AN INVESTIGATION OF HOME BACKGROUND FACTORS AND SCHOOL SUCCESS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN CAMEROON

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APPROVAL SHEET

This independent study has been read and approved as meeting the requirements of the award of Master's Degree in Educational Psychology.

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my beloved husband and my parents.

ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation of home background factors and its relationship to school success of Form Five pupils of six secondary grammar schools in Anglophone Cameroon. The sample (N=203) of subjects including both boys and girls was obtained at random. There are 118 boys (N_1 = 118), and 85 girls (N_2 = 85), in the sample.

The information about their home background factors was obtained by means of a questionnaire designed by the investigator. In addition their educational achievement scores were obtained from their respective performance in their previous year's final examination marks in four subjects, viz:- English, French, Mathematics and Biology, from their respective schools.

Analyses of this data failed to find any significant relationships between the home background factors on the one hand, and the educational achievement factors on the other - when the data of the entire sample, (N = 203) were examined. There were however some significant results viz:-

(a) Positive correlation between family background factors and french scores, of girls ($N_2 = 85$);

(b) Negative correlation between ambition of boys ($N_1 = 118$) and girls $N_2 = 85$ and mathematics and English scores respectively; and

(c) Positive correlation between 'environmental factors' and French scores for the girls ($N_2 = 85$).

The study ends with some discussion of the implications arising from the findings.

TABLE OF CONTENT

	Page
Approval Sheet - - - -	i
Dedication - - - -	ii
Acknowledgement - - - -	iii
Abstract - - - -	iv
Table of Content - - - -	vi
CHAPTER I: Introduction - - -	1
CHAPTER II: Review of Background Literature -	7
CHAPTER III: Aims and Hypothesis - -	18
CHAPTER IV: Experimental Methodology -	20
CHAPTER V: Analyses of Data and Results -	26
CHAPTER VI: Critique, Conclusion and Implications	39
Bibliography - - - -	46
Appendix I - - - -	47
Appendix II - - - -	56

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There has been considerable amount of research into home environment and scholastic attainments in the western world. The publicity given to these research reports have led to large outlays of public money and significant policy changes. Examples are the Project 'Head Start' in the U.S.A. and the establishment of Educational Priority Areas (EPAs) in Britain. In any case, mere common sense and common observation may lead us to expect that a child's school achievement will be determined to some extent by his home background. It was indeed this common sense expectation that guided the planning of this study. There are some typical studies that have been carried on in this research area, viz, that by Professor E. Fraser in Aberdeen, the cross-sectional survey conducted to provide empirical evidence for the Plowden committee, and also the study conducted by J.W.B. Douglas and his colleagues. Taken together, the three studies

present a persuasive demonstration of the influence of home environment on school attainment. Their findings will however be discussed in the next chapter.

The importance of the home in shaping educational attitudes and attainments cannot be overemphasised. There are many factors attributed to the home as a whole, and each of them has a role to play in the educational achievement of the child. As to which of them contributes most in the child's school success, will be seen in the results obtained from this study. For the ease of discussion home environment is classified under four headings or sections in this study. First of all there is the section about the family. Information in this category concerns such factors as the present status of the parents, the size of the family and the educational and occupational level of the parents. It is believed that in broken and unstable homes the children have no emotional security and this may have an adverse effect on their school work. Rather than the child concentrating on his work, he spends time worrying about his parents. Usually the responsibility of the child is taken care of just by one of

the parents instead of their combined efforts. Also when there are many children in a home, enough attention cannot be given to all of them and this reduces their chances of performing well in school. Educated parents often help their children to realise the value of education. The children of such parents have the tendency to further their education and attain the level of their parents' education or even a higher one. Right from early ages they see themselves as Doctors, Lawyers etc. in future just because their parents may be one of these. This sort of attitude helps a lot in their educational achievement; more so such parents are able to pay for their children's education and get them the necessary materials that will help them in learning.

The second section may be classified as home background. In this category the relevant items are those concerned with the interaction between the parents and their children. Also the parents' attitude towards the child's educational progress, and future employment, and the encouragement the parents give him in his school work are important here. Parents' attitude towards the child's educational progress seems to contribute very much in their school attainment.

This has been revealed in some studies which shall be discussed later. Some parents may not be very well educated but they encourage their children a lot towards education. This may be by showing a lot of interest in the child's work, and by verbal appraisal. Such children also tend to do well at school.

Thirdly there is the section on pupil background. This deals with the reading habits of the children and also how they spend their recreation time. There is no doubt that a child will have an edge over others in educational achievement, if at home this child has a regular study period, if he has been taught how to study and also trained to make good use of his spare time. He enjoys reading and will always like to search for knowledge in books. Such upbringing definately will make a child perform well at school.

Lastly, there is the section on ambition of the child. A child who is ambitious, always wants to know and thus he is prepared to learn. The reverse is also true.

There would thus appear to be a common thread linking all these factors on home environment taken together, a normal

home background, emotional stability, freedom from tension and from economic insecurity and consistent encouragement from parents are necessary for a child if his school work is to reach the potentials of the child.

Most of the studies undertaken in this field have been in the western and developed countries as earlier mentioned. The results obtained from these studies may not hold true in under developed countries and in poor nations. Thus the investigator decided to try out the same study in six randomly selected secondary grammar schools in the Anglophone Cameroon. Cameroon being a developing and poor country in Africa is quite different from the western countries. The level of unemployment is quite high in Cameroon than say, Britain for instance. The high level of unemployment in Cameroon, the low per capita income, the wider gap between the rich and the poor do not give rise to equal opportunities in the country. There is also the tendency for children in the western world to discuss freely with their parents, but in Cameroon and most parts of Africa, this is not the case except in few families. Children in trying to respect their parents are also afraid of them and they find it difficult to ask

questions and discuss freely with them. Because of these differences it will be interesting to find out the relationship of home environment and educational achievement of secondary school children in Cameroon.

The objectives of this study are therefore:

1. To find out the relationships, if any between home background and educational achievement of form five secondary school children in Cameroon.
2. To find out which of the factors under home background influences the educational achievement of these secondary school children most.

The next chapter discusses the relevant background literature.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF BACKGROUND LITERATURE

1. Theoretical Considerations

Many research findings have shown that there exists some relationship between home background factors and school success. It is widely believed that a good home background helps in shaping educational attitudes and attainments while a poor home background hinders progress on these lines. This section will therefore outline the theoretical bases explaining the role of home background factors and school success. There is no doubt that a child's level of intelligence or I Q plays an important role in his academic achievement but other factors like the home background factors or the type of school the child attends and also the teacher, must work hand in hand with the child's intelligence in his school success.

