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BOURDIEUSIAN FRAMEWORK OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIO-CULTURAL CAPITAL IN RELATION TO ACADEMIC OUTCOMES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study relied on Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital to explore the predictive powers of parental economic and socio-cultural capital on academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State, Nigeria. Against a backdrop of widespread poverty, conflict-induced displacement and educational inequity, the extent to which parental economic, cultural and social capital influence students' performance in English Language, Mathematics, and General Knowledge was explored in the study. Using a correlational survey design, data were obtained from a sample of 1,531 Senior Secondary School III students drawn through a multistage random procedure from 77 public schools across 23 Local Government Areas. Two validated instruments – the Economic and Socio-cultural Capital Questionnaire (ESCQ) and a 120-item Educational Achievement Test – were administered sequentially. Data were analysed using multivariate regression at a 0.05 significance level. Results revealed that all three forms of parental capital significantly and positively predicted students' academic performance ($p < .001$). While economic capital enhanced access to learning materials and stable schooling and cultural capital fostered language competence and academic disposition, supportive networks that advanced learning engagement were strengthened by social capital. The findings demonstrate that variations in academic outcomes among Benue's students are embedded in unequal distributions of familial resources. It was concluded in the study that education policy and interventions should address economic deprivation, promote parental literacy and build school–community networks to reduce educational inequalities and enhance student achievement in resource-constrained contexts.

Keywords: Bourdieu, economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and academic outcomes

Introduction

Education in Nigeria faces deeply stratified realities arising from family resources and social context. Even before COVID-19, roughly one in five of the world's out-of-school children lived in Nigeria, with about 10.5 million children (ages 5–14) not enrolled despite free primary education (UNICEF, 2020). Only at 61% of young children regularly attend primary school, and many public secondary schools are vastly overcrowded (often 70–80 students per

class). In 2020, the nationwide school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic operated with effects on an estimated 36.4 million Nigerian students (Mu'azu, Mohammed, & Alhaji, 2022). UNESCO and government reports warned that long closures would drive up drop-out rates and worsen learning gaps, especially for poor families who lack internet and remote-learning resources. In short, Nigerian students – particularly in rural and conflict-affected regions – returned to school after the pandemic with large learning losses, strained school resources, and families under severe economic pressure.

Benue State represents the quintessence of these challenges in a way unique to its local realities. Benue is a largely rural, agrarian state where most households depend on farming. As one review notes, "Benue State has an economy that is driven by agriculture" and produces large quantities of food crops (Alobo & Omenka, 2025). Tragically, over the past decade, persistent farmers–herders' conflicts have ravaged Benue's countryside. Attacks by armed herders have killed villagers, destroyed farms and homes, and forced massive displacement (Amnesty International, 2025). By late 2024, Amnesty International reported that roughly 500,000 Benue residents – nearly one in ten people – had fled their homes to live in overcrowded IDP camps without basic food, water or medical care. In these camps, schooling has all but collapsed: "many children are unable to exercise their right to an education in the camps" and schools set up for IDPs as ad-hoc measures have often shut down for lack of funding. These conflicts have also undermined Benue's economy and family incomes, as farmers lose land or harvests (Alobo & Omenka, 2025).

The pandemic and economic shifts compounded these stresses. Nationwide inflation surged past 34% by mid-2024 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2025), eroding household purchasing power. Families in Benue – already squeezed by rising prices – struggle to afford even basic school supplies or to pay qualified teachers for underfunded public schools. Poverty remains high: UNICEF notes that in northern Nigeria (which shares many rural and economic traits with Benue) various factors like "economic barriers and socio-cultural norms" keep children out of school (UNICEF, 2013). In Benue's classroom-based secondary schools, students often come from homes where parents have limited cash, few formal jobs, and no safety nets. At the same time, teachers and school facilities are in short supply (large classes, multi-shift schools, etc. reported in Benue's rural areas). In sum, Benue's public secondary students face overlapping disadvantages: a weak local economy, social instability, and disrupted schooling – conditions that make family support all the more crucial.

