

Academic Performance Among Students In Urban, Semi-Urban And Rural Secondary Schools Counselling Implications

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ABSTRACT

The study was set out to investigate the difference in academic performance among students of urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State Nigeria. To investigate the problem five hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The researcher collected data on the Senior School Certificate Examination results conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) in the year 2001. The subjects selected for analysis were English language, mathematics and biology. The others were chemistry and geography. Three out of the six secondary schools in the Local Government Area were used for the study. Ninety out of two hundred and twenty students in the three Secondary Schools were used for the study representing 49.1 percent. One way analysis of variance was used to analyse the data. The study showed that: there was a significant difference in the academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in English Language, mathematics, biology, chemistry and geography. Recommendations were therefore made.

KEY WORDS: Academic, Performance, Urban, Semi urban, rural.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of academic performance of students is of great importance to every concerned parent. This is because the level of academic performance of any child goes a long way to determine the child's future career. Many variables may be held responsible for either good or poor performance of children in the school. For example, inheritance and the type of school environment have been held accountable.

School environment may be classified into urban, semi-urban, and rural. This classification sometimes go a long way to influence Governments distribution of social amenities like electricity, water, hospital and educational institutions. It is a common knowledge that many of these social amenities are concentrated in urban areas. These amenities sometimes act as a factor that pulls the educated and rich members of the society to the urban areas.

It is in support of this that Bratte (2000) maintained, that the infrastructural facilities present in urban area tend to pull the elite of the society to such areas. Such elite usually have the economic power and so are able to provide all the educational facilities required by their children in the school e.g. books and other learning materials. They are also able to employ private teachers to teach their children at home after the day's work. This probably enhance their academic performance.

The rural communities on the other hand are mainly inhabited by peasant farmers. These communities therefore do not attract some amenities like Pipe borne water, electricity, good roads and well equipped schools. Government's reluctance to put amenities in these areas may be due to insensitivity to the plight of the population that are found in the villages. Many of the villages generally lack good educational facilities. It is in support of this that Mofon (2001) stressed that many rural schools are in terrible state of despair and lacking basic facilities. The poor environment and poor infrastructure contribute immensely to poor teaching and poor academic performance.

Okolosi (2007) investigated the difference in academic performance between urban and rural students in junior secondary schools in Udu Local government Area of Delta State and found out that there is no significant difference between urban and rural students in their academic performance in English Language and Mathematics as well.

Mofon (2001) undertook the study of the difference in academic performance between urban and rural students in senior school certificate examination in Ika South Local Government Area of Delta State and found out that there is a significant difference in academic performance between urban and rural students in English Language and Biology. There is no significant difference however in the academic performance between urban and rural students in Mathematics, Chemistry and Geography.

Ajayi, (2001) in her study of the relationship between achievement motivation and students academic performance in Mathematics and English Language found out that girls have a higher achievement motivation in

English Language than boys and hence perform better than the latter but that this difference was not recorded in mathematics.

Trewartha, Robinson and Hammond (1967) stressed that urban settlements possess facilities like water, electricity, radio, television cars etc which make life comfortable for this inhabitants. The presence of these facilities attract good qualified teachers to the locations and because of the comforts present, they remain there and put in the best in their jobs thereby enabling the students to perform well.

Mabogunje (1968) a major attribute of an urbanized society is its invention or adoption of writing. He stated that the inhabitants of a city or urban settlement are able to write to enable them record and transmit information in a civilized way to show to the world that they are a really civilized people. Ability to write implies the existence of a high specialized non-agricultural group that has the necessary leisure to develop such a complete skill. It is therefore common sight to find a lot of bill boards and signboards in urban areas.

Ogunlade (1973) in his study to find the extent to which parent's level of education affects the academic performance of their children found out that children from literate backgrounds performed better academically than those from illiterate homes.

Statement of the Problem

Poor academic performance has become a common characteristic of the educational system in Nigeria. The factors responsible for either good or poor academic performance may include inheritance, the nature of the school location, school facilities and social economic status of the parents. This investigation is however interested only in knowing the extent to which school location affect different academic performance of students in Senior school Certificate Examination in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. The study addressed itself to finding out the difference in academic performance among students in the urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools. The investigation sought to test the following five hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypotheses

- Ho1 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in the urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in English Language.
- Ho2 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in the urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Mathematics.
- Ho3 There is no significant difference among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Biology.
- Ho4 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Chemistry.
- Ho5 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Geography.

For the purpose of this study, urban area refers to the Local Government Headquarter with amenities such as electricity and postal services. Others are pipe borne water, hospital, library and good road. As far as the semi-urban area is concerned, it is not a Local Government headquarter. But it has some modern amenities such as maternity dispensary and pipe borne water. Rural area refers to the area that lacks almost all the modern social amenities but has primary and secondary schools.

Methodology

The research design chosen for this investigation is the Ex-post facto since the data were already there before the researcher visited the schools and obtained the student's senior school certificate examination results (SSCE) conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) which formed the data. Three secondary schools were randomly selected out of a total of six in the Local Government Area on the basis of urban, semi-urban and rural area.

There were a total of two hundred and twenty students who registered and sat for the examination in the year 2001. The investigator randomly selected ninety students out of two hundred and twenty representing 49.1 percent. Each student registered for a maximum of nine subject for the examination. The researcher selected English Language, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Geography for analysis because of their critical nature in their future career development.

The student's results were in grades of 1 to 9. While grades 1 – 6 were regarded as credits. 7 and 8 were taken as ordinary passes Grade 9 is failure. The students' results were converted to raw score as follow.

1 and 2	70% and above	A	Distinction
3 and 4	60-69%	B	Very good
5 and 6	50-59%	C	Very good
7 and 8	40-49%	D	Pass

9 1-39% E Fail

After the conversion of the grades into raw scores, the one way analysis of variance (Anova) was used to test the difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools.