The influence of the home background factors are greatest at two periods, first during the pre-school years,

and second at the end of the normal school period when many pupils leave secondary schools. The importance of the home influence in the pre-school years is seen by the fact that there appears to be an increasing social class gap in test performance, between the ages of eight and eleven. This indicates the growing influence of the environment on the measured ability and attainment of primary school children. Children from well-to-do homes, with two-child families, say, and with median birth intervals of 2-4 years, out of no effort of theirs come to learn many things because of the facilities they have at home, and from the discussions by their educated parents. This gives them an edge in school success over those children of the manual working classes, or in large families where there are many brothers and sisters near to them in age, or who have many signs or symptoms of disturbed behaviour. We attribute many of the major differences in performance to environmental influences acting in the pre-school years. That pupils are influenced during their years at school by their environmental circumstances is also apparent during their leaving age in their final examinations. This influence shapes attitudes to school and

learning and also the wish to pursue further in education. For this reason this study was conducted with final year students of six secondary grammar schools in the Anglophone Cameroon.

From the above discussion therefore the investigator expects that other things being equal, a good home background should reveal a significant positive correlation with school success and vise-versa.

2. Research Evidence.

One of the most popular researches on this area was that by E.D. Fraser, (1969) with the Aberdeen school children. Three of the variables of the home background factors used by Fraser, viz, parents education, Income, and Parents' attitudes showed that the measures of home environment are consistently related more closely with attainment than with intelligence. Three items of the home environment stood out as being mainly responsible for the high correlation with school progress. These were, in order of importance, abnormal home background, income, and parents' attitudes to the education and future occupation of the child. These three items appeared to be the most important features of the home environment, in so far

as its effect on the childs' school progress is concerned.

The national survey for the Plowden committee also investigated the aspects of home environment which are most closely related to attainment. The pupils in this survey however were primary school children. G.F. Peaker, (1967) carried out a regression analysis of the national survey. The inquiry showed that the variation in parental encouragement and support has much effect than either the variation in home circumstances or the variations in schools. Home circumstances in this case implies the parents material circumstances and their education. The conclusions suggested in this study were that:

1. The specific contributions made by the variation in parental attitudes are greater than those made by the variation in home circumstances, while the latter in turn are greater than those made by the variations between schools and teachers taken into account.
2. Only about a quarter of the variation in parental attitudes is conditioned by the variation in circumstances. The remainder may be conditioned

to a large extent by communication and persuasion, so that it is reasonable to hope that an attempt to improve the co-operation of parents and teachers by persuasion might attain some success.

3. Although parental attitudes are largely independent of home circumstances they are conditioned to them to some extent. For this reason, and also because parental circumstances operate directly, as well as through parental attitudes, on children's progress it is reasonable to hope that the latter will improve as circumstances improve.

In testing out the firmness of the link between attitude and material circumstances a model was set up. This is shown in the diagram of figure 2.1 viz: -

Figure 2.1

A path diagram (extracted from Peaker's study, 1967)

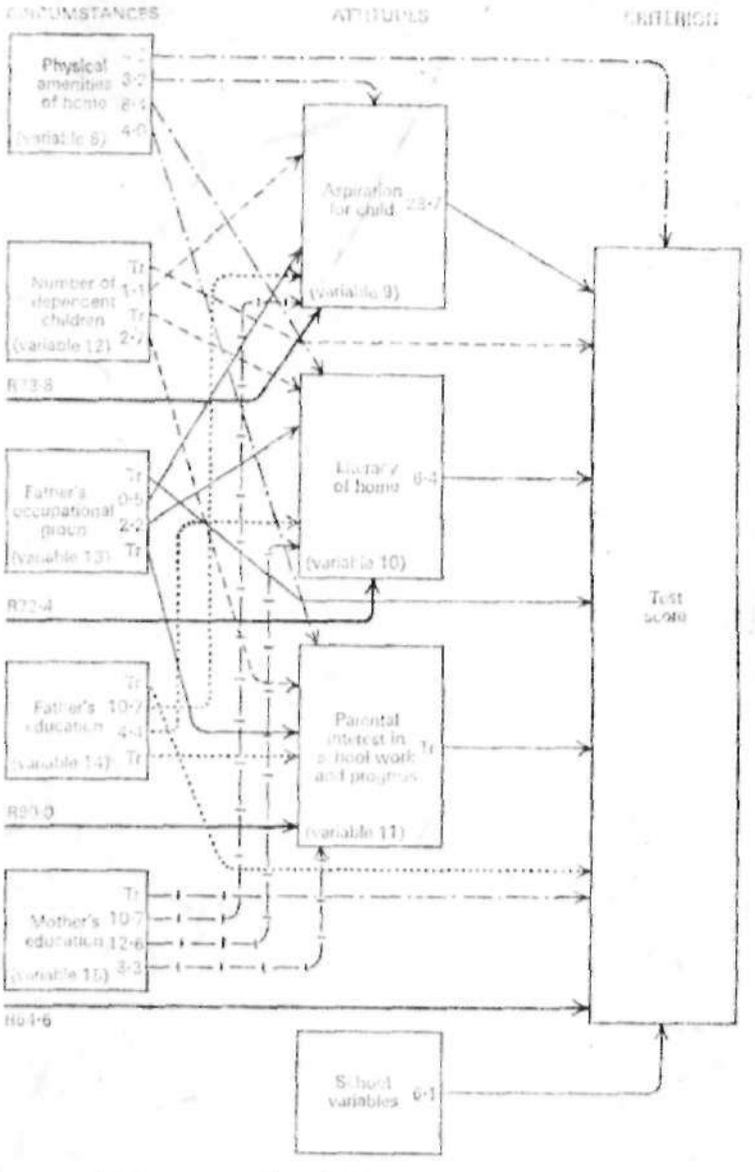


FIGURE 7:1 *A path diagram*

It is assumed that causal lines run from parental circumstances to parental attitudes, and then to the children's achievement as shown in the above diagram. (The numbers on the lines shown in the diagram show the percentage of the variance of one variable attributable to the other. By looking at these values it is thus possible to pick out those variables which are explaining most of the variations in attainment. For example, almost 29 per cent of attainment can be explained in terms of aspiration for the child, which in turn can be explained to a considerable extent by the two variables of parental education in the left hand column).