In the context of these social realities, Bourdieu's theory of capital provides a useful and powerful lens. Bourdieu argued that families possess different types of resources

or "capital" – not only money and property (economic capital) but also social networks (social capital) and educational/cultural assets (cultural capital) – which together shape the opportunities that children have in society (Ramsey, 2024a). Economic capital (e.g. household income, land, wealth) can directly pay for schooling expenses or private tutoring (Ramsey, 2024b). Social capital – the parents' connections to other families, teachers, community leaders and organisations – can provide support, information and advantages (for example, information on which schools are better or getting help with school fees) (Ramsey, 2020). Cultural capital (the parents' education level, literacy, values about schooling) helps children navigate the school system with greater effectiveness. Indeed, having more cultural capital allows for maximised educational outcomes and tends to be passed down through families (Sociology Institute, 2020). In normal times, various Nigerian studies have shown that parental involvement and support strongly predict students' grades and retention (Ugwuanyi, Okeke, & Njeze, 2020). In Benue's stressed environment, families' capitals may be especially decisive: for example, a parent with higher education or wider social ties might compensate for school shortcomings, while a family stripped of land or savings may see its children fall behind. Collectively, Bourdieu's framework suggests that a student's achievement is not determined by innate ability alone, but also by the "non-financial assets" that parents transmit – a mix of economic means, social connections, and cultural knowledge (Ramsey, 2024). While significant empirical work has explored the relationship between parents' socio-economic status and educational outcomes – often confirming the generally positive correlation – much of this research does not fully disentangle the unique impacts of each dimension of capital, nor does it sufficiently contextualize findings within the distinctive social, cultural, and economic realities of Benue. The significance of this study, therefore, lies in the context.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the recognised importance of family capital, little is known about how these factors operate in Benue's secondary schools. For the child of a civil servant or successful business owner in Makurdi or Otukpo, Benue State, economic capital translates not just to timely payment of school fees, but also to good nutrition for the body, access to a shelf full of recommended textbooks as well as access to a strong, stable and reliable internet connection for research. Meanwhile, for the child of a subsistence farmer in the rural areas of Logo or Apa Local Government of the state, the same economic constraints mean overcrowded classrooms, shared and tattered books, the pressure to contribute to family income after school and the constant anxiety of unpaid fees. But perhaps even more powerful than this visible economic divide is the silent, insidious operation of socio-cultural capital in the academic life of secondary school students in the state. The educational system, often unconsciously,

rewards a specific language, a certain set of manners, and a particular way of seeing the world. The student from a highly educated family enters the classroom already fluent in this language in that they converse confidently in Standard English, understand the unspoken cues of their teachers and see their family's values reflected in the implementation of the curriculum.

However, few studies have differentiated economic resources from socio-economic resources or investigated these dynamics within the particularly strained context of Benue State. In this state, national hyperinflation, recurrent flooding and violent displacement from armed conflicts have collectively piled overwhelming pressure on households, yet empirical evidence remains scarce regarding which parental attributes most significantly influence learning outcomes for children – including secondary school students. For example, do students from wealthier Benue households consistently outperform poorer peers (reflecting economic capital)? Do parents with broader social networks or higher education levels (social/cultural capital) buffer the effects of poverty and conflict on their children's schooling? Or has the recent crisis levelled some differences – for instance, by pushing even middle-income families into hardship, or by breaking community ties? These questions constitute the crux of the problem. In Benue's public secondary schools (across all local government areas), academic achievement appears to be lagging, but policymakers and educators appear to lack concrete directions on the underlying causes. If parental economic capital, social capital, and cultural capital each shape learning in distinct ways, then interventions (like scholarship schemes, community mentoring programmes or teacher support) would need to be planned and administered accordingly. This constitutes a pressing problem requiring systematic investigation.

Research Objectives

In line with the stated problem of the study, this research sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between parental economic capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.
2. To investigate the relationship between parental cultural capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.
3. To assess the relationship between parental social capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.

Research Questions

To meet the research objectives, the following questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between parental economic capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State?
2. What is the relationship between parental cultural capital and academic

outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State?
3. What is the relationship between parental social capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State?

