

CORROSIVE EFFECT OF POVERTY ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KOGI STATE

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Abstract

The study examines the corrosive effect on students' performance in secondary schools in Kogi state. It has two objectives which are to examine the socioeconomic status of parent on students' performance in secondary schools in Kogi state and to assess the effect of poverty on students' performance in secondary schools in Kogi state. The research questions and the null hypotheses are in line with the research objectives. The population of the study comprised 80 principals, 2260 teachers and 4000 SS1 and SS2 Students drawn from the 21 Local Government Area of Kogi State. Sample size was determined using percentage and stratified random sampling technique and the total sample size was 351 which comprised 21 principals, 233 teachers and 300 students. Self-structured questionnaire was designed to elicit response from the respondents. The data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation, the null hypotheses was tested using Analysis of Variance at 0.05 level of significance. The findings show that socio-economic status of parent affect students' performance as some of the low economic status parents are unable to pay school fees as at when due which often results to students being driven away from school and thus affect the performance of the students. Students' behavior and learning is affected by emotional imbalance where the students cannot meet up with the financial demands in the school. The study recommends that stakeholders in Education should give equal opportunities to those students raised in the low socio-economic status by considering their plight and adopt ways to recover the school fees without driving the students away from school.

Keywords: Poverty, Student and Academic performance

Introduction

Access to education is one of the basic and important human rights in all societies and as such every citizen of Nigeria is to have access to education irrespective of the level of education, however poverty has become an obstacle to most people to attain this basic right. Poverty is a universal social problem that has become a cankerworm in most household in Nigeria. Poverty presents so many challenges to human such as inability to access quality education, healthcare facilities and basic needs of life. Poverty is the most prevalent indicators of academic achievement in our various schools today; many students are raised in poverty. It is very important that principals, teachers and all stakeholders in education should be aware of effects of poverty on students' behavior and learning capacity in the classroom. All stakeholders in education should introduce strategies to close the gap between students raised in poverty and affluent students. Poverty involves inadequacy of resources which can be financial, spiritual, mental, emotional and physical resources (Suleiman & Abdullahi, 2015). Invariably, poverty directly affects academic achievement due to lack of resources available for students to move up to the social ladder. Low academic achievement is sometimes related to lack of adequate resources and there is also a correlation between low socio-economic position and low achievement. Poverty connotes different meanings, due to the multi-dimensional nature of poverty it is difficult to define and draws a clear demarcation between the rich and poor.

Higher needs such as esteem needs like education can become dominant only when lower needs such as hunger and thirst have been gratified (Wisdom, 2013). According to Maslon's theory a hungry child cannot pay attention in class since his or her mind will be dominated by food, in line with this Garba (2006) views poverty as hunger and lack of shelter. It is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. It is not being able to go to school, poverty is not having a job and is fear for the future. Obidike, Amobi, Uzoekwe, and Akuezuilo (2017) sees poverty as a way of life characterized by low calorie intake, inaccessibility of adequate health facilities, low quality education system, low life expectancy, unemployment and underemployment. The average population of Nigeria lives in poverty. Therefore, poverty is seen from national, state and home background. At the National level, a Nation is considered poor when her economic standard is very low. The role of a home (family) in education cannot be underestimated because education starts from the home and this is why the extent of poverty in a family depends on student's educational achievement. Poverty affects academic achievement of students negatively in the sense that poor parents are unable to provide adequate financial and material resources for their children. In all poverty could be seen as total deprivation of the physical, mental, economic, education and social needs. Cedeno, Martinez, Arias and Bueno (2016) and Redrdon and Portilia (2016) opines that socio-economic status of family can affect the academic achievement of students, went further to say that children raised in abject poverty are reliable to experience emotional and social challenges and chronic stressors and students dealing with chronic stressors are likely to experience low academic achievement.

Likewise, students raised in poverty need to develop relationship with teachers who serve as role models that they count on and trust (Jensen 2013). This is to show that every teacher needs to know that apart from impacting knowledge through teaching and learning they are also a model to the students who are looking at them as their mirror. Any negative behavior from the teachers towards the students who come from low socio-economic background will go a long way to affect their academic performance.

Statement of the Problem

Every individual has the right to be educated however poverty has restricted so many from going to school and those who are in school have been facing low academic performance. The plight of poverty stricken students is provoked by school policies that relates to school fees, purchase of stationeries which invariably has negative effect on the students' performance due to constant staying away from school as a result of parents not able to pay the required fees. It was observed from previous research carried out by other researchers that some of the students do street hawking before coming to school in order to meet up with all that is required in the school in terms of school fees payment. According to World Bank (2019) if families cannot afford the cost of school fees and other educational materials, such parents are likely to send their children to the farm or end up as a street hawker. It is against the background that the researchers carried out this study to ascertain the corrosive effect of poverty on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the Socio-economic status of Parents on Students' Performance in Secondary Schools in Kogi State.
2. Assess the Effect of Poverty on Students' Performance in Secondary Schools in Kogi State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guides the study:

1. To what extent does socio-economic status of parents affect students' performance in Secondary School in Kogi State?
2. What are the effects of poverty on students' performance in Secondary Schools in Kogi State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated for the study:

HO 1 There is no significant difference among the opinion of Principals, Teachers and Students’ on socio-economic status of parents and students’ performance in Secondary Schools in Kogi State.