J.W.B. Douglas and his colleagues (1968) carried out a longitudinal study on the influence of social variables on attainment. The conclusions of this study were that, social inequalities in educational opportunity could have been greatly reduced by raising the standards of many of the existing schools, by increasing the provision of grammar, direct-grant and technical schools and by removing local inequalities in the provision of the selective places. A general improvement in the staffing and amenities of many of the schools and the elimination of local discrepancies are, and will be, no less

necessary in the comprehensive system of secondary education which is now evolving in U.K. It requires and will require an equally great investment and direction of both capital and staff. In a nut shell, Douglas agrees in social inequalities or home background factors in shaping out educational achievement but he is suggesting ways by which this home background factors could be modified.

Rosen and D'Andrade, (1959) felt a child's achievement motivation is likely to reflect parental attitudes and patterns of child rearing. Swift, (1967) has stressed that 'social class' is too broad a measure to describe the different home environments experienced by children. Eysenck, (1957) has suggested that inherited differences in 'conditionability' may affect children's reactions to their environment. The attitudes and behaviour making up 'academic motivation represents the result of interactions between the child's environment and his basic temperament rather than simply more specific environmental variables within social class.

From the above research evidence, it is now clear that there exists some positive correlation between home background and educational attainment. It is now left for the investigator

to find out if this is true of this study.

3. The Cameroonian Situation

Family Set Up: In discussing the Cameroonian family situation, I will like to limit myself to the Anglophone Cameroon where this study was conducted. In this part of the country, two family types exist, viz: - the monogamous and polygamous families, the monogamous being conspicuously more common than the polygamous ones. Polygamous families are found commonly among the chiefs who often marry as many wives as they wish. In most cases they do not envisage and often do not suffer from the economic hardship which is associated with large families because the honours of child care often falls almost entirely on the mothers. As one would expect, such children who depend almost entirely on their mother's limited income are found lacking in educational achievement. There are a few exceptions however found among the educated chiefs who normally do not marry as many wives as the uneducated ones. The recent trend towards the monogamous way of life may be partly associated with the rising standards of living and also with the religious affiliations of the people.

Even with these monogamous families, most of the homes are still very large. This is as a result of the extended family system which is very common in many African communities and lacking in the western world. By this system parents are obliged to cater for their own children as well as those of their less fortunate relatives. They also have to cater for their aged parents, and may be other close relatives all of whom may be living in the same house. This certainly has an influence in the upbringing of a child who does not only learn from the parents but from the grand parents aunts and other siblings.

2. Religion: Most of the people in this part of the country are christians. This can be confirmed from the sample where only 4 out of the 203 subjects, were of other religions. This may partly be the reason for the general awareness towards education found among the people. Many parents very much realise the importance of education whether they are rich or poor and would encourage the children towards it. The difference in educational achievement of these children, then lies in the income of their parents. This determines the level of education they will attain and also the facilities available in their

various homes to enable them learn more.

This being the case, one would expect that children from well to do homes will perform better at school and will also attain a higher level of education than those from poor homes. This is therefore the bases for this study.

Summary

The following points which are worth noting, can be summarised from the above discussion, viz,-

1. A normal and good home background as opposed to an abnormal and poor one will help in the educational attainment of a child especially at the leaving age in secoondary schools;
2. Some of the aspects of home background are more important than others in influencing educational achievements. For most studies, parents' attitude towards the education and future occupation of the child and also the home circumstances are very important in educational attainments;
3. The above two points are also expected to be true in Cameroon.

In the next chapter, the aims and hypotheses of this study will be discussed.

CHAPTER III

AIMS AND HYPOTHESIS

Aims

The following are the aims of this investigation, viz:-

1. To discover the relationships if any, existing between home background factors and educational achievements of form five secondary school children in Cameroon.
2. To ascertain in the event of such a relationship being found which factors of the home background contributed most towards educational achievements.

From the above aims the following hypotheses were derived by the investigator, viz:-

Hypothesis - 1 (H_1)

1. There will be a significant positive correlation between home background factors and educational achievement of form five secondary school children in Cameroon.

Hypothesis - 2 (H_2)

2. Parents' attitude towards the child's success, and parents' circumstances will contribute most towards the educational achievements of their form five secondary school children in Cameroon. These hypotheses would be tested against their corresponding null-hypotheses (H_o).

The next chapter is on the experimental methodology of the study.

CHAPTER IV

EXPERIMENTAL METHODOLOGY

The Sample

The sample of this study was obtained from the final year students from six randomly selected secondary grammar schools in Anglophone Cameroon out of 24 secondary grammar schools of the area. The number 24 does not include newly opened secondary schools which do not have classes up to form five which were of no use to the investigator as she was interested to obtain subjects from form five of these schools.

The schools in the study were randomly selected and they made up 25% of the secondary grammar schools in the area. This percentage together with the random system of selection ensured an adequate and satisfactory representation of the parent population of the secondary grammar schools in this area. The schools selected were as follows:

1. Sacred Heart College, Mankon.
2. Bishop's Rogan College, Buea.

3. St. Joseph's College, Sasse.

4. Lourdes College, Mankon.

5. Saker Baptish College, Victoria.

6. National Comprehensive College, Victoria.

These consisted of three boys schools (numbers 1-3 in the above list), two girls schools (numbers 4 and 5), and one mixed school (number 6).

The total population of this sample was 203 students out of which 85 (i.e. about 42%) were girls. The age range of the students was between fifteen to eighteen years. The choice of Form Five students as sample of this study was partly based on an assumption that academic performance at this level will perhaps reflect all the effects, if any of the home background factors as by this age the children had already underwent some considerable socialisation process, and the effects of fairly established values and aspirations of home will be taken upon the respective achievements of these children, boys and girls alike.

Test and Test Administration

A home background questionnaire was drawn up by the investigator with the guidance of her supervisor. The questionnaire

contained 40 simple and straight forward questions which were grouped under five sub-headings. The first was personal information which required information on sex, age and religion of the student. The second section of it inquired about the students' family with regards to marital status, family size, education and occupation of parents and standard of life at home. The third was about the students' home with an aim to explore the degree of subject-parent relationship. The fourth was aimed at finding out how seriously the subject studies at home with a background of the existing atmosphere at home, that is his reading habits, preparation of home work and so on. The last section was about the students' ambition and it contains five searching questions. A copy of the questionnaire can be seen in the Appendix I of this study.

