

Relationship between Socio-Economic Status and Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students from Single Parent in Yobe State, Nigeria: Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parents (by death and divorce) in Yobe State. The population for the study comprises of 12,734 students spread across 55 secondary school in Yobe State. The study adopted a sample size of three hundred and seventy-six (376) secondary school students randomly selected from 9 secondary schools across the State. Questionnaire tagged "QSES" was used to collected from respondents. The three (3) hypotheses formulated were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results revealed a significance relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent in Yobe State. It was therefore recommended among others that government should support single parent by way of giving scholarship to their children.

Introduction

In Nigeria, a family's income level is determined by per capita income of single parent, which is very low these days. In the past, Nigeria was among the richest fifty countries of the world as early as 1970s but has since slide into becoming one of the 25 poorest countries at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The country has maintained an intolerable upward trend in poverty level (Jaynes, 2002). In this context, the World Bank in Kiyawa (1999) perceived poverty as the lack of capability to attain a minimum standard of living. Poverty is multi-dimensional that cannot be reduced to a single indicator. Thus, more often than not, people talk about absolute and relative poverty. The world Bank country study in Bulus (2006) stated that absolute poverty line can be measured with respect to the income needed to satisfy minimum nutritional requirements and

non-food component while relative poverty exists where a percentage of household are at the bottom of the income distribution minimum level.

Kiyawa (1999) indicated that population and family survival in Nigeria is difficult. It indicated that the population of people surviving on one dollar a day was found to be 70.2% with a poverty gap of 34.9%. When the scope was extended to less than two dollar a day, 90.8% of the population was found to be poor. The rate of poverty in Nigeria is quite worrisome and frightening with a destabilizing influence and consequence on Socio-economic Status of the family, so the inaccessibility to quality education (Kiyawa, 1999).

Socio-Economic Status is typically broken into three categories, High SES, Middle SES, and Low SES to describe the three areas a family or an individual may fall into. When placing a family or individual into one of these categories any or all of the three variables (income, education, and occupation) can be assessed. (Wikipedia, 2010).

Academic performance as viewed by Ganai and Ashraf (2013) refers to excellence in academic disciplines, in class as well as extracurricular activities. It includes excellence in sporting behaviour, confidence, communication skills, punctuality, etc which can be achieved only when an individual is well adjusted. It is clear from the above that whatever the type of family the children come from, the level of their seriousness and interest are critical factors in determining their academic performance in schools. Senior Secondary School Students from single parent with different socio-economic status need to adjust to the various degrees of circumstances in their academic pursuits so that their educational struggle will not be in vein.

Single parenthood is a situation where one parent takes charge of the physical and social development of the child or children either in the event of divorce or death of the other parent. It is a terminology mostly used to suggest that one parent is responsible for taking care of the child or children. Similarly, Denga and Denga (2007) opined that single-parent or one parent family is headed by one person either a man or woman. The major reasons for this phenomenon are traceable to the death of one parent, divorce or a social circumstance that may involuntarily cause a man or woman to parent a child without marriage. In most cases, it is women who become mothers without a marriage. However, it is in the best interest of the children to have both parents' involvement, encourage each parent to respect the other parents in the children's presence and financial help through child support for the parent that carries the most responsibility when parents separate (Wikipedia, 2009).

Research Studies such as Jaynes, (2002) and Eamon, (2005) have indicated that SES affects students' performance. Also, students who have a low SES earn lower examination score or perform poorly and are likely to dropout of school. Students who come from parents of low SES have been found to perform lower than those from higher SES. It is also believed that low SES negatively affects academic performance because low SES parents lack access to vital resources and creates additional stress at home (The economic hardship that is caused by low SES lead to disruption in parenting and increasing amount of family conflicts and an increased likelihood of depression in single-parent households. For these reasons, SES is closely tied to home environment and one could argue that SES dictates the quality of home life for the children (Eamon, 2005).

In the same vein, in the researches of people like (Majoribanks, in Barry, 2006), Jaynes, (2002), Ajila & Otula (2007), have also shown that children from single-parent households do not perform as well in school as the children from two-parent households. Several explanations have been advanced for the existence of this performance gap. Single-parents household is found to have less income, lacking support and have increase in stress and conflict. They often struggle with time management issues due to balancing of many different areas of life on their own. It is also evident that single-parents are less involved with their children and therefore give less encouragement to have lower expectation of their children than two-parent households (Majoribanks, in Barry, 2006). Jaynes, (2002) sees divorce as one of the features of broken home and has found it to negatively affect academic performance. He reported that students whose parents were divorced were found to perform poorly. This is because divorce can cause a family's SES level to decrease and also parental connections are leaned considerably. According to McNeal (2001) researches have indicated that parental involvement in school has been found to have both positive and negative influence on academic performance and the explanations for this discrepancy are not conclusive SES as mentioned earlier has link with income level which is associated with how rich or poor family is.