Findings

The findings of the investigation are presented in tables 1 – 5

Ho1 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in the urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in English Language.

Table 1

Academic Performance in English Language Among Students Using One Way Analysis of Variance.

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	df	SUM OF SQUARE	MEAN SQUARE	F-cal	F-crit
English Language Between groups	2	2921.756	1460.878	25.05	3.07
Within groups	87	5070.867	58.286		
Total	89	7992.622			

The hypothesis which says that there is no significant difference in the academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural area secondary schools is therefore rejected. This is because the calculated F value of 25.05 is higher than table value of F which is 3.07 at 2/87 degrees of freedom and at .05 level of significance.

Ho2 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Mathematics.

Table 2

Academic Performance in Mathematics Among Students Using One Way Analysis of Variance.

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	df	SUM OF SQUARE	MEAN SQUARE	F-cal	F-crit
Mathematics Between groups	2	5347.8000	2673.900	37.75	3.07
Within groups	87	6162.200	70.830		
Total	89	11510.00			

Table two shows that the value of F calculated is 37.75 and F critical is 3.07 at 2/87 degree of freedom and at .05 level of significance. The hypothesis which says that there is no significant difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural area secondary schools is therefore rejected since F calculated is higher than table value of F.

Ho3 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Biology.

Table 3

Difference in Academic Performance in Biology Among Students Using One Way Analysis of Variance.

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	df	SUM OF SQUARE	MEAN SQUARE	F-cal	F-crit
Biology Between groups	2	2586.867	1293.433	15.61	3.07
Within groups	87	7208.733	82859		
Total	89	9795.600			

The investigation has revealed that there is significant difference in the academic performance in Biology among students in urban ,semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Biology. This is because the calculated F value of 15.61 is higher that its table value of 3.07 at 2/87 degree of freedom and at .05 level of significance. The hypothesis is therefore not accepted.

Ho4 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in the urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Chemistry.

Table 4

Difference in Academic Performance in Chemistry Among Students Using One Way Analysis of Variance.

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	df	SUM OF SQUARE	MEAN SQUARE	F-cal	F-crit
Chemistry Between groups	2	7142.022	3571.011	38.10	3.07
Within groups	87	8153.633	93.720		
Total	89	15295.66			

The hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural area secondary schools in Chemistry is hereby not accepted. This is because the calculated F value of 38.10 is higher than its table value of 3.07 at 2/87 degree of freedom and at .05 level of significance.

Ho5 There is no significant difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in Geography.

Table 5

Difference in Academic Performance in Geography Among Students Using One Way Analysis of Variance.

SOURCE OF VARIANCE	df	SUM OF SQUARE	MEAN SQUARE	F-cal	F-crit
Geography Between groups	2	2393.956	1196.978	16.23	3.07
Within groups	87	6415.833	73.754		
Total	89	8809.787			

The study has revealed that there is no significant difference in academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural area secondary schools in Geography. This is because the F calculated value of 16.23 is higher than its table value of 3.07 at 2/87 degree of freedom and at .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is hereby rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The finding of this investigation agrees with one of Mofon's findings of 2001. Mofon's investigation has revealed that there is significant difference in academic performance between urban and rural students in English Language in the senior school certificate examination. The present investigation equally found out that there is a significant difference in the academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools in English Language. However, the present study disagrees with that of Okolosi's of 2007. This was because Okolosi's investigation revealed that there was no significant difference between urban and rural students in their academic performance in English Language in the junior school certificate examination. The probable reason for the disagreement may be attributed to the fact that the classes are different and their examinations were conducted by different examination bodies.

The investigation has found out that there is a significant difference among students in urban and rural secondary schools in their academic performance in Mathematics. The difference in academic performance among the students may be due to the concentration of more qualified mathematics teachers posted to the urban secondary schools as against those in the rural areas. The study revealed that there is a significant difference in the academic performance in Biology among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools. The difference in academic performance may be attributed to the poor Biology laboratory facilities available in the rural secondary schools as against those in the urban and semi-urban areas.

The issue of lack of well equipped chemistry laboratory coupled with refusal of well qualified chemistry teachers to accept posting to the rural secondary schools against those in the urban and semi-urban areas may be held accountable to the significant difference found in academic performance among the students.

The significant difference in academic performance found among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools may be due to lack of adequate facilities for effective teaching of geography in the rural secondary schools as against those in the urban and semi-urban areas.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion that may be drawn is that the difference in academic performance among students may be due to the disparity in the provision of educational facilities among schools in urban, semi-urban and rural communities.

COUNSELLING IMPLICATIONS

- (1) Counsellors are indispensable in semi-rural and rural secondary schools because they are the trained personnel who will provide educational guidance to students in form of study habit induction. Therefore, the Federal and State Government need to post counsellors to rural schools and also provide them moral and financial support that will enhance their efficiency.
- (2) Parents are to be enlightened on the significance of providing for the physical and psychological needs of their children so that they can learn with minimal constraints.
- (3) Counsellors are to liaise with parents and arrange remedial lessons for students with learning difficulties so as to improve their performance.
- (4) Other researchers need to conduct studies on the causes of the disparities in the academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary schools (in English Language, Mathematics and Geography), publish such results in professional journals so that practicing counsellors will have access to them and direct their attention on how to proffer the necessary solution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings and conclusions reached, the Government should ensure that there is equity in the distribution of educational facilities among schools in urban, semi-urban and rural areas. There should be constant supervision of schools in the rural areas to ensure that teachers and students are working hard. In addition, incentives should be given to teachers posted to rural schools as a way of motivating them so that they can work harder and for the students to perform better.

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