For each question the students were asked to tick the answer which they thought was applicable to their situation. In order to gain their confidence, students were reasured that all information given will be treated with utmost confidence and that the questionnaire will not affect their school academic report.

Method of Scoring

The working hypothesis in this study was that good home background (characterised by being monogamous, stable, fairly good income, and with at least one literate parent) should be directly related to good academic performance and vice-versa. Hence high scores were alloted to answers which indicated a good home background. Answers which indicated a home background highly lacking in standards (i.e. polygamy, broken homes, low income, illitracy etc) scored low marks.

The scoring technique is also illustrated in the sample questionnaire in Appendix I. The scoring on personal information was abitrary and did not affect the over all result. Thus under sex, the male subjects were scored as '1', and the females as '2'. Under religion, christians were scored as '1' and moslems '2', and others as '3'. There was no scoring for age because all the subjects fell within the same age group, i.e. 15-18 years. The scoring key is self-explanatory as shown in Appendix I except the last item. The last item was a choice question. It contained five choices which had to be graded in order of preference by the subjects. For the purpose of scoring, the investigator scored only one of these choices.

This was "studying for knowledge" since it is regarded as being the most favourable for the purpose of this study. Thus any student who ranked it as number one among the list of choices was given a score of '5'. If ranked as number two, the subject scored '4', if three, he scored '3', if four he scored '2', and if five, '1' was scored.

The investigator also obtained from various school records, the marks of the last session's final examination for all the students in four subjects. These subjects were English, French, Mathematics and Bilogy. English, French, and Mathematics are made compulsory in schools by the ministry of education. Biology is not a compulsory subject but happens to have been done by all the students in this study. Consequently it was chosen as one of the subjects for measuring educational achievement. The results in these four subjects were obtained in percentages. For each student an average percentage was calculated and this was refered to as the "educational achievement" score.

Data Matrix

The data matrix contains all the relevant information needed in this study for all the students in a tabular form.

These information were represented by their scores in the home background questionnaire and educational achievement. This makes for easy analysis of the data or information obtained, with the help of a computer.

At the top of the data matrix is a key which gives the meaning of all the abbreviations of the variables used. The first column has the name of all the schools while the second contains all the subjects listed down consecutively from 001 to 203. The third column is for sex where all the males are scored as '1' and all females as '2'. The fourth is for religion. The fifth column contains all the scores for family background for all the subjects. Then comes the column for home background, pupil background and subjects' ambition. After these follows the column for educational achievement where the percentage scores for English, French, Mathematics and Biology as well as total average scores are recorded.

The data matrix is shown in Appendix - II of this project.

The next chapter deals with the analyses of data and their results.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSES OF DATA AND RESULTS

All the analyses of this study were done by the University computer using S.P.S.S. programmes. The investigator punched cards which were used in running various programmes in the computer centre for the purpose of analysing the data of this study.

A. Means and Standard Deviation

First of all the investigator calculated the means and standard deriations of nine variables for all the subjects i.e. (N=203). These variables are Family Background, Home Background, Pupil Background, Ambition, English, French, Mathematics, Biology and Educational Achievement. They are abbreviated as Famback, Homeback, Pupback Amb., Eng., Fren., Maths., Biol., and Edach, respectively in these tables. The data was further broken up into males, females, and all subjects taken together and the means and standard deviations for the above variables were also calculated separately for the two groups.

In this case, (N=118) stands for the boys and (N=85) stands for the girls. Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 show the means and standard deviations of the variables for (N=203), (N=118), and (N=85) respectively.

Table 5.1

Means and Standard Deviations of variables (N=203)

Variable	Mean	Standard Dev.
Famback	35.46	6.22
Homeback	20.78	2.27
Pupback	12.54	1.91
Amb.	8.66	1.54
Eng.	50.17	9.51
Fren.	52.16	13.65
Maths	49.15	18.02
Biol.	55.37	12.04
Edach.	51.86	9.23

Table 5.2

Mean and Standard Deviations of Variables (Boys N=118)

Variable	Mean	Standard Dev.
Famback	34.17	5.41
Home back	20.42	2.50
Pupback	12.45	1.97
Amb.	8.69	1.62
Eng.	50.75	8.00
Fren.	52.34	15.46
Maths	52.68	18.31
Biol.	57.53	10.61
Edach.	53.33	9.23

Table 5.3

Means and Standard Deviations of Variable (Girls N=85)

Variable	Mean	Standard Dev.
Famback	37.73	5.48
Homeback	21.22	1.82
Pupback	12.69	1.85
Amb.	8.62	1.45
Eng.	50.02	9.92
Fren.	51.91	10.75
Maths	44.74	15.78
Biol.	52.32	13.26
Edach.	49.82	8.89

The mean scores suggest that the boys and the girls were comparable with one another. This further suggests that the effects of sampling were satisfactory.

B. Correlations

Further computer programmes were run in an attempt to find out if there existed any interrelationship between the independent variables and the criterion scores. The independent variables were Famback, Homeback, Pupback, and Ambition, while the criterion scores were English, French, Maths, Biology and Educational Achievements. The Pearson correlation analysis was used in obtaining the correlation matrix. Tables - 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 reproduce them for (N=203), (N=118) and (N=85), respectively.

Table 5.4

Correlation Matrix: All subjects (N = 203)
(Independent variables-vs-Criterion Scores)

Variables	English	French	Maths	Biology	Education Achievement
Famback	0.02	-0.02	0.04	-0.07	0.00
Homeback	-0.03	0.03	-0.03	-0.05	-0.03
Pupback	-0.04	-0.07	-0.04	-0.05	-0.08
Ambition	-0.12	-0.06	-0.09	0.05	-0.08

For the above correlation matrix the following significant results were obtained:

(a) Ambition of boys revealed a significant negative correlation with mathematics achievement scores.

(b) Family background for girls showed a significant positive correlation with French achievement scores.

(c) Ambition for girls revealed a significant negative correlation with English achievement scores.

The levels of significance and their associated degrees of freedom are shown in the respective tables.

Thirdly the investigator was interested in seeing if there was any relationship between the environmental factors and criterion scores or educational achievement. This programme was again run for all the subjects, boys and then girls. To get scores on environment as a global factor, the investigator computed the variables Famback, Homeback, Pupback and Ambition into one index of ENVIRONMENT by the use of COMPUTE CARD in the appropriate programme.

