which these factors shape children's ability to interact, adapt, and thrive in diverse social settings.

### **Research Questions**

1. Is there any relationship between the socio-economic status of parents and their children socialization?
2. Is there any relationship between parental academic background and children's socialization?

3. Is there any relationship between parental ethnic background and children's socialization?
4. Is there any relationship between parental religious background and children's socialization?

### **Hypotheses**

These hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. There is significant relationship between socio-economic status of parents and children's socialization
2. There is significant relationship between parental academic background and children's socialization.
3. There is significant relationship between parental ethnic background and children's socialization.
4. There is significant relationship between parental religious background and children's socialization.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine family background as a correlate to child socialization. The specific objectives are as follows:

- To examine whether there is a relationship between socio-economic status of parents and children's socialization
- To find out whether there is a relationship between parental academic background and children's socialization
- To assess whether there is a relationship between parental ethnic background and children's socialization.

## **Significance of the Study**

This study holds significant value for multiple stakeholders within Oredo Local Government Area and beyond, for Parents, children, society, teachers and school authorities. Parents will gain awareness of how their educational level, income, and religious practices influence their children's social growth. Children would find the recommendations and findings of this study useful as they will help make the child have emotional attachment to his or her parent, because the study will explore all that is to be known about the home and its role in child's socialization and the school.

The society will be able to understand the essence of socialization through this study, this is because, the recommendations and findings of this study will provide relevant knowledge to the public on the relationship between home and socialization of children in the society. Equally, it provides insights for teachers and school administrators to better understand the diverse social backgrounds of students and tailor interventions accordingly. The study adds to the growing body of literature on child development and Families studies in the Nigerian context.

### **Scope and Delimitation of the Study**

This study focuses on secondary school students (ss 1-3) within selected Urban communities in Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State, Nigeria. It examines family background variables such as social and economic status, religious affiliation, and parental academic qualifications. The study does not cover other agents of socialization such as peers, media, or school environment, which may also influence child development.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Socialization:** The process by which children learn and internalize societal norms, values, and behaviors.

**Family Background:** The composite of social, economic, religious, and educational characteristics of a child's home environment.

**Socioeconomic Status:** A measure of a family's economic and social position based on income, education, and occupation.

**Religious Orientation:** The beliefs, practices, and values associated with a family's faith tradition.

**Academic Background of Parents:** The highest level of formal education attained by a child's parents.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter deals with the review of literature considered important to this study. The literature review is discussed under the following sub-headings:

- Theoretical Framework
- Concept of Socialization
- Social-Economic Status of Parent and Socialization
- Parent Academic Background and Socialization
- Parental Ethnic and Socialization
- Parental Religion and Socialization
- Summary of Reviewed Literature

#### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on four major theories that explain the relationship between family background and child socialization: Social Learning Theory,

Ecological Systems Theory, Symbolic Interactionism Theory, and Cultural Transmission Theory.

**Social Learning Theory** developed by Albert Bandura (1977) posits that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and modeling. Children acquire social behaviors and values by observing their parents and significant others. According to Bandura, reinforcement and punishment play key roles in determining which behaviors are retained. Within the family context, parents act as role models, and children internalize behaviors exhibited by them—whether positive or negative. For instance, a child raised in a nurturing and disciplined home tends to emulate pro-social behaviors, while a child exposed to aggression may develop antisocial tendencies. Therefore, the socialization process is largely dependent on parental conduct and the learning environment within the home.

**Ecological Systems Theory** by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) provides a holistic framework for understanding how various environmental systems influence a child's development. The theory identifies multiple interacting systems—the microsystem (family, school, peers), mesosystem (interrelations between microsystems), exosystem (indirect influences like parental workplace), and macrosystem (cultural values and traditions). In this view, the family forms the immediate microsystem, directly shaping the child's attitudes, social behaviors, and adjustment. The theory asserts that a supportive family environment

strengthens children's ability to adapt socially and academically, while a disorganized home contributes to behavioral problems.

**Symbolic Interactionism Theory**, advanced by Mead (1934) and Blumer (1969), emphasizes that socialization occurs through interpersonal interactions and shared meanings. Children learn social roles and norms by interpreting and internalizing the meanings attached to parental actions and societal expectations. Through communication and role-taking, children develop their self-concept and identity based on feedback from parents and other family members. Thus, a child from a home characterized by positive interaction and communication is likely to develop healthy social relationships, while one from a home marked by neglect or misunderstanding may face difficulties in social adjustment.