Socio-economic status in this study is considered from two dimensions-positive and negative. When positive, it stimulate children from such family towards high academic performance in schools, as parents are able to cater for the educational facilities necessary to stimulate the children to effectively adjust to various degree of learning circumstances. However, if negative, it is expected that the children from such families find things unfavourable. This is because the parents are unable to provide financial support to the educational development of their children, hence, low academic performance in schools (Guidubaldi & Perry, 1984).

Statement of the Problem

Secondary education as a foundation for career development is designed to provide a wide range of educational opportunity to a large number of students in Nigeria leading to specialization in disciplines such as natural sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities. Therefore, this form of education is not only a preparation for continuing education but for a long - life occupational development. However, achieving these laudable goals depends on the academic performance of the students in West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), National Business and Technical Examination Board and Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Examinations which have been found to be unsatisfactory.

Secondary School Students in Yobe State in particular and Nigeria in general come from different socio-economic and cultural background of which without doubt has long lasting influence on their academic activities and future ambitions. In view of the high level of poverty, social insecurity and single parenthood (by death and divorce) as a result of insurgency by Boko Haram group in the study area affects considerable population of students from high and low economic status which invariably impact positively or negatively on their academic performance in schools. Therefore, whatever level of family setting the students come from, there is the need to provide the opportunities for students from single parents, intact parents, parents of low and high socio-economic status to progress amidst the various degrees of poverty, social insecurity, insurgency, socio - economic status and single parenthood. The main trust of this study therefore is to examine socio-economic status and academic performance of senior secondary school students from single parents in Yobe State, Nigeria and its implications for counselling.

Research Questions

This study sought to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent in Yobe State?
2. Is there any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death in Yobe State?
3. Is there any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce in Yobe State?

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study.

1. To find out the relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent in Yobe State.
2. To find out the relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death in Yobe State.
3. To find out the relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce in Yobe State.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha level.

1. There is no any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent in Yobe State.
2. There is no any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death in Yobe State.
3. There is no any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce in Yobe State.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design for this study is a descriptive research design which is interested in observing what is happening to respondents or variables without the researchers' attempt to manipulate them. The design used was a correlational design. The cross – sectional type of design was used because it examines the relationship among single parents' socio-economic status and academic performance of senior secondary school students.. The purpose of using this design is to enable the researcher to measure the degree of relationship between the variables under study (Asika, 2002).

Population of the Study

The population of the study was all the Twelve Thousand Seven Hundred and Thirty Four (12,734) Senior Secondary School Students in 55 schools in Yobe State. This population of students was spread across the fifty-five Senior Secondary Schools in the state.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size selected was Three Hundred and Seventy Six (376) Senior Secondary School (SSS) class III students from single parents (by death and divorce) with high and or low socio – economic status. This was obtained through purposive selection of the students that fall within these categories. The choice of these categories of respondents was deliberately motivated because the researcher is looking for a specific group of students that fall within these categories. A purposive sampling according to Best and Kahn (2006) allows the researcher to select those participants that will provide the richest information, those who are the most interesting and those who manifest the characteristics of most interest to the researcher.

Instrumentations

There are three instruments for this research. They include: Questionnaire on Socio- Economic Status (QSES). This was divided into two parts: Part one consist of the respondents' personal data. Part two consists twenty (20) items on different socio-economic status of students from single parents. Students' Performance Scores (SPS) in English language and Mathematics). These are mock examination scores of senior secondary school class III students for the year 2013 in Yobe State. The SPS is the performance scores of 376 students from single parents, parents of broken home and parents from different socio-economic status. Thus, mock examination is believed that it is a standard exam which have taken care of both construct and context validity and thus is reliable.

The QSES was given to the experts and lecturers from Guidance and Counselling of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto for correction and amendment. The experts adjudged that the instruments has content and face validity. The instrument was thereafter administered to 30 students randomly selected from a Secondary School in Yobe State for pilot test. The result of the tests was subjected to Pearson Moment Correlational analysis which yielded coefficients alpha of 0.79, which shows that the instrument has high reliability.

Method of Data Analysis

A descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data collected such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and also frequency and percentage were used to analyse the demographic features of the respondents.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents by type of Single Parent

Single Parent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
By Death	141	37.5
By Divorce	235	62.5
Total	376	100

Source: Researcher's Field Study 2015

The above table presents the types of single parent distribution of the respondents. It shows that most of the respondents are from single parent by divorce 235(62.5%) whole the remaining respondents 141(37.5%) are from single parent by death. This shows that there is high rate of divorce in the study area.

Hypothesis 1. There is no any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent in Yobe State.

