

Effects of Poverty on Academic Progress of Students in Niger State College of Education, Minna: Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

This research project, examined the effect of poverty on academic progress of students in college of education, Minna. The background to the study was that poverty remains a stubborn fact of life and interrupts students' academic progress. The problem of this study is that, a lot of students in college of education, Minna due vacate the school to search for registration fees, while the lectures are going on. It disturbed a good number of students psychologically, most especially when the deadline for tuition fee payment to register the student is published. In ability to capture them for the examination as a result of no registration payment due to poverty also disturbed them mentally. This study is significance to all stakeholders, most especially the students and their parents or guardians. Thus, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of poverty on academic progress of students in College of Education Minna. The other purposes were explicitly stated under three (3) specific objectives, research questions and hypotheses were also stated and tested. The scope of the study focused on students' interruptions during lectures as a result of poverty and not on their intelligent quotient. The study reviewed the previous related empirical studies of Taiye (2020) in Akoko Local Government of Ondo State and the findings revealed that parental source of income and students' health status do have significance effect on students' poverty and affect their academic progress. The study has 285 Population out of which 65 sample size was derived. The T-test was used to answer the research questions, while the chi-square was adopted in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. It was recommended that school management should utilize the available natural resource in the college to support and empower such students.

Keywords: Poverty, Students and Academic Progress.

Introduction

Poverty remains a stubborn fact of life even in rich countries since over past decades. The unfortunate reality is that the differences in income gap has greater widened space between Nigerian families and educational outcomes are one of the key areas influenced by poverty. Children from low-income families often start school already left behind by their peers (in times of age) who come from more affluent families. The depth duration and timing of poverty all influence a child's educational progress (Hulme, 2010). Academic progress of students from poor family background is often detriment. Students with emotional instability may get frustrated easily when given upon a task

and success was just moving away without any intervention. Social dysfunction may inhibit students' ability to work well in cooperative groups, quite possibly leading to their exclusion by group members who believe they aren't play their part or pulling their share of load.

This exclusion and the accompanying decrease in collaboration and exchange of information exacerbate at risk students whose academic progress is already shaky. Lack of emotional nurturing can lead to feelings of alienation, inadequacy, depression and anxiety, most especially when deadline for closure of portal is disclosed and they are yet to pay the tuition fees. This condition, contributed to the students' academic backwardness and failure as a result of poverty other than their low intellectual ability. Some students do also forfeit their academic dreams just because they are unable to reimburse their school fees and voluntarily withdraw out of the school resulting to psychological disturbances. Good number of students do skip lectures and at time do defy session in struggling to get the tuition fees. The aftermath of it is usually academic backwardness, failure or withdrawal and falling of grades due to dropped CGPA.

These circumstances which are beyond students control do influence such students to become nuisance in the school environment and roots insecurity challenges in the school and entire society. The mental aspect of it is that, such students are totally disturbed psychologically which roots mental disorder and eventual there may be little or no academic progress. They find it difficult to concentrate on their studies and begin to back off from the lectures, assignments and tests. Such conditions hurt them so much that it causes depression which push many students into deviant behaviours such as; stealing, examination malpractice, smoking of hemp, drug abuse and other sorts of criminal behaviours.

Students who defy a session, when they come back to continue their academic pursuit, by then their course mates who are lower than them intellectually have left them behind living them with no choice but to have an additional year in the college aggressively. However, both Nigeria and international organizations have shown that the effects of poverty can be reduced using sustainable interventions (Jensen 2013). Based on these backgrounds, the researchers have developed and come up with this topic; "Effects of Poverty on Academic Progress of Students in College of Education Minna, Niger State: Implications for counselling".

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is that, a good number of students in public tertiary institutions come from poor socio-economic background and failed academically despite their high intelligent quotient (I.Q). Such condition made them to respond aggressively to normal situations. Determined students supposed to study in conscious mind and emotionally stable, but unfortunately, a lot of students, study in anxiety due to poverty. Some students, do vacate the school to search for registration fee. Insecurity challenges of the bandit and heavy rainfall that over flood the crops, discouraged student farmers from farming and worsen their condition of poverty, but yet, no much programmes is set by the government to help such students to alleviate poverty.

As such, many students cannot afford to pay their school fees when due. The situation seriously interrupts their academic progress and become a source of concern and worrisome to researchers. Students are also frustrated whenever they are deprived from writing tests and examination. However, the overall goal of this study investigated how poverty affect the academic progress of students in college of education, Minna, Niger state and it implications for counselling. Which is the philosophical foundation behind this topic: "Effects of Poverty on Academic Progress of Students in College of Education Minna, Niger state: Implications for counselling"

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the Effect of Poverty on Academic Progress of Students in College of Education, Minna, Niger State and its Implications for Counselling under the following specific objectives;

1. To establish the effect of poverty on academic progress of students in college of education Minna, Niger state.
2. To evaluate the effect of poverty on academic progress of male students in college of education Minna, Niger state.
3. To identify the effect of poverty on academic progress of female students in college of education Minna, Niger state.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised for the purpose of this study;

1. Does the poverty affect academic progress of students in college of education Minna?
2. Does the poverty affect academic progress of male students in college of education Minna?
3. Does the poverty affect academic progress of female students in college of education Minna?