Hypotheses

To address the research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant relationship between parental economic capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.
2. There is no significant relationship between parental cultural capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.
3. There is no significant relationship between parental social capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.

Literature Review

Theoretical and Conceptual Reviews

This study is grounded in Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital, which provides a robust framework for looking at economic and socio-cultural resources in the context of their relations to academic outcomes. Bourdieu (1986) conceptualises capital as prevalent in multiple interrelated forms: economic, cultural and social. Economic capital refers to material resources such as wealth, income and property. Lareau and Weininger (2003) define economic capital as "the economic resources available to a family, such as income, wealth, and financial assets" (p. 994); while Lin (2002) defines it as "the material resources available to a family, including income, savings, and assets, which can be used to enhance social and economic opportunities for family members" (p. 32). Cultural capital is, by definition, non-financial assets like education, skills, cultural knowledge and tastes. Cole (2019, para. 1) defines cultural capital as the knowledge, skills, education, including other intangible resources "that a person can tap into to demonstrate [their] cultural competence and social status". Cultural capital is acquired from family upbringing, formal education, personal experiences and familiarity as well as various forms of art such as literature, music and cinema and other forms of high culture (Prahasya, Wijayanto & Setyani, 2020). Cultural capital operates in three subtypes: embodied (here we are looking at dimensions like one's dispositions, language and preferences), objectified (e.g., books, artwork and cultural goods as examples) and institutionalised (e.g., educational qualifications and credentials) (Ciftci et al., 2023). These embody a person's familiarity with and access to high-status cultural forms. Social capital has been defined in multiple ways across the literature. For instance, it has been described as "a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing a stock of social norms, values, beliefs, trusts, obligations, relationships, networks, friends, memberships, civic engagement, information flows, and institutions that foster cooperation

and collective actions for mutual benefits and contribute to economic and social development" (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009, p. 486); "any feature of a social relationship that yields reproductive benefits" (Machalek & Martin, 2015, p. 897); "linkages among social systems and groups for strengthening communication among citizens" (Norouzi et al., 2022); and "a network of relationships created by a group of people that helps them achieve common goals and lead a comfortable life" (Vaidya, 2023, para. 1). Taken together, these standard definitions highlight social capital as an intangible yet advantageous resource derived from networks, relationships and connections.

In the educational context, academic outcomes of individuals can be impacted by social stratification through (1) financial resources that can aid their academic efforts (Jang, 2018); (2) non-financial or cultural resources like language and social skills, high culture, education, knowledge of history, politics and current events that are prized for their power to help them successfully navigate the educational system (Petrusha, Kozlova & Ivanova, 2019); and (3) networks formed between people on the basis of social connections such as family members, friends, classmates, schoolmates and colleagues (Ershova, Belyaeva & Obukhova, 2019) – all of which respectively define the concepts of economic capital, cultural capital and social capital.

Empirical Review

Economic Capital and Academic Outcomes

Numerous studies worldwide confirm that family economic resources strongly affect student achievement. For example, a study in North-Central Nigeria noted that economic hardship neuters school enrollment and elevates drop-out rates, this implying that students from lower-socio-economic backgrounds tend to lag academically (David, 2023). Similarly, a 2024 multi-level evaluation of Nigerian secondary students found vast wealth-based variations in literacy and numeracy: children from wealthier households had critically higher foundational skills than those from poorer homes (Azubuike, Browne, & Leckie, 2024). These patterns reflect findings from the international arena: children of high-income families generally outshine lower-income peers academically because wealthier families can invest more in education (the "family investment" model) (Ciftci et al., 2023).

Cultural Capital and Academic Outcomes

Research pictures cultural capital as operating in significant relations to student achievement. Families rich in cultural assets tend to confer advantages on their children's schooling. For instance, Dumais (2023) and others found that students with highly educated parents and plentiful learning materials perform better academically. In Nigeria, Gbenga (2019) showed that secondary students' home cultural capital (parental education, books in the home and cultural practices) provided a central

component in molding their educational performance, significantly predicting Science and English test scores.