HO 2 There is no significant difference among the opinion of Principals, Teachers and Students’ on effects of poverty and students’ performance in Secondary Schools in Kogi State.

Methodology

The study adopted the survey method of descriptive research design. The population comprises of all principals, teachers and students in secondary schools in Kogi state with the total of 2600 teachers, 80 principals and 4000 SS 1& SS 2 Students drawn from the 21 Local Government Area in Kogi State. The sample size was determined using percentage according to Nwana (2004) format and stratified random sampling technique was also used. Kogi State has a total of 21 Local Government Areas, based on Adetoro 1986, one third of the Local Government constituted the sample and the total sample size was 351 which comprises 21 Principals, 233 Teachers and 300 students. The instrument used was a self-structured questionnaire and was validated and used with reliability coefficient of $r = 0.82$. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Opinions of respondents on socio-economic status of parents on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi state

S/N	Item Statement	SA	A	UD	D	X	STD	
1	Most parents cannot afford to pay their children school fees and it affect the students’ performance.	123	121	42	32	30	3.872	1.177
2	Socio economic status of parents contribute to students low performance	75	100	62	91	20	3.411	1.185
3	Students run away from the class because their parents could not afford to buy their writing materials	59	114	67	77	31	3.334	1.185
4	Some students hawk for their parents before coming to school in order to raise money for payment of schools	42	135	47	84	40	3.221	1.206
5	Family from low income background prefer a mush room schools for their children	2	160	30	109	47	2.932	1.110
6	Parents from low socio economic background are not sensitive to their children school work thus affect their performance	22	143	34	124	25	3.097	1.105
7	Students from poor background have poor attitude to school activities and affects their performance	5	197	37	96	13	3.310	.931

8	Parents economic status influence on students motivation towards learning	2	200	84	42	20	3.414	.818
	Students from high socio economic status achieve better performance than students from low socio economic status	25	263	5	35	20	3.703	.845
10	Parents education level also affect students' performance	32	222	37	37	20	3.677	.898
Aggregate mean							3.397	

Decision mean = 3.0000

The above table shows that socio-economic status of parents affects students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State. This is because the overall aggregate mean responses on the ten items was 3.397 which is higher than the 3.000 decision mean, most of the respondents opinion shows that some parents cannot afford to pay their children school fees which made such students to stay away from school and thus have adverse effect on the students' performance, this attracted the highest mean response of 3.872 with details showing that 123 strongly agreed, while 121 agreed as against 42 that were undecided while 32 disagreed and the rest 30 strongly disagreed. In summary it can be said that socio economic status of parents affects students' performance in secondary schools in Kogi state.

Table 2: Opinions of respondents on effect of poverty on students' performance in secondary schools in Kogi state

S/N	Item Statement	SA	SD	D	A	UD	X	STD
1	Some students experience chronic stressors like being emotionally in balance in the class and thus affect their performance	184	3	20	104	37	3.035	1.152
2	Some students experience short memory in the class and thus affect their performance	38	15	4	225	30	2.298	.838
3	Most students from poor background are easily irritated with others in the class	92	14	2	220	20	2.508	.969
4	Some of the students from poor background exhibits behavioral problems in the class	32	12	62	212	30	2.384	.992
5	Students from poor background feels inferior in the class with the students from affluent homes and thus affect their performance	52	32	10	158	96	2.307	1.289
6	Most students from poor background experience developmental delay against students raised in affluence	104	67	10	100	67	3.121	1.584
7	When in the class, some of the students who hawk around before coming to school sleep in the class	34	28	17	240	29	2.381	1.086
8	Most of the students end up being dropped out of school	34	57	58	160	29	2.724	1.147

9	Some students become a truant due to inadequate supply of their school needs	114	32	12	103	87	2.718	1.414
10	Students tend to become irrational to their studies due to inability to meet with the financial demands	114	32	12	103	87	2.718	1.414
Aggregate mean							3.619	

Decision mean = 3.0000

The table above indicates that there are effects of poverty on students’ performance in secondary schools in Kogi State. This is because the overall aggregate mean responses on the ten items on effect of poverty on students’ performance was 3.619 which is higher than the 3.00 decision mean. However, on specific terms, it is believed that some students become truant due to inadequate supply of their school needs which in turn has effect on their performance, this attracted the highest mean response of 3.121, with details showing that 114 were in strong agreement, while 103 were in agreement as against 12 that disagreed and the rest 32 strongly disagreed with this item. In the same vein some students suffered serious emotional imbalance called chronic stressor as a result of the effect of poverty which adversely affect student’s low performance. Some of the students’ sleep in the class after hawking, this item attracted the second highest mean of 3.015 with details showing that 34 strongly agreed, 240 agreed, while 29 were undecided as against 17 that disagreed with this item and the rest 28 strongly disagreed with the item. In summary it can be said that the corrosive effect of poverty affects students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State.