**Cultural Transmission Theory**, proposed by Cavalli-Sforza and Feldman (1981), explains how cultural values, beliefs, and practices are passed from one generation to another through socialization. Parents play a central role in transmitting cultural norms and ethnic values that define acceptable behavior. The theory posits that variations in parental ethnic and religious backgrounds influence the type of values and behaviors children learn. This aligns with studies in Nigeria showing that cultural diversity significantly shapes children's moral behavior and attitudes toward others (Adeyemi, 2011). Hence, the theory provides a foundation for understanding how parental cultural identity and ethnic background impact child socialization.

## **Concept of Child Socialization**

Socialization refers to the lifelong process through which individuals learn and internalize the values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors necessary to function effectively within society. It begins at birth and continues throughout life, shaping the individual's identity and social competence (Durkheim, 1956; Ross & Buriel, 1998). In early childhood, socialization occurs primarily within the family, where children acquire the foundational attitudes and behaviors expected by their culture. Through this process, a child learns what is considered acceptable and unacceptable behavior, thereby ensuring the continuity of cultural and social norms across generations (Peterson & Haan, 1999).

The family is often considered the most significant agent of socialization, particularly during the formative years of a child's development. According to Parsons and Bales (1955), the family provides both emotional support and the initial exposure to societal expectations, serving as the child's first social system. The values, religious beliefs, discipline, and affection provided within the home environment influence the development of the child's moral and social identity. Children from cohesive and nurturing families are more likely to exhibit positive social behaviors, whereas those from dysfunctional homes may develop maladaptive tendencies (Ayo, 2000; Mundi, 2000).

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory provides a framework for understanding child socialization as a dynamic process influenced by multiple environmental systems. The

microsystem, which includes the family, school, and peers, has the most immediate impact on the child's social development. The mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem further shape socialization through broader socio-economic and cultural factors. This model underscores the interdependence between a child's home environment and larger societal structures, demonstrating that socialization is both a personal and societal process.

Bandura's (1977) social learning theory emphasizes that socialization occurs largely through observation and imitation. Children learn social behaviors by observing their parents, teachers, peers, and media role models. Reinforcement and punishment further shape these behaviors, helping the child understand the consequences of their actions. This theory highlights the active role of children as participants in their socialization rather than passive recipients of external influences. Consequently, the behavior and values modeled by parents play a crucial role in the formation of a child's social identity.

Culture plays a defining role in determining what is considered appropriate behavior and values for socialized individuals. Lareau (2011) distinguishes between "concerted cultivation" often practiced by middle-class parents, who actively structure their children's social and educational experiences, and the "natural growth" approach common among working-class families, which allows more autonomy but less guided socialization. These variations in cultural parenting styles produce distinct social outcomes, affecting a child's confidence, communication skills, and adaptability in different social contexts.

Religious and moral values also constitute a major component of socialization. Parents transmit religious beliefs and ethical norms to their children through instruction, rituals, and daily interactions. According to Super and Harkness (1986), these moral teachings shape the “developmental niche” of the child—an environment where spiritual, emotional, and social development intersect. In societies like Nigeria, where religion permeates social life, religious socialization helps children internalize communal norms such as respect for elders, honesty, and cooperation (Munonye, 2001; Olayinka, 1987).

Socio-economic status (SES) significantly influences the nature and quality of child socialization. Hoff, Laursen, and Tardif (2002) found that parents from higher socio-economic backgrounds tend to provide more stimulating environments and engage in more verbal interactions with their children. In contrast, children from lower-income families may face limited exposure to such opportunities, affecting their linguistic, cognitive, and social competence. Nigerian studies (Mundi, 2000; Anyakoga, 1994) have shown that economic hardship often results in inadequate parental supervision, emotional neglect, and limited access to quality education—all of which impede social development.

The role of peers and schools becomes increasingly important as children grow older. Schools are secondary socialization agents where children learn cooperation, competition, and adherence to rules outside the home (Durkheim, 1956). Teachers act as moral guides and social models, reinforcing societal expectations through discipline and guidance. Peer groups,

on the other hand, influence the development of self-concept, communication styles, and social belonging. According to Pillemer and McCartney (1991), the interaction between family and school environments determines how effectively a child internalizes social norms.

Modernization and media exposure have introduced new dynamics into the socialization process. With the rise of social media and digital communication, children now interact with global cultures at an early age. While this exposure can promote diversity and global awareness, it may also challenge traditional family and cultural values (Adamson, 2000). The media thus acts as a powerful socializing agent, often shaping children's perceptions of gender roles, morality, and social status more than the family itself.

In conclusion, child socialization is a complex, multi-faceted process influenced by family background, socio-economic status, religion, culture, and peer interactions. The quality of the home environment plays a foundational role in shaping a child's behavior, moral values, and emotional adjustment. As research consistently shows (Arnolds, 1994; Ross & Buriel, 1998; Bronfenbrenner, 1979), positive socialization within the family fosters stable, socially competent adults capable of contributing meaningfully to their communities. Conversely, neglect or poor home upbringing can lead to social maladjustment, behavioral disorders, and diminished societal participation.