Table 2: Correlation between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	Std. Dev.	r-cal	P-Value	Remark
Socio-Economic Status	376	36.95	6.067			
Academic Performance	376	54.57	17.065	0.071	0.003	Rejected

Source: Researcher's Field Study 2015

The table above gives the values of r-cal and P for Socio-Economic Status and Academic Performance as 0.071 and 0.002 respectively. Since the value of *r-cal* is greater than *P-Value*, it shows that there is significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent in Yobe State. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death in Yobe State.

Table 3: Correlation between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death

Variables	N	\bar{X}	Std. Dev.	r-cal	P-Value	Remark
Socio-Economic Status	141	37.09	5.759			
Academic Performance	141	54.15	16.554	0.070	0.011	Rejected

Source: Researcher's Field Study 2015

The table above gives the values of *r-cal* and *P-value* for socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death as 0.070 and 0.011 respectively. Since the value of *r-cal* is greater than *P-Value*, it shows that there is significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death in Yobe State. Hence, the hypothesis is not accepted.

Hypothesis 3: There is no any significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce in Yobe State.

Table 4: Correlation between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce

Variables	N	\bar{X}	Std. Dev.	r-cal	P-Value	Remark
Socio-Economic Status	235	36.86	6.255			
Academic Performance	235	54.83	17.394	0.072	0.024	Rejected

Source: Researcher's Field Study 2015

In the above table, the *r-cal* for socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce is 0.072, *P-Value* is 0.024. Since *r-cal* is greater than *P-Value*. This implies that there is significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce in Yobe State. Hence, the hypothesis is not accepted.

Summary of the Findings

The following are the summary of the finding based on the 11 hypotheses tested.

1. There is significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent in Yobe State.
2. There is significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death in Yobe State.
3. There is significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce in Yobe State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in the study are discussed based on the result obtained from the analysis. The first hypothesis tested revealed a significance relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent in Yobe State. This is corroborated with the outcome of other people findings such as Jaynes, (2002) and Eamon, (2005). In their separate study, it was revealed that Socio-Economic Status (SES) affects students' performance. Also, students from a low SES earn lower examination score or perform poorly and are likely to dropout of school. Students who come from parents with low SES have been found to perform lower than those from higher SES. It is also believed that low SES negatively affects academic performance because low SES parents lack access to vital resources and creates additional stress at home.

This study also revealed a significance relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by death in Yobe State. This finding concurred with that of Ajila & Olutola (2007). They noted that the home socio-economic status of family has been recognized as having a lot of influence on the academic performance of students. They concluded that, parenthood is a responsibility requiring the full cooperation of both parents who must ensure the total development of their offspring(s).

On socio-economic status and academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students from single parent by divorce, the study revealed a significance relationship. The result is supported by the outcome of Jaynes (2002) who see divorce as one of the features of broken home and has found it to negatively affect academic performance. He reported that students whose parents were divorced were found to perform poorly. This is because divorce can cause a family's SES level to decrease and also parental connections are leaned considerably. Also, the findings of McNeal (2001) indicated that parental involvement in school has been

found to have both positive and negative influence on academic performance and the explanations for this discrepancy are not conclusive SES as mentioned earlier has link with income level which is associated with how rich or poor family is.

In the same vein, researches have also shown that children from single-parent households do not perform as well in school as the children from two-parent households. Several explanations have been advanced for the existence of this performance gap. Single-parents household is found to have less income, lacking support and have increase in stress and conflict. They often struggle with time management issues due to balancing of many different areas of life on their own. It is also evident that single-parents are less involved with their children and therefore give less encouragement to have lower expectation of their children than two-parent households (Barry, 2006).

Conclusion

This study had examines the relationship between socio-economic status and academic performance of senior secondary school students from single parents (by death and divorce) in Yobe State, In view of the findings emanated from this study, it could therefore be concluded that, socio-economic status affects academic performance of students from single parents (by death or divorce) in Yobe State-Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings emanated from this study, the following recommendations are advanced for considerations:

Special scholarship should be provided for children from single parents to enable them complete their educational endeavours as some show promising future.

The community should regard and take in such children as theirs and give them both economic, social and psychological supports in order to build them as acceptable members of the society.

The parent and relations should give their utmost support in order to make the children feel safe and cushion the psychology effect(s) the loss of parent may have caused.

Implications for Guidance and Counselling

School counsellors should provide effective counselling services for children of single parent so that they will be equipped to face the challenges of the trying life for becoming successful members of the society. Also counsellors should engage

in public enlightenment and sensitization campaigns in conjunction with the community leaders in the area of the study to clearly paint the picture of the ills of single parenting either by death or divorce on the educational development of the individual students in particular and the life in general. Moreover, married people should as a matter of fact periodically seek marital counselling to help build and maintained a satisfying and lasting relationship. This will go a long way in preventing the occurrence of single parenting and their attendant social and academic problems not only on the children but the parents involved.

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