Table 3: Summary of analysis of variance statistics on the opinions of respondents on the socio-economic status of parents on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State

Variations	Sum Squares	Of Df	Mean square	F ratio	F critical	Sig.
Between Groups	243.264	3	81.088	1.825	2.60	.161
Within Groups	15691.272	348	46.980	1.825	2.60	.161
Total	15934.536	351				

Calculated p > 0.05, calculated F ratio < 2.60 at df 3, 348

The opinions of respondents on the socio-economic status of parents on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State, ANOVA were used in testing the hypothesis. The summary of data collected and analyzed in respect to null hypothesis one is presented in table 3. Results of the one-way analysis of variance statistics revealed that there was significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the socio-economic status of parent on students’ academic performance. Reason for this is because the calculate significant (p) value of 0.161 is higher than 0.05 alpha level of significance while the calculated f ratio value of 1.825 is higher than the F critical value of 2.60. Consequently, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on socio-economic status of parents on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in kogi State was accepted.

Table 4: Summary of analysis of variance statistics on the opinions of respondents on the effect of poverty on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State

Variations	Sum Squares	of Df	Mean Square	F ratio	F Critical	Sig.
Between Groups	784.358	3	261.453	1.726	2.60	0.170
Within	3163.216	348	9.471	1.726	2.60	0.170

Groups		
Total	3947.574	351

The data collected were analyzed in respect to null hypothesis two as presented in table 4. According to the outcome of the one-way analysis of variance statistics, there is significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the effect of poverty on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State. This is because the calculate significant (p) value of 0.170 is greater than the 0.05 alpha level of significance while the calculated f ratio value of 1.726 is higher than the F critical value of 2.60. Consequently, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on effect of poverty on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kogi State was accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study revealed in the first instance that all the items on table 1 on the opinion of the respondent on the socio-economic status of parents on students' academic performance was reflected as the overall aggregate was 3.397 which is higher than 3.0000 decision means. This finding is in line with Brito & Noble (2009) who opines that students who are raised in low socio-economic status tend to become truant as a result of inability of their parent to pay school fees. Most often some of the affected students who come from a low socio-economic status tend to go hawking for their parents before coming to school, which has negative effect on such students due to emotional stress associated with the street hawking. The findings show that there are several effects of poverty on students' performance as the aggregate mean was 3.619 which is higher than 3.0000. Such effects can be a long term such as chronic stressors and changes in brain structure that affect emotion and memory, other effects are situational causing emotional and social struggles. This is line with Jensen (2009) who opines that students who experienced emotional and social challenges may misbehave in the class, the students may be impatience and have poor control, their behavioral responses may be limited due to having a parent that is not sensitive to their needs.

Likewise, they lack the ability to empathize with others, thus making it difficult for these students to work well in co-operative groups with their classmates. This inability to work well with classmates often results in students becoming unwanted participants in groups, adding to their feelings of inadequacy and resulting in the students giving up on tasks before they successfully complete it. According to Jensen (2009) chronic stressors will cause students to under-perform in school and either give up or become disinterested in their school work also developmental delays are more common for children raised in poverty as against their counterpart raised in affluence, poor performance on tests and examinations are mostly indices common to students raised in abject poverty and some behavioral problems in the classroom, mental health issues, and emotional problems are more frequently in those children who have been raised in a lower socio-economic home.

Recommendations

1. There is need to give help to those children raised in low socio-economic status in the classroom in order for them to become educationally equal with their counterpart from affluent home. In this regard teachers need to develop strong relationship with their students, shows respect in their interactions with students, display some social skills in the lessons.
2. Also teachers and all stakeholders in education should recognize that there are students raised in poverty and as such be empathetic, build caring and supportive relationships with such students in order to arouse their interest towards their studies.
3. The stakeholders in education should provide a conducive environment where students feel included, valued and accepted as members of the classroom which will help them to improve their overall mental health. This is to shows that school administrators and teachers should make sure that all the students in the classroom are presented with equal opportunities in respective of their socio-economic status.

Conclusion

Poverty is a reality today and is still a prevalent factor in our societies between those who have and those who do not have. Students raised in abject poverty are likely to experience emotional instability, social challenges and mental health issues and chronic stressors and cognitive problems. It is imperative that the level of schooling is highly related to level of economic development and as such both students raised in poverty and affluence should be given equal access to every educational programs. Poverty is the most prevalent indicator of academic performance in our various schools today, many students are raised in poverty, it is very important that principals, teachers and all stakeholders in education should be aware of effects of poverty on students' behavior and learning capacity in the classroom. All stakeholders in education should introduce strategies to close the gap between students raised in poverty and affluent students.

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