Tables - 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 show these correlation matrix, viz:-

Table 5.7

Correlation Matrix: All Subjects (N=203)

(Environmental Factors-vs-Criterion Scores)

	English	French	Maths	Biology	Education Achievement
Environmental Factor	-0.06	-0.04	-0.07	-0.10	-0.10

Table 5.8

Correlation Matrix: Boys (N = 118)

(Environmental Factors-vs-Criterion Scores)

	English	French	Maths	Biology	Education Achievement
Environmental Factor	-0.14	-0.16	-0.10	-0.08	-0.17

Table 5.9

Correlation Matrix: Girls (N = 85)

(Environmental Factors-vs-Criterion Scores)

	English	French	Maths	Biology	Education Achievement
Environmental Factor	0.06	*0.21	0.16	0.03	0.15

* Indicates $P < 0.05$, for df = 85-2 = 83, for a two tailed test.

There was only one significant result observed in this case. This was with girls where there was a positive correlation between environmental factor and French.

The next step the investigator took was to render uniformity of the achievement scores. This was deemed necessary because these schools took different examinations even though the syllabuses were the same. Also the examinations were marked by different teachers who marked according to the standards they expected from their students. The investigator, therefore, felt there wasn't a uniform basis for comparison. In order to achieve this, there was the need to standardize their achievement scores and re-run the correlation programme. The criterion scores were all standardised with a mean of 100, and a standard deviation of 15. This helped to tease out any skewed nature of distribution of marks given by different teachers. Once the standardised scores were calculated in the programme, the programme undertook another Pearson's correlational analyses. This was done using the Pearson's correlation technique once more.

Tables - 5.10, 5.11 and 5.12 of this study show the above correlation matrices for N=203, N=118 and N=85 respectively.

Table 5.10

Correlation Matrix: All Subjects (N=203)

Standardized Achievement Scores-vs-Home Background Factors

Variable	English	French	Maths	Biology	Education Achievement
Famback	-0.01	-0.30	-0.05	-0.10	-0.06
Homeback	-0.04	0.03	-0.01	-0.05	-0.03
Pupback	-0.03	-0.07	-0.05	-0.06	-0.09
Ambition	-0.12	-0.06	-0.10	-0.05	-0.08

Table 5.11

Correlation Matrix: Boys (= 118)

Standardized Achievement Scores-vs-Home Background Factor

Variable	English	French	Maths	Biology	Education Achievement
Famback	-0.11	-0.16	-0.07	-0.05	-0.13
Homeback	-0.06	-0.02	-0.03	-0.05	-0.01
Pupback	-0.12	-0.14	-0.06	-0.08	-0.14
Ambition	0.02	-0.02	*-0.18	-0.02	-0.11

* Indicates $P < 0.05$, for df = 118 = 116, for a two tailed test.

Table 5.12

Correlation Matrix: Girls (N = 85)

Standardized Achievement ~~Scores~~-vs-Home Background Factor

Variable	English	French	Maths	Biology	Education Achievement
Famback	0.12	*0.24	0.17	-0.02	0.17
Homeback	0.00	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.04
Pupback	0.09	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.02
Ambition	**-0.30	-0.14	0.02	0.13	-0.06

* Indicates $P < 0.05$, for df = 85-2 = 83, for a two-tailed test.

** Indicates $P < 0.01$, for df = 85-2 = 83, for a two-tailed test.

The following significant results were obtained:

(a) Ambition for boys revealed a significant negative correlation with the standardised scores of Mathematics.

(b) Family background of girls was positively correlated with the standardised scores of French.

(c) Ambition for girls was negatively correlated with the standardised scores of English.

C. Chi-Squared Analyses

Lastly the investigator used the crosstabulation technique to see if the high and low scores of the boys and girls differ significantly from one another in any of the variables. This joint frequency distribution was statistically analysed by the Chi-squared test. Only one significant result was obtained.

Table 5.13 shows the significant difference in the distribution of ENGLISH by FAMBACK (2x2) matrix of the boys (N=118) only viz:-

Table 5.13

X^2 - Analysis: Boys (N = 118)

(Observed Frequencies in Boys)

Variables		ENGLISH		
		Low	High	Total
Famback	Low	36	41	77
	High	28	13	41
Total		64	54	118

$X^2 = 4.17$, df = 1, $P < 0.05$

Summary of Results

1. The significant negative correlation between ambition of boys and their Mathematics achievement (Table 5.5) suggests that the boys of the sample do not like Mathematics. This result calls for some discussion in the concluding chapter.

2. The significant positive correlation between family background factors and French achievement scores of the girls (Table 5.6) coinciding along with the significant negative correlation of the girls' ambition and their English achievement scores simply tells us that the girls of the sample were performing better in French than in English and further that the family background factor of these girls were helpful in their French achievement scores and they had no ambition to do well in English. These results call for some discussion in the concluding chapter.

3. Table 5.9 reveals significant positive correlation between the environmental factors taken together and the French achievement scores of the girls only. These results corroborates partly the results in (2) above.

4. Table 5.11 reveals significant negative correlation between ambition and standardized Mathematics scores of the boys only. This result is lending further support to the result at (1) above.

5. Table 5.12 reveals significant positive correlation between family background factors and standardized French scores and also significant negative correlation between ambition of the girls and their standardized English scores. These results are in agreement with results as in (2) above.

6. Table 5.13 reveals significant difference between the boys coming from low family background who have obtained higher English scores than the rest of the boys coming from high family background. This result is an apparent contradiction of the investigators hypothesis and investigation and therefore calls for some discussion in the concluding chapter.

The next chapter deals with the critique, conclusion and the implications arising from the study.

CHAPTER VI

CRITIQUE, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

A. Critique

So far the investigator has been engaged in finding out the relationship between home background factors and educational achievement in Form Five secondary school children in Anglophone Cameroon. The results obtained from this study have already been discussed in the last chapter. It is now necessary to have a critical look at the study.

The sample used in this study was randomly selected as was mentioned before. The investigator assumes that it provided for a fair representation of the parent population. Further the sample of 203 subjects is large enough to represent the Form Five students of the secondary grammar schools of Anglophone Cameroon, and therefore the sampling errors if any, were very minimal.