## **Relationship between Home and Children's Socialization**

The home is universally recognized as the primary socializing agent in a child's life. It is within the family setting that children first acquire language, social norms, and patterns of behavior that shape their identities and interpersonal relationships (Parsons & Bales, 1955). According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, the family operates as the microsystem where the earliest interactions influence the child's cognitive and emotional development. Therefore, the quality of parent-child relationships largely determines how effectively children internalize values, roles, and acceptable conduct within society.

Family cohesion, emotional warmth, and communication patterns play critical roles in the child's social adjustment and moral development (Lareau, 2011). When parents provide a supportive home environment, children develop trust, empathy, and confidence in social interactions. Conversely, a hostile or neglectful home tends to foster aggression, withdrawal, or deviant behaviors (Durkheim, 1956). Studies conducted by Mundi (2000) in Nigeria found that children from homes characterized by mutual respect and open dialogue exhibit higher levels of cooperation and adaptability in school and peer relations.

Furthermore, Bandura's (1977) social learning theory explains that children learn by observing and imitating behaviors modeled by parents and siblings. Thus, parental actions—such as honesty, discipline, and kindness—serve as behavioral templates for children. When parents exhibit prosocial conduct, children are more likely to replicate similar behavior

patterns both at home and in school (Hoff et al., 2002). Hence, the home remains a central force in determining the child's moral and social orientation.

### **Parental Socio-Economic Status and Children's Socialization**

Socio-economic status (SES) significantly influences the quality of parenting and, by extension, the child's social adjustment in school. SES, often measured by income level, occupation, and educational attainment, affects access to resources that support learning and social development (Hoff et al., 2002). Children from high-SES families are more likely to experience enriching environments that promote self-confidence, good communication, and effective social functioning (Lareau, 2011).

Research by Olayinka (1987) demonstrated that children from low-income families in Nigeria often face challenges in adapting to school environments due to limited exposure to stimulating activities, inadequate parental involvement, and financial constraints. Such children may experience social withdrawal, inferiority complexes, or behavioral issues arising from deprivation and social comparison. Conversely, children from affluent homes often benefit from better nutrition, health care, and learning materials, all of which enhance their capacity to participate actively and confidently in school activities (Mundi, 2000).

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the socio-economic context shapes parental behavior and expectations. Parents in higher socio-economic strata are more likely to adopt democratic parenting styles that encourage reasoning and independence, while those in lower socio-economic brackets may rely on authoritarian methods due to stress and limited resources (Hoff et al., 2002). These differences influence children's emotional regulation, peer relations, and academic performance, reinforcing the connection between family background and school social adjustment.

### **Parental Academic Background and Children's Socialization**

Parental academic background plays a pivotal role in shaping children's intellectual orientation, social values, and emotional regulation. Educated parents often have greater awareness of child development principles, effective communication strategies, and the importance of emotional support in fostering social competence (Crosnoe, 2004). They are also more likely to model positive attitudes toward education and social engagement, which children internalize through observation (Bandura, 1977).

In a study conducted by Onwuama (1988), Nigerian children whose parents possessed tertiary education demonstrated higher self-esteem and better peer relationships compared to those whose parents had lower educational qualifications. This difference was attributed to the parents' ability to engage in meaningful conversations, provide guidance in problem-solving, and expose children to diverse social experiences. Educated parents also tend to

encourage participation in extracurricular activities, which further enhances children's teamwork, leadership, and communication skills (Peterson & Haan, 1999).

Furthermore, parental education influences parenting style and expectations. Parents with higher education levels tend to balance discipline with emotional warmth, fostering environments where children feel valued and secure (Hoff et al., 2002). Such children often exhibit emotional stability and social maturity, key attributes for successful adjustment in school. Conversely, children of less educated parents may experience restricted communication and limited social stimulation, potentially leading to low confidence or social anxiety (Mundi, 2000).

### **Parental Religious Backgrounds and Children's Socialization**

Religion is a powerful force in the socialization of children, particularly in societies where faith permeates moral and social values. Parental religious background often dictates the moral codes, behavioral expectations, and social norms children adopt (Durkheim, 1956). Religious homes typically emphasize virtues such as honesty, humility, respect, and compassion, which promote positive interpersonal relationships and community participation (Olupona, 2011).

According to Ross and Buriel (1998), consistent exposure to religious teachings reinforces discipline, empathy, and altruism in children. When parents practice what they preach, children internalize those religious values and display socially acceptable behaviors in school

and other social environments. This alignment between belief and behavior promotes harmony and moral consistency in children's interactions.