Social Capital and Academic Outcomes

Strong social networks and supportive relationships are beneficially related to learning outcomes. One Nigerian study observed that secondary students embedded in high-trust school and family networks reported better results, highlighting that high social capital supports students' increased academic achievement (Nwogu & Nelson, 2023). This aligns with broader evidence: students whose families have extensive educational networks tend to have higher motivation and scores. In practical terms, students with greater social capital may receive more help with homework, guidance on school choices or quality exposure to academic resources. Overall, social capital complements economic and cultural capital in promoting higher achievement, although its effects depend on how actively the network resources are used (Nwogu & Nelson, 2023).

Synthesis and Research Gap

Overall, the literature indicates that economic, cultural and social forms of capital contribute to academic success. However, there is a lack of holistic, empirical investigation of Bourdieusian forms of capital in relation to academic outcomes in Benue. This underpins the present study, which aims to address this deficiency and elucidate the role of family and social resources in shaping educational outcomes in this context.

Methodology

The researchers utilised a survey design with a correlational technique to allow for systematic data collection and rigorous analysis of relationships between the three forms of Bourdieu's capital and academic outcomes. Data were sourced from a population of 16,076 Senior Secondary School (SSS) III students across 772 public schools in Benue State. Using Nworgu's (2015) sample size estimation technique, 10% of the population (1,608 students) was chosen through a multi-stage sampling technique. First, all 23 Local Government Areas were selected. Second, 10% of schools in each LGA were randomly sampled (77 schools). Finally, 10% of male and 10% of female students in each school were randomly chosen, which yielded 802 boys and 806 girls. Two instruments were used for data collection. The first was a questionnaire titled Economic and Socio-cultural Capital Questionnaire (ESCQ), which comprised 30 Likert-scale items, 10 each on economic, cultural and social capital. The second was a 120-item Educational Achievement Test (40 questions each in English, Mathematics and General Knowledge). The instruments were validated through expert review, and reliability was confirmed with Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.79 for ESCQ and a Kuder-Richardson 20 coefficient of 0.87 for the achievement test. Data were collected sequentially: students first completed the ESCQ, followed by the achievement test.

Students' admission numbers were used as identifiers to match responses from the two research instruments. Multivariate regression analysis, using a 0.05 significance threshold, was then employed to examine the predictive influence of different forms of Bourdieu's capital (economic, cultural and social) on student performance across subjects and on overall academic outcomes.

Results

The researchers administered the research instruments, comprising the questionnaire and the educational achievement test, to 1,608 students. All the copies of the administered instruments were successfully retrieved. However, the instruments registered incomplete responses from 77 students, who accounted for 4.8% of the original sample size. These 77 students were, consequently, excluded from the study, bringing down the final sample size from the original 1,608 to 1,531. Of the 77 students excluded from the study, 40 were male while females accounted for the balance of 37. Furthermore, of the 1,531 students that provided complete responses to the research instruments, 575 came from urban schools, whereas the vast majority, amounting to 956, were from schools in rural areas.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between parental economic capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State

Table 1: Multivariate Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Parental Economic Capital and Academic Outcomes among Secondary School Students

Dependent Variable	R^2	B	T	df	F	p-value
Performance in English Language	.538	2.663	42.203	1	1781.085	0.000
Performance in Mathematics	.355	2.497	29.036	1	843.077	0.000
Performance in General Knowledge	.499	2.61	38.991	1	1520.329	0.000
Performance across Three Subjects (Pillai's Trace Test)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	3	594.587	0.000

Source: Data from researchers' fieldwork (analysed using SPSS Version 25 Output)

The data presented in Table 1 reveal that the p-value of the multivariate regression analysis of the relationship between parental economic capital and student performance across all subjects, at 0.000, is less than the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between parental economic capital and

academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between parental cultural capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State

Table 2: Multivariate Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Parental Cultural Capital and Academic Outcomes among Secondary School Students