In order to know about the home background of the various subjects involved in the study, the subjects had to answer a

home background questionnaire administered to them by the investigator. This method of aquiring information, is admittedly not very satisfactory even though the investigator did all in her powers to make sure that the right information was obtained. The researcher was present when the questionnaires were filled and the subjects were reassured that the responses to the questionnaire were just for the investigator's personal research and they had nothing to do with their school work. Also, the investigator made sure that all the questions were answered by the subjects in her presence. There was however no guarantee that the information provided by the subjects were all reliable. Further, there was an ambiquous item in the questionnaire which the subjects did not seem to understand i.e. - item No. 38. This was realised by the investigator while going through the completed questionnaires and the item was deleted for the purpose of this study. A better method would have been by interviewing i.e. visiting the various homes of the subjects. Nevertheless this method has the disadvantage of consuming a lot of time. These children come from various parts of the country which meant a lot of travelling. Unlike in the western world where you have all streets named abd

almost every house has its own distinct house number, it is not the case in Cameroon. Therefore if the investigator had been prepared to visit all the homes, she would have required a whole year to get the information needed. This may have served the purpose of a protracted research, but was not feasible in practical terms for the purpose of this study.

Scoring the questionnaires was done as described in chapter IV. The objective behind the scoring was that children from good homes are expected to do well at school as shown in the questionnaire attached in Appendix I of this study. This should be expected if the questionnaires were reliably answered but apparently there seem to exist no such relationship in the results.

Educational achievement of the subjects were obtained from their last year's performance in four subjects, viz, English, French, Mathematics and Biology in their various schools. The fact that these students did not do the same examination puts a bias in the scores they obtained in the above subjects. This the investigator tried to minimize by standardizing the scores as explained in chapter V. The results

did not reveal any significant relationships.

8. Conclusion

The following conclusions can be drawn from the results obtained, viz:-

1. Ambitious boys were significantly poor performers in mathematics than others (vide Table - 5.5 and 5.11).
2. The girls with good family background were significantly better performers in French than others (vide Table - 5.6 and 5.12).
3. Ambitious girls were significantly poor performers in English than others (vide Table 5.6 and 5.12).
4. Boys coming from low family backgrounds were significantly better performers in English than boys coming from high family backgrounds (vide Table 5.13.)
5. Girls coming from a better "environment" (i.e. all home background factors taken together) performed significantly better in French than others (vide Table 5.9).

C Implications

It has been noticed that there were no significant correlations between the different home background factors in the one hand, and the different educational achievement scores on the other - when the result of the entire sample is taken into consideration. This observation was also true for the standardized achievement scores. This apparent failure on the part of the investigator to locate signigicant relationships calls for some observation. It has been emphasised by many psychologists that the questionnaire method of obtaining home background information is extremely poor (Fraser 1969). It has been explained before the practical constraining factors preventing the investigator visiting every child in his home. Thus the investigator rightly feels, may have introduced lack of support for the expectations asserted in the hypothesis of this study.

As regards some of the significant relationships located among the girls and the boys, taken separately, it can only be said that they reveal their respective merits and demerits. It is surprising to see how ambitious girls fail to do well in English, and further how stimulating family background

factors can help them to do better in French. One wonders if Cameroon is still in greater love for the French people, their language, culture, and systems of education and values than they are for the recent trends towards English and English Educational values. No emphasis can however be made from such significant findings but they are worth further research. As regards the poor performance of ambitious boys in Mathematics, the investigator can only say that it is perhaps a reflection of the standards of mathematics achievement in that part of the country. The fact that boys from "low" family backgrounds were superior to those from "high" family backgrounds in English may suggest some underlying achievement motivation in these boys who want to do well in English for the sake of their own future security in developing Cameroon. All these above observations call for further research in future.

Before leaving the investigator will like to recommend the following, viz:-

(a) Future research in this field should take steps to obtain information about home backgrounds of the subjects by methods of individual interviewing of the subjects in their respective homes.

(b) Examination should be undertaken to check the adequacy of the teaching and learning situations in the schools of Cameroon by its respective Educational Authorities.

(c) It may be interesting to launch a research to check if there is still some underlying trends and love relationships for the French culture and the French systems of the previous French influence in Cameroon which manifest their attendant values in the performance of French at schools.

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APPENDIX I

HOME BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE (AM/JB)

Variable labels are on left, and variable scores are on right.

Instruction

Name:.....

From:.....

School:.....

The following questions are simple and straight forward. They are not a test of your intelligence, neither will they affect your school report. Following each question are a number of possible answers. You are required to tick only one answer which is applicable to you.

The information you give will be treated with utmost confidence and will be collectively used by me to research into home background and school activities of students.

Please endeavour to be as truthful as possible.

Personal Information: (Put a tick where your answer lies).

(1) ~~Sex~~ of student: 1. Male = 1

2. Female = 2

(2) Age: 1. 11-14

2. 15-18

3. Over 18.

(3) Religion: 1. Christian 1

2. Moslem 2

3. Others (Please specify)..3.....

I. About Your Family

(4) What is the present status of your parents?

(1) Is your father alive? 2 1 Yes/No

PL (2) Is your mother alive? 2 1 Yes/No

(3) Are your parents divorced? 1 2 Yes/No

(4) Are your parents living together? 2 1 Yes/No

(5) What type of family do you come from?

(1) Monogamous 2

TF

(2) Polygamous 1

(6) How many children are in your family?

1. Below 2 3

SF 2. Between 3-5 2

3. Over 5 1

(7) What is your position among the children? Are you

1. The eldest Yes/No

SP If no, then how many brothers and sisters are elder to you?

..... (State actual number).

0 = 4
1 = 3
2 = 2
> 2 = 1

(8) what is your fathers occupation?

1. Civil servant or teacher 4
2. Business man or trader 3
3. Unemployed 1
4. Others (please state) 2

FO

MO (9) What is your mothers occupation?

1. Civil servant or teacher 3
2. Business woman or trader 2
3. Housewife 1
4. Others (please state) 1

HW

Yes 2 - No 1

(10) What is your fathers education?

1. Primary School 2
2. Secondary School 3
3. Post-secondary school: (a) High school 4
   (b) University 5
4. None 1

FE

(11) What is your mother's education?

1. Primary School 2
2. Secondary school 3
3. Post-secondary school (a) High school 4 (b)University 5
4. None 1

ME

(12) Is the house you live in

1. owned by your father? 2
2. rented by your father? 1
3. government or company house? 3

HO

(13) Where is your house situated?

1. G.R.A. 3
2. Township 2
3. Village 1

SH

(14) Do you have electricity in your house?

1. Yes 2
2. No 1

EL

(15) Do you have car(s) at home?

1. None 1
2. One 2
3. More than one 3

CR

(16) Do you have a radio at home?

RD

1. Yes 2
2. No 1

(17) Do you have servants at home?