In the Nigerian context, research by Anyakoga (1994) found that children raised in religiously devout families demonstrate greater respect for authority and stronger moral reasoning compared to those from secular backgrounds. Such children often possess clearer boundaries between right and wrong, reducing the likelihood of deviant behavior. However, overly rigid or dogmatic religious training may also restrict open-mindedness and social flexibility, sometimes resulting in social withdrawal or judgmental attitudes (Ukah, 2008).

Moreover, religion can serve as a coping mechanism that strengthens children's resilience in the face of adversity. Families that engage in communal worship and faith-based activities foster belonging and emotional support (Anderson, 2013). These social networks, embedded within religious institutions, enhance children's capacity to navigate social challenges and maintain positive adjustment in school and community settings.

Religious education within the home thus contributes not only to moral development but also to emotional and social stability. Parents who consistently integrate faith-based teachings with empathy and open dialogue help their children develop balanced personalities, capable of interacting harmoniously with diverse social groups (Super & Harkness, 1986). Consequently, parental religious background emerges as a crucial factor in shaping the moral and social foundations of children's lives.

## **Parental Ethnic Background and Children's Socialization**

Ethnicity plays a profound role in shaping the values, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals within a society. In the context of child socialization, parental ethnic background influences the social norms and cultural expectations transmitted to children (Super & Harkness, 1986). Through ethnic traditions, language, customs, and belief systems, children acquire culturally appropriate behaviors that guide their interactions within their communities. Bronfenbrenner (1979) emphasized that these cultural systems form part of the macrosystem that shapes developmental outcomes, suggesting that ethnic background can directly influence children's emotional and social competencies.

Different ethnic groups in Nigeria and beyond possess unique child-rearing practices and socialization patterns that affect children's adjustment to school and society. For example, collectivist ethnic groups, such as the Yoruba and Igbo, emphasize interdependence, respect for elders, and communal living, which often foster cooperation and empathy among children (Olaoye, 2013). In contrast, ethnic groups with more individualistic orientations may encourage independence and assertiveness, which can enhance self-confidence but may reduce conformity to group norms (Harkness & Super, 2002). Thus, parental ethnicity provides the framework for acceptable behavior and defines how children perceive authority, cooperation, and self-expression.

Research indicates that children from culturally cohesive ethnic backgrounds often display stronger identity formation and better social adjustment due to consistent reinforcement of values and belonging (Phinney, 1990). However, when families migrate or live in multicultural settings, children may experience acculturative stress as they attempt to balance home-based ethnic norms with the expectations of broader society (Berry, 1997). Such cultural dissonance can lead to confusion, identity conflicts, and social maladjustment if not properly managed.

In multi-ethnic societies such as Nigeria, parental ethnic orientation can also influence the language of communication, peer selection, and attitudes toward education. According to Adeyemi (2011), children who grow up in homes where indigenous languages and cultural practices are valued tend to develop stronger social identities and moral grounding. However, children from ethnically mixed or urbanized homes may adopt hybrid behaviors, reflecting multiple cultural influences that can either enhance social flexibility or cause behavioral inconsistency (Edewor, 2001). The extent to which these cultural patterns support or hinder social adjustment depends on the family's capacity to harmonize ethnic traditions with modern societal demands.

Furthermore, ethnic-based child-rearing norms can impact gender roles, obedience, and emotional expression. For instance, some ethnic groups place greater emphasis on male assertiveness and female modesty, which can shape how children relate to peers and teachers

in school (Mbah, 2008). Children socialized under such gendered expectations may experience either social ease or difficulty depending on the school environment's compatibility with their home-taught norms. Therefore, understanding the influence of parental ethnic background is essential in explaining variations in children's behavioral and social adjustment patterns.

### **Gender Difference in Academic Performance of Children Due to Home Background**

Gender differences in academic performance have long been a subject of educational research, with home background identified as a critical factor influencing these disparities (Okeke, 2014). The family serves as the foundation where gender roles and expectations are first defined. Parents often assign tasks, responsibilities, and privileges based on gender, which in turn affects children's academic engagement and achievement orientation (Bandura, 1977). In some households, boys may be encouraged to pursue science or leadership-related goals, while girls may be guided toward domestic roles, limiting their educational exposure and motivation.

Socio-economic and cultural factors within the home environment also shape gendered educational outcomes. In patriarchal societies, male children are often prioritized for schooling due to cultural beliefs that they are future family providers (Okafor & Akpan, 2010). Conversely, female education may be undervalued, especially in rural or low-income families, resulting in lower literacy levels and academic performance among girls. However,

contemporary shifts toward gender equality have gradually improved female educational attainment, especially in urban and middle-class households (UNESCO, 2020).