Hypotheses

Three (3) null hypotheses have been formulated and tested

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of students in college of education Minna, Niger state.

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of male students in college of education Minna, Niger state.

H₀₃: There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of female students in college of education Minna, Niger state.

Significance of the Study

This study is of paramount relevant to the following stakeholders; Students, parents, other researchers, academic institutions, government and society at large. The findings obtained from this study will serve as an awareness and enlightenment to the college management team, parents, and government on how poverty affects academic progress of students and way forward. When copies of this research is displayed in the libraries it

will serve as a contribution to the knowledge to all library users, most especially those who will make review of related empirical studies in the area of the effect of poverty on students' academic progress. The counselling provided and suggestions will serve as a way forward to the college management and government to adopt certain measures to empower students' from low socio-economic background during their tertiary education to enable them pay their school fees independently.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this study covers only 200 and 300 level students of the department of special education in college of education, Minna, Niger state. The focus of this study was on students' interruptions during academic activities as a result of poverty and not on their intelligent quotient. It is so in order to have a genuine result and reduce financial, time and energy constraints of the researchers.

Review of Previous Related Empirical Studies

Omogun Taiye (2020) examine how poverty affect the academic performance of the girl child in selected secondary schools in Akoko local government area of Ondo State. Three (3) research questions were raised and answered. Sample of the study were obtained with two hundred (200) students, randomly selected from four secondary schools in Akoko. The three factors that were examined and statistically analyzed were: parent source of income, parental educational background and students' health statuses. The study revealed that Parental source of income and students' health status do have significant effect on students' poverty and affect their academic progress.

Theoretical Framework

Banerjee & Duflo (2011) in their theories of "External Factors" (environmental and structural) are believed to play a larger role in poverty. In view of this theory, it could be agreed that any environment with abundant of natural resources and fertile vast land without utilization might source poverty to that society. Likewise, if it is effectively harnessed, such individuals might be alleviated from poverty. Regards to this assertion, the researchers are of the opinion that the college management in collaboration with the state government should make possible avenue to harness the available land resources in the college for mechanized farming to alleviate students' poverty.

Research Design

Survey research design (quantitative method) was used to enable researchers to derive sample from population, design instrument for data collection, and to obtain response rate on how poverty affect academic progress of students.

Population of the Study

The population of this study is all 200 and 300 level students in the department of special education Niger State College of Education, Minna which is two hundred and fifty-eight (258) according to departmental comprehensive list, issued by the head of department.2020/2021 academic session.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Quarter Sampling Technique (QST) was used to select 65 students as the respondents of this study. Therefore, the sample size of this study is 65 respondents.

Instrumentation

The major instrument used for this study was questionnaire named: Effect of Poverty on Students' Academic Progress Rating Scale (EPSAPRS) developed by the researchers in two (2) sections. Section 1 contains demographic data of the respondents and section 2 contained 10 items structured in a four Likert rating scale of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagree and Strongly Disagreed.

Treatment Procedure

Both 200 & 300 level students converged in Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure lecture theatre B for sample size. After counting of four students, one will be selected for sample. Sixty-three (63) respondents were selected and the remaining two (2) were merged with the sample size making total sample of sixty-five (65). The next day the researchers administered the instrument to the 65 respondents on their own in counselling laboratory at Centre for Educational Technology (CET) Niger state college of education, Minna. The data were directly retrieved immediately by the researchers. It was conducted in second (2nd) semester to enable full participation of 300 level students.

Measures of Controlling Extraneous Variables

Population of the study were purposively chosen to enable target population and quarter sampling technique was used to select manageable sample size of the study. 30 minutes were adequately managed used for selection at Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure lecture theatre B in order not to interrupt their lecture much. An hour was also used for the administration of the instrument. All these are measures adopted to control extraneous variables.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis has been defined as those techniques used by the researcher to extracts relevant information from the data which would enable a summary description of the findings to be made. The statistical tools used in analyzing the data are; T-test was used to answer the research questions, while the chi-square was adopted in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Result

Research Question 1. Does the poverty affect academic progress of students in college of education Minna?

TABLE 1: T-test of independent on the effect of poverty on academic progress of students in college of education, Minna Niger state.

Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	40		61.5	61.5
Agree	20		30.8	92.5
Disagree	5		7.7	100
Strongly Disagree	-		-	-
Total	65		100.0	100.0

Source: 2021 Questionnaire (EPSAPRS)

Above table 1 shows that 40 respondents representing 61.5% strongly agreed that poverty interrupted students' lecture. 20 respondents representing 30.8% also chose to agree that poverty interrupted students' lecture and other academic activities. While 5 respondents representing 7.7% disagreed that poverty interrupted students' lecture and other academic activities. This contradiction is insignificant, therefore, the first and second responses which is 92.3% of the total respondents provide answer to the research question 1.

TABLE 2: T-test of independent on the effect of poverty on academic progress of male students in college of education, Minna Niger state.

Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	30	50.1	50.1	53.8
Agree	20	30.1	30.1	84.6
Disagree	15	19.8	19.8	100
Strongly Disagree	-	-	-	-
Total	65	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 above, revealed that 76.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that, a lot of male students do left school in search for money to pay for the registration. 10 respondents representing 15.4% also agreed a lot of male students do left school in search for money to pay for their registration fees. While 5 respondents representing 7.7% disagreed that, a lot of male students do left school in search for money to pay for the registration. Thus, the total number of respondents who agreed that male students do left school in search for money to pay for their registration fees is 50 representing 92.32% that answered research question 2.

Research Question 3.

Does the poverty affect academic progress of female students in college of education Minna?

TABLE 3: T-test of independent on the effect of poverty on academic progress of female students in Niger state college of education.

Value	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	15	23	23	7.7
Agree	30	46.3	46.3	46.3
Disagree	15	23	23	23
Strongly Disagree	5	7.7	7.7	100
Total	65	100.0	100.0	

Source: Questionnaire

From the above table 3, only 7.7% of respondents strongly agree that female students to left school in search for school fees registration. 23% agreed and 23% disagree, while 46.3 strongly disagree. This indicated that 77% of the respondents both male and female disagree that female students to left school in search for school fees. Though, it is not a prove that poverty does not affect their academic progress but only the factors differ.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of students in Niger state college of education Minna.

TABLE 4: Test of chi-square on effect of poverty on academic progress of students in college of education Minna Niger state

There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of Students in College of Education Minna Niger State.	Pearson Value	Correlation		.954
	Sig.			1
	N			65

Since the Pearson correlation value of 0.954 and r calculated is (0.000) which is greater than the r tabulated or level of significance (0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is significant effect of poverty on academic progress of students in college of education Minna Niger state.

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of male students in College of education Minna Niger state.

TABLE 5: Test of chi-square on effect of poverty on academic progress of male students in college of education Minna Niger state

There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of male students in college of education Minna Niger state.	Pearson Correlation Value		.954
	Sig.		0.000
	N		65

Since the r calculated (0.000) is greater than the r tabulated or level of significance (0.05), we reject the null hypothesis and concluded that there is significant effect of poverty on academic progress of male students in college of education Minna Niger state. This can be observed by the Pearson correlation value of 0.954

H₀₃: There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of female students in college of education Minna Niger state.

TABLE 6: Test of chi-square on effect of poverty on academic progress of female students in college of education Minna Niger state.

There is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of female students in College of Education Minna Niger State.	Pearson Value	Correlation		.954
	Sig.			0.0
	N			65

Since the r calculated (0.0) is less than the r tabulated or level of significance (0.05), the stated null hypothesis is accepted and concluded that there is no significant effect of poverty on academic progress of female students in college of education Minna Niger state.

Discussion of the Finding

According to analysis of this study, 3 major findings were revealed. First; 80% of the respondents strongly agreed that poverty has caused many students to vacate the school in search for money to pay for their registration fee. 83% also strongly agreed that some students differ an academic session due to poverty. Thus, that is an indication that poverty have effect on academic progress of students. This finding concord with Davidoff (2015) who pointed out that poverty is associated with a number of educational disadvantages that entail poor attitudes to school, low academic skills achievement, little interest in formal lessons.

Second findings showed that 83. 5% of respondents strongly agreed that both male and female students are usually disturbed psychologically whenever they are unable to pay school fees, departmental and other dues. They cannot concentrate on academic activities leading to drop down of CGPA. They therefore, agreed that poverty have effect on academic progress of both male and female students. The third findings indicated that that 79.16% of respondents agreed that there is no adequate programme organized by school to checkmate students’ poverty.

Conclusion

The issue of students’ poverty certainly causes academic backwardness, failure and voluntary withdrawal in different dimensions such as; missing tests, deferment of academic session. Leaving school to search for school fees, dropping of CGPA leading to emotional distressed, thus, it can be concluded that poverty affects academic progress of both male and female students in college of education, Minna, Niger state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. School management should endeavour to provide farm land for all sorts of farming including; poultry keeping, fishery, mechanized farming and support students with needed inputs as well as improved seedlings.

2. At the end of the harvest the school can purchase the farm produce, pay a little percentage for the students' labour and the remaining balance should be used for registration and maintenance of the farm inputs.
3. The same research topic should be conducted in the various schools and departments of the college.
4. The college management should endeavour to utilize students' research project and implement the valuable ones.
5. The college management should present the issues of students' poverty at the governing board for efficient way forward.

Implications for Counselling

Students are emotionally disturbed due to frequent thinking about how and where to get the school fees, such situation causes persistent headache and might likely result to drug abuse in the name of medication. This category of students may become nuisance in the school environment and threaten other students, staff and the management team. Students who leave the school to search for money may likely join perpetrators of crime and plan for criminal acts against the school in any possible channel. In that regard, the school should endeavour to liaise with the government, non-governmental organizations and good philanthropist to implement meaningful and sustainable empowerment programmes for less privilege students to alleviate their poverty in the school.

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