SV

1. None 1
2. One 2
3. More than one 3

II. About Your Home

(18) Who do you like best?

LK

1. Father } 2
2. Mother }
3. A sister/brother 1

(19) To whom can you tell your secrets?

CF

1. ~~Father~~ } 2
2. Mother }
3. A sister/brother 1

(20) Who spends more time with you?

IT

1. Father } 2
2. Mother }
3. Both 3
4. ~~Neither~~ 1

(21) Do your parents dicuss your home-work with you?

HD

1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(22) Do your parents dicuss your school progress with you?

PD

1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(23) Do you have any fixed period at home for studying?

PSD

1. Yes (state when) 2

2. No 1

(24) Do your parents attend the parent-teacher association meeting in yours school?

PTA

1. Yes (state who does) 2

2. No 1

(25) Do you spend your holidays with your parents?

HWP

1. Always 3

2. Sometimes 2

3. Never 1

(26) Do your parents take you to task for school failures or poor results in school?

PRF

1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(27) Do your parents give you presents when you pass examinations?

PRS 1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(28) What is the attitude of your parents towards continuing your education after secondary school?

PAE 1. They are indifferent 2

2. They want me to work immediately 1

3. They will be happy if I continue my studies. 3

III. About yourself

(29) Do you regularly study at home?

SDH 1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(30) Do you always prepare your homework?

PHW 1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(31) If you have some homework to do when your friends or brothers or sisters ask you to play, will you go to play with them?

AHW 1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(32) Do you like to read books even when the books are not required to be read by you?

SRH 1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(33) Do your parents read at home regularly?

PRH 1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(34) Do you buy books of your own choice, if you have any money to spend?

BBH 1. Yes 2

2. No 1

(35) How many hours do you read or study on your own per day at home?

TSR (a) 0-2 hours 1

(b) 2-3 hours 2

(c) 3-4 hours 3

(d) 4-5 hours 4

IV. About Your Ambition

(36) I would rather like to have a lot of money than anything else in my life?

PMB MONEY 1. Yes 1

2. No 2

(37) I do not mind if I remain a poor teacher all my life.

PAT TEACHING
1. Yes 2
2. No 1

(38) I would rather be engaged in learning and teaching all my life than do anything else.

PAT TEACHING
1. Yes 2
2. No 1

(39) In the following you are given a list of choice. Please indicate by giving numbers as to which you want most, then which you, want next, etc.

(a)	Money	d Ranked 1 = 5
(b)	Expensive cars	d Ranked 2 = 4
(c)	Traveling and holidaying	d Ranked 3 = 3
(d)	Studying for knowledge	d Ranked 4 = 2
(e)	Having an easy life with plentiful money.	d Ranked 5 = 1

DP 4928

APPENDIX 2

KEY.

PL = Parents Living
TF = Type of Family
SF = Size of Family
SP = Subjects position
FO = Father's Occupation
MO = Mother's Occupation
HW = House Wife
FE = Father's Education
ME = Mothers Education
HO = House Ownership
SH = Situation of House
EL = Electricity
CR = Cars
RD = Radios
SV = Servants

LK = Like Best
CF = Confide
IT = Interact
HD = Homework Discussion
PD = Progress Discussion
PSI = Period of Study
PTA = Parents Teacher Association
HWP = Holidays with Parents
PRE = Parents Reaction to Failure
PRS = Parents Reaction to Success
PAE = Parents Attitude to Education

SDH = Study Habits
PHW = Preparation of Homework
AHW = Attitude to Homework
SRH = Subjects Reading Habit
PRH = Parents Reading Habit
BBH = Buying Books Habit
TSR = Time Spent Reading

PAM = Primary Ambition - Money
PAT = Primary Ambition - Teaching
SDK = Study for Knowledge

Sex: M = 1, F = 2. All 25 rows are Sacred Heart College - Mankon (1).

Family background

Ss	SEX	REL.	PL	TF	SF	SP	FO	MO	HW	FE	ME	HO	SH	EL	CR	RD	SV	TOTAL
001	1	1	8	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	31
002	1	1	8	2	1	1	4	3	1	5	5	3	2	2	1	2	1	41
003	1	1	8	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	26
004	1	1	8	1	1	4	4	1	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	38
005	1	1	8	1	2	3	4	1	2	4	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	37
006	1	1	8	1	1	1	4	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	34
007	1	1	6	1	2	4	4	3	1	5	4	2	2	2	3	2	3	44
008	1	3	7	2	1	3	4	3	1	4	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	39
009	1	1	8	2	1	1	4	1	2	4	2	3	1	1	1	2	1	34
010	1	1	6	1	2	3	4	2	1	5	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	37
011	1	1	8	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	29
012	1	1	8	2	1	4	4	1	2	4	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	37
013	1	1	8	2	1	4	4	1	2	4	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	38
014	1	1	8	2	1	2	2	1	2	5	3	2	1	2	3	2	3	39
015	1	3	8	2	1	3	4	3	1	4	3	2	1	2	1	2	1	38
016	1	1	8	2	1	4	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	32
017	1	1	8	2	1	1	4	1	2	4	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	32
018	1	1	8	2	1	4	4	1	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	40
019	1	1	8	1	2	4	4	3	1	4	3	3	3	1	1	2	2	42
020	1	1	8	1	1	1	4	1	2	3	4	3	3	3	1	2	2	39
021	1	1	6	2	1	1	4	1	1	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	34
022	1	1	6	1	1	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	27
023	1	1	8	2	1	4	4	3	1	5	5	3	3	2	3	2	3	49
024	1	1	8	2	2	2	3	3	1	5	4	2	2	2	3	2	3	44
025	1	1	6	2	1	3	4	2	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	33

Home background

Ss	LK	CF	IT	HD	PD	PSI	PTA	PRE	PRS	PAE	TOTAL
001	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	19
002	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	3	22
003	2	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	20
004	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	1	3	20
005	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	21
006	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	21
007	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	23
008	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	18
009	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	3	20
010	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	24
011	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	16
012	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	3	17
013	1	1	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	23
014	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	1	3	22
015	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	3	23
016	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	20
017	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	3	18
018	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	24
019	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	23
020	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	21
021	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	19
022	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	21
023	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	24
024	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	21
025	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	3	2	3	20