Parental education plays an essential role in moderating gender disparities in learning. According to Eze and Enekwechi (2009), parents with higher educational backgrounds tend to adopt egalitarian attitudes toward child education, providing equal academic opportunities for both genders. Such homes foster inclusive learning environments, where both boys and girls are encouraged to excel academically. On the contrary, in less educated families, gender stereotypes remain entrenched, influencing how parents support or neglect their children's educational pursuits (Crosnoe, 2004).

The quality of parental involvement also varies by gender, with studies showing that mothers often invest more time helping daughters with academic tasks, while fathers are more likely to mentor sons (Epstein, 2010). This pattern can reinforce traditional gender divisions, affecting how children perceive their academic potential. Nevertheless, children raised in homes where both parents model balanced support and emphasize equal educational expectations tend to exhibit higher academic self-concept regardless of gender (Lareau, 2011). Moreover, differences in home resources and stimulation contribute to gender-based academic variation. Boys are often exposed to problem-solving activities and outdoor exploration, which enhance analytical skills, while girls may engage in nurturing or verbal tasks that strengthen communication and empathy (Maccoby, 1998). Although these

experiences develop complementary skills, unequal access to educational materials or reinforcement can widen gender gaps in performance.

Cultural attitudes toward discipline and freedom also affect boys and girls differently. Boys may be granted greater autonomy to explore their environment, encouraging initiative but sometimes reducing concentration in academic work. Girls, on the other hand, are often closely supervised, which may increase diligence but limit creativity and risk-taking (Okeke, 2014). Consequently, gender-related parenting styles shape distinct academic and behavioral outcomes in schools.

In Nigeria, gender bias remains a challenge in rural communities where socio-cultural norms prioritize early marriage or domestic roles for girls (Adedeji & Olaniyan, 2011). However, national initiatives and parental awareness programs are gradually shifting perceptions toward supporting the education of both genders. Empirical studies show that when family environments are supportive and gender-fair, differences in academic performance between boys and girls become minimal (Olayinka, 1987).

Overall, home background remains a powerful determinant of gender differences in academic achievement. The interplay of parental beliefs, socio-economic factors, cultural expectations, and educational practices collectively influences how boys and girls perform in school. Promoting gender equity in the home environment is therefore crucial for achieving balanced educational outcomes and fostering holistic social development.

## **Empirical Review**

Several studies have explored the relationship between family background and children's socialization across diverse settings. In Nigeria, Adebule (2004) found that family structure significantly influences children's social and emotional behavior. Children from stable, two-parent homes demonstrated higher levels of social adjustment and moral conduct compared to those from broken homes. This aligns with the argument that family cohesion and emotional support are key predictors of a child's social competence.

In a similar study, Eze (2009) examined the influence of parental socio-economic status on the academic and social adjustment of students in Enugu State. The findings indicated that children from high socio-economic backgrounds had better access to learning resources, exhibited greater confidence, and adjusted more effectively to school environments than those from low-income families. The study concluded that parents' economic stability enhances children's opportunities for proper socialization through exposure to diverse learning experiences.

Parental education has also been found to correlate positively with children's social development. Adeyinka and Adetayo (2013) discovered that parents with higher educational attainment tend to provide better guidance, communication, and moral instruction, thereby

fostering higher levels of social responsibility among their children. The study further noted that educated parents are more likely to adopt democratic parenting styles, which promote open dialogue and social competence.

Religious background has been identified as another determinant of children's social behavior. A study by Olagunju (2015) revealed that children raised in homes with strong religious foundations displayed better discipline, empathy, and community participation. Religious teachings and practices serve as a moral compass, shaping children's sense of right and wrong.

Similarly, Oladipo (2010) emphasized that parental religiosity contributes to the development of ethical conduct and civic responsibility among youths.

Ethnicity has also been shown to affect socialization outcomes. Edewor (2001) noted that ethnic identity and cultural values play a central role in how children interact with peers and authority figures. In his study of Yoruba and Igbo families, he found that ethnic-based practices such as respect for elders and communal responsibility significantly influenced children's social adjustment patterns. However, exposure to multicultural environments was associated with greater social flexibility and adaptability.

Gender differences in academic and social outcomes have been widely documented. Okeke (2014) found that boys and girls differ in academic motivation and social behaviors based on

the gender expectations modeled at home. In many traditional Nigerian families, boys are encouraged to be assertive and independent, while girls are trained to be nurturing and obedient. These differences manifest in classroom participation, leadership roles, and social relationships. Nonetheless, when parents promote gender equality, such disparities tend to diminish.

