



# **Effect of Poverty on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students In Bonny Local Government Area Of Rivers State**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined effect of poverty on the academic performance of secondary school students in Bonny Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The study used a sample of 4 selected schools. Random sampling was adopted. Two (2) research questions were answered. For data collection, a structured questionnaire which was validated by two experts in measurement and evaluation was used. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient method for a measure of internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient value of 0.88 was obtained and used for the study. Copies of the instrument were administered directly to the respondents by the researcher and three research assistants that were trained by the researcher. Mean and percentage were used to answer the research question. Result of the study revealed that among other things the economic status of parents has an impact on the academic performance, while an environmental factor has an impact on academic performance of students. It was recommended among others that Parent should provide for their children the necessary schools material so that their child would be better disposed toward developing and achieving a better education attainment in life and Government should provide school which should be located in conducive environment to enable effective learning. This will help to improve the academic performance of students within the catchment zone.

**Keywords:** poverty, academic performance, students

## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a process through which individual acquires skills, competencies, and attitude. It is the right of every child to be educated, be it traditional or western. Thus, education is been regarded as culture to man, people and the nation of the world at large. This explains why man has to educate himself and his offspring in the society. Poverty is one of the factors militating against man from carrying out his educational activities perfectly. Because of the various perception and complexities of the term poverty, a universally agreed definition cannot be arrived at. But then poverty according to the oxford advanced learners dictionary (2000) defined poverty as the state of being poor. Oguw Mike (2005) 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 under-employment. Leroy and Symes (2001) consider poverty as a major anti-risk factors relating the concept poverty to Nigeria, it will therefore be considered in a broader way which implies that it has be viewed in various perspectives which include one national state and home background. At the national level, a nation can be considered poor when her economic standard is very low and this automatically makes the nation underdeveloped. The economy of a country that does not reached certain stage of development in terms of infrastructure and other

development indices. As regard poverty in the family level, we are referring to the home background. Even before the indigenous education or western type of education, the home has always been the agency through which man learns various aspect of life to enable him live a meaningful life in his environment. The home which is also known as traditional way of educating the young ones is still regarded as the first school of a child before he enters the larger society.

The role of the home cannot be over emphasized because the general assumptions that states of poverty in the family or home goes to a long way to determine the extent of youth or students educational development. Education is seen by many as the route to alleviate poverty. There is no doubt that meaningful; education is the most potent instrument for alleviating and eventually abolishing poverty. In considering the effect of poverty on academic performance of students to be precise, the home background is the most important phenomenon that needs to be seriously considered in order to enhance the effective study of the relationship between poverty and students academic performance. In view of this, some factors that needed to be considered in the home or family background are parents academic qualification, socio-economic class and facilities available in home or home environment as well as parent status.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Evidence shows that in Nigeria, the number of those in poverty has continued to increase every year. By 1999, when the government came into power, it was estimated that more than 70% of Nigeria lived in poverty. In recent years, it has been a controversy through in the mind of people that if the poor status of any society or nation, even family can really have an impact on the students educational performance. In view of this, the study intends to investigate the positive and negative impact of poverty on the student's education in Nigeria. This is because the diversity of the world poverty by different scholars who have used it in their course of study and how it has affected the learning and performance of the students in their educational development. Goldstem (1976) admitted this concept when he said that the fact that much of youth educational development takes places in a circle or home, the child begins to attend school in psychological tourism, an attempt would be made to determine the influence of parent's socio-economic performance and the poverty impact on student's education. There is a group which contents the poor have right to be assisted on the bases of group solidarity. Oijkstra (1984) we know that in Africa, the system of the extended family addresses the issues of poverty in the community.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate effect of poverty on the academic performance of secondary school students in bonny local government areas of Rivers State. The study also tries to find out the extend of which any community standard of living can affect the students education in that community. Some teachers are surprise when it comes to evaluate performance of some students such teachers might find particular students in class performing extremely poor despite all kinds of skills employed in carrying out an effective teaching and learning process which are extremely well.

### **Research Questions**

For the proper examination of this study, the following have been formulated to serve as a guide in the conduct of the investigation.

1. What is the impact of environmental factors on the academic performance of students in bonny local government areas of Rivers state ?
2. To what extent does the economic status affect the academic performance Of secondary school students in bonny local government areas of Rivers state

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design with six (6) secondary schools from Bonny Local Government Area of Rivers state. The sample size consists of 4 selected schools. A random sampling was adopted. The instrument for the study was a self constructed questionnaire title: effect of poverty on the academic performance of secondary school student's questionnaire. The instrument was validated by two experts in measurement and evaluation. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient method for a measure of internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability

coefficient value of 0.88 was obtained and used for the study. Copies of the instrument were administered directly to the respondents by the researcher and three research assistants that were trained by the researcher. Mean and Percentage were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

**RESULTS**

Table 1: does home environment have some effect on the academic performance of students?

Alternative answer	No of respondents	Percentage %
Yes	80	80
No	20	20
Total	100	100

In the above table, 80 students responded positively that home have some effect on the academic performance of students, while 20 students responded negatively.

Table 2: Does home environment have full effect on the academic performance of students?

Alternative answer	No of respondents	Percentage %
Yes	30	30
No	70	70
Total	100	100

In the above table, 30 students responded positively while 70 students responded negatively.

Table3: do you think your community economic status can have any effect on your academic performance?

Alternative answer	No of respondents	Percentage %
Yes	48	48
No	52	52
Total	100	100

In the above table, 48 students from different schools responded positively, while 52 students responded negatively.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

From the analyzed data, the following results were made. The study indicated that the home environment have some effect on the academic performance of students.

There is indication that the economic status might affect or may not affect the academic performance of the students.

**Summary of the Findings**

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. The economic status of parents has an impact on the academic performance of students.
2. The environmental factor has an impact on academic performance of students.

**CONCLUSION**

1. It is evident from the foregoing that the level of poverty of a country or parents greatly affects student’s performance in school academically. Based data available, it clearly shows that among the factors that determines good academic performance of secondary schools students’ poverty is prominent.
2. These include the economic status of a country, the economic status of parent’s occupation and income
3. Based on the findings of this research, one can conclude that the socio-economic status of parents goes a long way to affect and determines their children performance in school.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the result of the study the following recommendations have been suggested in order to assist the government, parents in improving student's performance.

1. Parent should provide for their children the necessary schools material so that their child would be better disposed toward developing and achieving a better education attainment in life.
2. Government should provide school which should be located in conducive environment to enable effective learning

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