Dependent Variable	R^2	B	T	Df	F	p-value
Performance in English Language	.594	2.621	47.318	1	2238.94	0.000
Performance in Mathematics	.392	2.456	31.385	1	985.024	0.000
Performance in General Knowledge	.547	2.566	42.958	1	1845.407	0.000
Performance across Three Subjects (Pillai's Trace Test)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	3	750.005	0.000

Source: Data from researchers' fieldwork (analysed using SPSS Version 25 Output)

As indicated by the data presented in Table 2, the p-value of the multivariate regression analysis of the relationship between parental cultural capital and student performance across all subjects, at 0.000, is less than the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between parental cultural capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between parental social capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State

Table 3: Multivariate Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Parental Social Capital and Academic Outcomes among Secondary School Students

Dependent Variable	R^2	B	T	df	F	p-value
Performance in English Language	.575	2.682	45.472	1	2067.744	0.000
Performance in Mathematics	.430	2.676	33.957	1	1153.059	0.000
Performance in General Knowledge	.549	2.675	43.164	1	1863.094	0.000
Performance across Three Subjects (Pillai's Trace Test)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	3	700.428	0.000

Source: Data from researchers' fieldwork (analysed using SPSS Version 25 Output)

According to the data presented in Table 3, the p-value of the multivariate regression analysis of the relationship between parental social capital and student performance across all subjects, at 0.000, is less than the significance level of 0.05. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between parental social capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.

Discussion

The study established that all three forms of parental capital – economic, cultural, and social – significantly predicted secondary students' outcomes in Benue State (all $p<.001$). The multivariate regression test of Hypothesis One reveals a strong positive relationship between parental economic capital and academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State, both in individual subjects (English Language, Mathematics, and General Knowledge) and overall, across the subjects. Higher parental socio-economic status is associated with improved academic performance, highlighting its essential role in shaping achievement outcomes. These findings can be contextualised within the broader research on the impact of parental economic capital on various aspects of child development and educational outcomes, highlighting how financial resources can provide students with access to nutrient-rich foods essential for their well-being and academic success. This is crucial because, as reported in research findings by Black, Baqui, Zaman and El Arifeen (2009), poor nutrition, often prevalent in low-income households, can lead to health issues and cognitive lags. The study by Galler, Bryce, Zichlin, Fitzmaurice, Eaglesfield, Waber and Harrison (2012) also directs attention to how early-life malnutrition can have enduring impacts on behaviour and academic outcomes, which associated with better health outcomes. Very importantly, the findings acknowledge the academic challenges faced by students affected by material deprivation, referenced by Eurostat (2018) as a state of economic strain characterised by constraints in the ability to meet unexpected expenses, consume meals with meat, chicken or fish every second day, possess durable items like appliances, electronics or a vehicle – all of which can significantly impact an individual's quality of life and well-being. This resonates with Drajea and O'Sullivan (2014) who found a significant association between parents' income, literacy levels and the quality of support provided for their children's education in Uganda. The findings are further supported by previous studies on parental education, as evidenced by Gbenga (2019), who found that students' cultural capital was a central component in improving educational performance. In short, the findings that higher parental cultural capital leads to better student achievement echo both Bourdieu's theory and empirical findings across contexts.

Results from the multivariate regression test of Hypothesis Two indicate that parental

cultural capital had a strong, positive association with the educational achievement of secondary school students in Benue State, both individually in English Language, Mathematics, and General Knowledge, and collectively across these subjects. These results are supported by the existing body of research findings regarding the significant impact of parental cultural capital on educational achievement, particularly in secondary school students, such as those conducted by Aikens and Barbarin (2008) and Štrangarić, Rodić-Lukić and Marić (2017), providing a deeper understanding of how parental cultural capital influences achievement outcomes for children. The findings are also supported by theoretical perspectives that associate gaps in cognitive development, language skills and academic attitudes with significant variations in familial cultural capital (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008; Hoff, 2003). The positive associations between parental cultural capital and student scores are reflected in the reality linked to how children from families lacking cultural resources may be disadvantaged in developing the intellectual abilities, verbal proficiencies and motivated mind-sets that facilitate attainment of school outcomes for children. Thus, the study's findings regarding student performances in English Language and General Knowledge, with significant correlations to parental cultural capital (R^2 = 0.594 and R^2 = 0.547, respectively) correspond to previous findings on language skills and attitudes in previous research, aligning with Hectic Teacher Resources (2017) in its emphasis on how language use, particularly the elaborated code associated with higher cultural capital, impacts student success. Finally, the results reinforce empirical evidence from places like Nigeria (Nwogu and Mmeka, 2015), Serbia (Štrangarić et al., 2017) and China (Jin, Jiao, Ma & Xia, 2024) which reported cultural capital, especially the institutionalised and embodied forms, as a significant predictor of educational achievement across subject areas. The robust relationships in their studies persisted even when controlling for other variables.