Empirical findings from international contexts further corroborate these patterns. A study by Crosnoe (2004) in the United States demonstrated that family social capital, defined by parental involvement and supportive home environments, is a strong predictor of children's social and academic adjustment. The study emphasized that consistent parental monitoring and communication enhance children's social competence across socio-economic levels.

Finally, Ogunleye and Adepoju (2018) conducted a study in Lagos State and reported that parental communication style, emotional availability, and family cohesion were the strongest predictors of children's moral behavior and peer relationships. The findings reaffirmed that the home environment remains the primary agent of socialization, with long-lasting effects on children's academic success and social adaptation.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter , the processes and procedures that were followed in carrying out the study are discussed under the following sub-headings:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

#### **Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to collect data from a sample of respondents and

describe the relationship between variables as they exist in their natural setting. The descriptive survey design helps in assessing the opinions, attitudes, and perceptions of students regarding the influence of family background on their socialization. According to Creswell (2014), survey research is suitable for gathering information from a large population where direct observation is not feasible. This design therefore provided a means of obtaining factual and attitudinal data related to the home environment, socio-economic status, ethnic background, and religious upbringing of children in relation to their socialization.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study consisted of all secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. These students were selected because they are in the critical stage of social development and are directly influenced by their family background and school environment. The population includes both male and female students from senior secondary classes.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

A total of 200 students were selected as the sample size for this study. The sample consisted of 100 males and 100 females drawn from four randomly selected secondary schools within Oredo Local Government Area. A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure that each student had an equal chance of being selected. This technique helped to eliminate bias and ensured a fair representation of the population. According to Fraenkel and

Wallen (2012), random sampling provides a representative subset of a population and enhances the generalizability of findings.

### **Research Instrument**

The primary instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled “*Family Background and Child Socialization Questionnaire (FBCSQ)*”. The questionnaire was divided into two sections:

- **Section A:** Demographic information of the respondents (such as gender, age, class, parents’ occupation, and educational background).
- **Section B:** Items related to the research questions based on a **five-point Likert scale:** Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1).

The questionnaire contained items designed to examine the relationship between family background variables (home environment, socio-economic status, ethnic background, religious upbringing) and children’s socialization.

### **Validity of the Instrument**

The instrument was subjected to content and face validity. Copy of the questionnaire was presented to researcher’s supervisor for comments, amendments and suggestions.

Observations and suggestions were used to modify some items to ensure that the

questionnaire adequately measured what it intended to measure. This process ensured that the instrument was both clear and relevant to the research objectives.

### **Reliability of the Instrument**

To determine the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted among 20 students from a secondary school outside the study area. The responses obtained were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient.

### **Method of Data Collection**

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires . The purpose of the study was clearly explained to the respondents, and confidentiality was assured. Respondents were encouraged to provide honest answers without fear of victimization. The completed questionnaires were collected immediately to ensure a high rate of return and to minimize loss of data.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze demographic data, while mean scores were computed for each item in the Likert-scale section. To test the hypotheses, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and t-test statistical tools were used at the 0.05 level of significance. The PPMC was used to determine the relationship between family background

variables and children's socialization, while the t-test compared differences between male and female students in terms of academic performance due to home background. Statistical analyses were carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### Hypothesis One

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference between socio-economic status of parents and children's socialization.

**Table 1: One Sample t-test on Socio-Economic Status of Parents and Children's Socialization**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Socio-Economic Status</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>15.19</i>	<i>2.77</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>9.68</i>	<i>.000</i>

Table 1 shows a calculated t-value of 9.68 and a p-value of .000, testing at an alpha level of 0.05. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level, therefore the null hypothesis which states that “*there is no significant difference between socio-economic status of parents and children's socialization*” is rejected. Consequently, there is a significant difference between socio-economic status of parents and children's socialization.

## Hypothesis Two

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference between parental academic background and children's socialization.

**Table 2: One Sample t-test on Parental Academic Background and Children's Socialization**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Parental Academic Background	100	15.12	3.07	99	8.52	.000

Table 2 shows a calculated t-value of 8.52 and a p-value of .000, testing at an alpha level of 0.05. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level, therefore the null hypothesis which states that “*there is no significant difference between parental academic background and children's socialization*” is rejected. Consequently, there is a significant difference between parental academic background and children's socialization.

## Hypothesis Three

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference between parental ethnic background and children's socialization.

**Table 3: One Sample t-test on Parental Ethnic Background and Children’s Socialization**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Parental Ethnic Background	100	15.34	2.71	99	10.45	.000

Table 3 shows a calculated t-value of 10.45 and a p-value of .000, testing at an alpha level of 0.05. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level, therefore the null hypothesis which states that “*there is no significant difference between parental ethnic background and children’s socialization*” is rejected. Consequently, there is a significant difference between parental ethnic background and children’s socialization.