Pupil background, ambition and educational achievement

Ss	SDH	PHW	AHW	SRH	PRH	BBH	TSR	TOTAL	PAM	PAT	SDK	TOTAL	ENG	FREN	MATHS	BIOL	AVERAGE
001	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	14	1	2	3	06	49	26	44	61	45.00
002	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	2	2	5	09	47	35	43	73	49.50
003	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	12	1	2	5	08	46	57	50	56	52.25
004	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	09	2	3	4	09	43	32	33	48	39.00
005	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	13	2	3	5	10	45	40	28	52	41.25
006	2	2	2	1	1	2	3	13	1	2	2	05	45	38	74	57	53.50
007	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	13	2	2	4	08	46	49	62	63	55.00
008	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	12	1	3	3	07	47	61	39	60	51.75
009	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	09	2	2	5	09	44	50	32	56	45.50
010	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	13	2	4	5	11	48	54	41	55	49.50
011	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	12	1	3	5	09	45	47	29	62	45.75
012	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	12	1	2	2	05	47	48	63	48	51.50
013	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	12	2	4	4	10	45	61	68	51	56.25
014	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	14	2	2	4	08	45	36	35	57	43.25
015	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	14	1	2	2	05	45	20	78	56	49.75
016	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	11	2	2	4	08	52	48	39	78	54.25
017	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	09	2	2	5	09	48	26	38	59	42.75
018	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	15	2	2	5	09	43	56	50	53	50.25
019	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	12	2	1	3	06	46	60	67	57	57.50
020	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	2	2	4	08	55	22	35	59	42.75
021	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	13	2	2	5	09	44	42	63	52	50.25
022	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	12	2	3	5	10	42	22	54	59	44.25
023	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	12	2	3	1	06	41	38	37	59	44.00
024	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	13	1	2	1	04	50	30	53	44	44.25
025	1	2	2	2	1	1	3	12	2	2	5	09	42	60	57	44	50.75

X

LOURDES COLLEGE

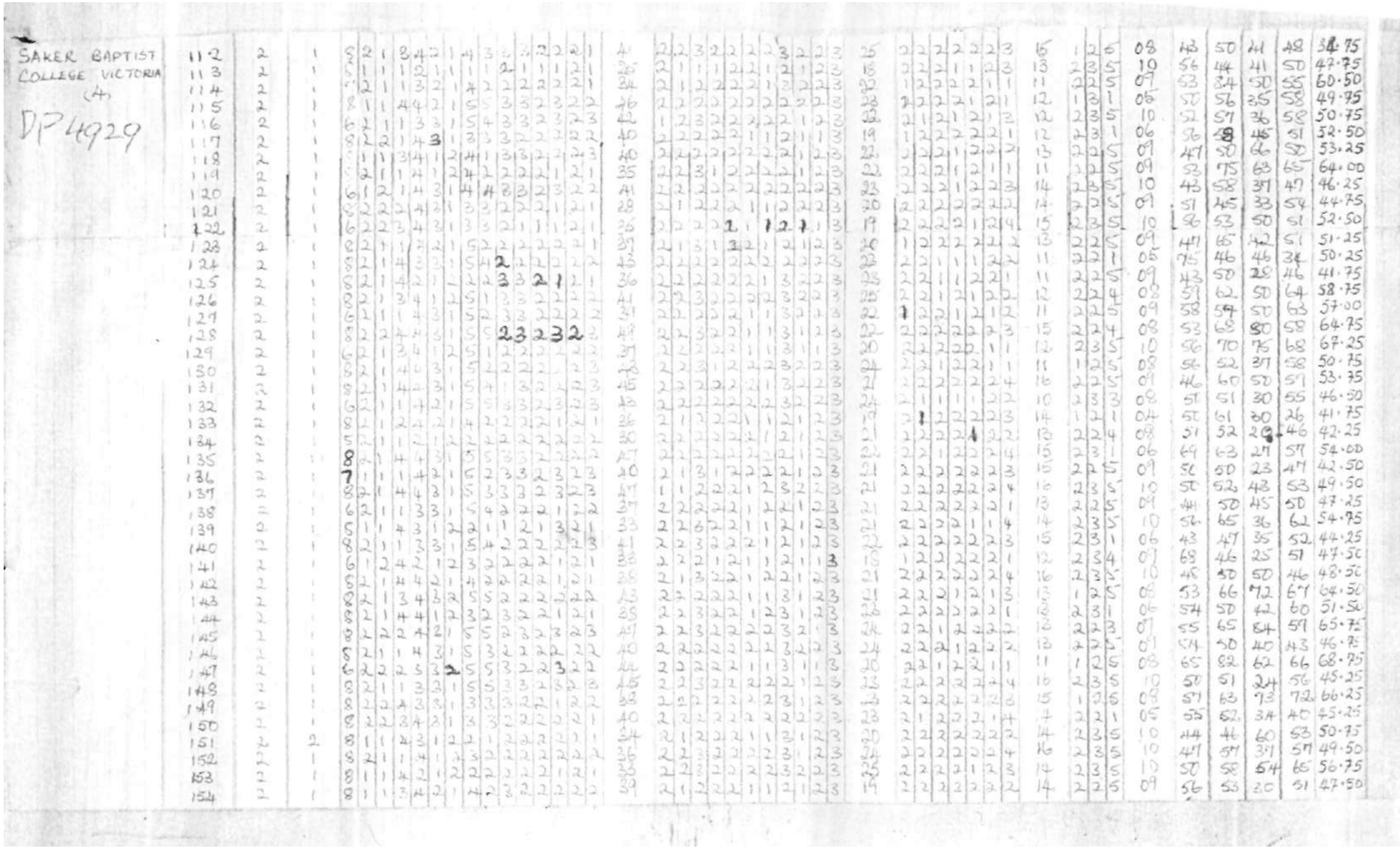
M. N KON

(2)

BISHOP REGAN COLLEGE - BUEA (3)

SAKER BAPTIST COLLEGE VICTORIA (A)

DP 4929



	ST. JOSEPHS COLLEGE SANDSEA (5)	NATIONAL CHANCHEN-SIN COLLEGE VICTORIA (7)
155	56.50	
156	49.00	
157	40.25	
158	50.00	
159	68.00	
160	44.25	
161	54.25	
162	62.50	
163	57.25	
164	41.00	
165	45.25	
166	49.75	
167	45.00	
168	52.50	
169	70.75	
170	49.75	
171	52.50	
172	55.50	
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193	61.75	
194	52.75	
195	52.50	
196	55.50	
197	53.25	
198	58.50	
199	53.75	
200	57.50	
201	67.75	
202	53.00	
203	58.25	