The multivariate regression test of Hypothesis Three reveals that parental social capital significantly impacted academic outcomes among Benue State secondary school students in English Language, Mathematics and General Knowledge, as well as overall educational achievement across these three subjects. Notably, higher perceived parental social capital, encompassing networks and support systems, correlated strongly with improved student outcomes, demonstrating the centrality of parental social resources in educational outcomes. Consistent with previous research, studies by Kuranchie and Addo (2017), Naite (2021), Bosco and Andala (2021) and Schmitt and Kleine (2010) reported positive impacts of social capital on academic outcomes. Kuranchie and Addo (2017) found social capital significantly improved educational outcomes across international contexts. Naite (2021) showed secondary school students in Thailand benefited from parental social capital in the form of

enhanced academic performance. Bosco and Andala (2021) reported in their findings that Parent-Teacher Association participation explained 83.9% of the variation in Rwandan secondary school students' academic achievement.

Conclusion

Within the context of Benue State of Nigeria, the academic outcomes among secondary school students are considerably shaped in the matrix arising from the distribution of parental economic, cultural and social capital, as theorised by Pierre Bourdieu. Economic capital affords families the material means that sustain the trajectory of their children's academic outcomes. Circumstances in which families are deprived of this capital mean that students are constrained by material deprivation, where their ability to compete on equal terms with peers from more advantaged households is also limited. Cultural capital operates in parental education levels, literacy practices and the transmission of intellectual dispositions corresponding to general expectations from formal schooling. Students from families endowed with elevated volumes of embodied and institutionalised cultural capital are better positioned to internalise and imbibe school values, language codes and learning strategies, all of which converge to give them a structural advantage over peers whose families lack such resources. This process demonstrates that cultural capital is not merely an asset but also a structural mechanism through which educational inequalities are reproduced across generations. Social capital, as defined by networks of relationships, trust and community participation, reinforces the educational experiences of students. Parents with access to strong social connections are better able to mobilise support, share information and engage in school-related activities that enhance access for their children to success. Conversely, students from socially isolated households reckon with constrained opportunities to benefit from these collective resources, thereby deepening the gap in academic achievement.

Recommendations

1. The Federal Government should provide financial support in the form of scholarships, bursaries or conditional cash transfers to students from low-income households in order to reduce the economic barriers to the desired level of academic outcomes among secondary school students in Benue State.
2. The Benue State Government, operating with development partners, should introduce and implement school feeding programmes across both rural and urban secondary schools to improve nutrition, enhance concentration and support better academic outcomes.
3. The Benue State Ministry of Education and Local Government Councils should invest in adequate infrastructure, qualified teachers and learning materials in rural schools to bring variations in academic

outcomes to the barest minimum between urban and rural students.

4. The State Ministry of Education in partnership with non-governmental organisations should establish adult literacy and parental education programmes to enable parents to provide stronger cultural capital support that facilitates their children's academic growth
5. Secondary schools across the state should step up the tempo of cultural and social enrichment initiatives such as debates, arts and literacy clubs that strengthen students' confidence, language use, and problem-solving skills, thereby maximising their cultural and social capital.
6. Parents, community leaders and Parent-Teacher Associations should strengthen family-school relationships, collaborations and mentoring initiatives to empower students with social networks of encouragement, information and role models that maximise positive academic attitudes

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