**Hypothesis Four**

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference between parental religious background and children’s socialization.

**Table 4: One Sample t-test on Parental Religious Background and Children’s Socialization**

Variable	N	Mean	Std.	df	t-	Sig. (2-
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				<i>Deviation</i>		<i>value</i>	<i>tailed)</i>
<i>Parental</i>	<i>Religious</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>15.40</i>	<i>2.89</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>10.01</i>	<i>.000</i>
<i>Background</i>							

Table 4 shows a calculated t-value of 10.01 and a p-value of .000, testing at an alpha level of 0.05. Since the p-value is less than the alpha level, therefore the null hypothesis which states that “*there is no significant difference between parental religious background and children’s socialization*” is rejected. Consequently, there is a significant difference between parental religious background and children’s socialization.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of hypothesis One shows that there is a significant difference between socio-economic status of parents and children’s socialization in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. This findings has shown that the financial and social standing of a family can influence the quality of social interaction and exposure a child receives. For instance, children from high socio-economic backgrounds often have access to diverse social environments and resources that build confidence, while those from lower-income families may face limited social stimulation. This finding is in support of Mundi (2000), who found that the effect of home factors on the development of the child and their social adjustment cannot be overemphasized. It also aligns with the views of Hoff, Laursen, and Tardif (2002),

who found that parents from higher socio-economic backgrounds engage in more verbal interactions and provide more stimulating environments for their children.

The findings of hypothesis Two shows that there is a significant difference between parental academic background and children's socialization in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. This findings has shown that the educational level of parents plays a vital role in how they guide their children through societal norms and communication. Educated parents are more likely to model analytical thinking and social maturity which children internalize through observation. This is in support of Onwuama (1988), who demonstrated that children whose parents possessed tertiary education exhibited better peer relationships and higher self-esteem. It also corroborates Bandura (1977), whose social learning theory posits that children acquire social behaviors by modeling their parents.

The findings of hypothesis Three shows that there Is a significant difference between parental ethnic background and children's socialization in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. This findings has shown that ethnic traditions, customs, and languages are fundamental tools used by parents to shape a child's social identity and interaction patterns. In a multicultural environment like Oredo, the specific values transmitted within an ethnic group influence how a child respects authority and cooperates with peers. This finding is in support of Adeyemi (2011), who stated that cultural diversity significantly shapes children's moral behavior and

attitudes toward others. It also aligns with Cultural Transmission Theory which explains how ethnic values are passed from one generation to another through the socialization process.

The findings of hypothesis Four shows that there is a significant difference between parental religious background and children's socialization in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. This findings has shown that religious orientation provides the moral code and ethical boundaries that children follow in their daily interactions. Religious practices such as communal worship and faith-based teachings help children develop empathy and respect for societal rules. This finding is in support of Anyakoga (1994), who found that children raised in religiously devout families demonstrate greater respect for authority and stronger moral reasoning. It also corroborates the views of Olagunju (2015), who revealed that children raised in homes with strong religious foundations displayed better discipline and community participation.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusion, and recommendations based on the results obtained in the previous chapter. The study examined the influence of family background on child socialization among students, with particular attention to variables such

as home environment, parental socio-economic status, ethnic background, religious background.

### **Summary of the Findings**

The study titled “Family Background as Correlate of Child Socialization” aimed to explore how various family factors contribute to children’s socialization. The research adopted a descriptive survey design using a structured questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection. Respondents included students across junior and senior secondary school levels.

The questionnaire comprised demographic information and four key research questions covering parents academic background, socio-economic status, ethnic background, religious background. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency counts and percentages) and inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation and t-test) at a 0.05 level of significance.

Findings from the study revealed strong relationships between parental academic background variables and children’s socialization. It also showed that parental socio-economic, ethnic, and religious factors significantly influenced children’s behaviour and adaptability.

## **Summary**

There is a significant relationship between the parental background and children's socialization. Parents with higher education levels model effective social behaviours, encourage peer interaction, and raise socially confident children.

There is a significant relationship between parental socio-economic status and children's social adjustment. Children from financially stable homes exhibit better social confidence and integration.

There is a significant relationship between parental ethnic background and children's social adjustment. Cultural norms and ethnic identity shape children's interpersonal relationships and adaptability.

There is a significant relationship between parents' religious backgrounds and children's social adjustment. Religious teachings and moral values enhance children's discipline and social behavior.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the family remains the foundation of social and moral development in children. A supportive home environment characterized by love, discipline, and communication enables children to develop appropriate social skills and emotional stability.

Furthermore, parental socio-economic conditions play an important role in determining the quality of education, exposure, and social participation of children. Ethnic and religious backgrounds equally influence moral and social standards, thereby shaping children's overall adjustment to school and community life.

