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A STUDY ON THE EFFECTS OF FAMILY BACKGROUND ON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS’ ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF BULAWAYO URBAN SCHOOLS.

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ABSTRACT
This study focused on the effects of family background on high school students’ academic performance, a case of Bulawayo urban high schools.

One of the major aspects of the social pillar of life in Zimbabwe is education. Family backgrounds have been highlighted as of great importance in moulding the performance of children in schools worldwide. The study was a case of Bulawayo urban high schools thus a sample of forty respondents that is thirty-two form four and four students and 10 parents was chosen. 12 teachers and two school development committee chairpersons served as key informants. Stratified sampling was used to select key informants. Questionnaires and focus group discussions were used to collect data from students and data from parents, and key informants was collected through interviews. Findings show that family size, financial status, distance travelled to school, level of parental academic attainment, single parenthood, domestic violence and parental guidance tremendously affect students’ academic performance. The study recommended that teachers must be made aware of various stakeholders who solve children’s social problems and parents and teachers’ relationship must best be strengthened to insure constant communication and consultation. The study also seek scholarships to help students from low socio-economic status households. The study also recommended the employment of social workers in the school setting to effectively solve students’ social problems.