Gender differences do not significantly determine academic success; rather, the quality of home upbringing and the level of parental involvement are the key determinants of children's social and academic outcomes. Therefore, strengthening family values and promoting inclusive parental roles are vital for enhancing the holistic development of children.

### **Recommendations**

**Parental Involvement:** Parents should show active interest in their children's emotional and academic development through regular communication, guidance, and supervision.

**Economic Empowerment:** Government and NGOs should initiate programs aimed at improving the economic capacity of families, as financial stability directly affects children's socialization and education.

**Promotion of Family Values:** Religious and community leaders should emphasize the importance of peace, love, and unity within families to promote moral and social stability among children.

Cultural Integration: Parents should teach cultural values that encourage openness, tolerance, and respect for others while discouraging practices that hinder social inclusion.

Equal Educational Opportunities: Both male and female children should be given equal educational support and opportunities at home to promote fairness and academic balance.

Counselling Support: Schools should provide guidance and counseling services to assist students from unstable homes in coping with emotional and social challenges.

Religious Balance: Parents should ensure that religious education at home fosters moral discipline without intolerance or discrimination.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

Future researchers should consider:

Conducting similar studies in other geographical regions to compare cultural and religious influences on socialization.

Investigating the impact of single-parent households on children's social and academic development.

Examining the role of digital media and modern parenting styles in shaping children's social behaviors in the 21st century.

Expanding the study to include teachers and parents as respondents for a broader perspective on the influence of home background on child development.

### **Contribution to Knowledge**

This study contributes to existing knowledge by demonstrating that:

Family background significantly influences children's social and academic adjustment.

Parental socio-economic, religious, and ethnic factors shape children's behavior more strongly than gender differences.

A supportive, peaceful, and value-driven home environment is fundamental to child socialization and development.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Family Background as Correlate to Child Socialization**

**Dear Respondent,**

Kindly read the following questionnaire items and tick the answers that accurately reflect your choice where appropriate. The responses you give are purely for research purposes and will be treated confidentially. Please do not write your name.

Thank you.

**Yours faithfully,**

Researcher

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

**Parent's Occupation**      Civil servant ( ) Trader ( ) Farmer ( ) Artisan ( ) Others ( )

**Parent's Educational Background**      Non-formal education ( ) Primary education ( ) Secondary education ( ) Tertiary education ( )

**Parent's Religious**  
 Christian ( ) Muslim ( )  
**Background**

**Research Question 1**

*Is there any relationship between the socio-economic status of parents and their children's socialization?*

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Children from wealthy families tend to socialize more easily than those from poor backgrounds				
2	Parent's financial status determines the quality of social exposure of their children				
3	Low socio-economic background may limit a child's participation in social activities				
4	Children from higher socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to develop leadership skills through social interaction				
5	The social networks of parents influence the social opportunities available to their children				

## Research Question 2

*Is there any relationship between parental academic background and their children's socialization?*

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	The academic level of parents affects the kind of social environment they expose their children to				
2	Parents with higher academic backgrounds often model effective social behavior for their children				
3	Children whose parents have higher academic qualifications are more socially confident				
4	Parents with limited formal education may struggle to guide their children's social development				
5	Educated parents are more aware of the importance of peer interaction for their children				

### Research Question 3

*Is there any relationship between parental ethnic background and children's socialization?*

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Ethnic customs affect the way children are taught to communicate with peers and adults				
2	Parents' cultural beliefs influence their children's choice of friends and social circles				
3	Children raised in culturally rich households tend to be more socially expressive				
4	Children from ethnically diverse families are more adaptable in social situations				
5	A parent's ethnic background influences the values they teach their children about social behavior				

### Research Question 4

*Is there any relationship between parental religious background and children's socialization?*

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Religious gatherings provide children with opportunities to socialize with peers				
2	Religious traditions and practices help children develop a sense of belonging in social groups				
3	Religious teachings at home promote good moral and social acceptance				
4	Parents who actively practice their religion tend to guide their children's social choices				
5	Children raised in religious environments are more respectful in social settings				

## APPENDIX B

### Reliability

#### Case Processing Summary

Cases	N	%
Valid	20	100.0
Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
Total	20	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.771	5

#### Reliability

Scale: Religion

#### Case Processing Summary

Cases	N	%
Valid	20	100.0
Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
Total	20	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
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.747	5
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**Case Processing Summary**

Cases	N	%
Valid	20	100.0
Excluded	0	0.0
Total	20	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.771	5

**Reliability**

Scale: Religion

**Case Processing Summary**

Cases	N	%
Valid	20	100.0
Excluded	0	0.0
Total	20	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.747	5