

Correlational Relationship between School Location and Students' Academic Performance in English Language in Nigerian Secondary Schools

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Abstract- This study was to determine the correlational relationship between school location and students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in Ogoja Local Government Area. It adopted a survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the 836 senior secondary two (SS2) students of the 2016/17 academic session in all the 46 public and private secondary schools in Ogoja Local Government Area. Through stratified random sampling, a sample of two hundred (200) students was drawn for the study. Out of this number, 124 representing 62% were males; while 75 students representing 38% were females. The instrument used for data collection was achievement test tagged English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) carved from 2015 English Language Mock Examination. The data obtained was analysed using independent t-test. The results revealed that there is a significant difference in students' academic performance in English language on the basis of school location. It was recommended that government should close the gap between the rural and urban location through the provision of social amenities to rural populace which will enhance better academic performance of students in their final examination like SSCE.

Index Terms- School location, academic achievement and English language.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent time, the low level of students' academic performance in English in Nigerian schools, has been the concern of stakeholders and researchers in education. At senior secondary school level, students' poor performance cut across almost all the compulsory subjects in which English Language is inclusive. Many students' in Ogoja Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria, complete their secondary education with poor grade or scores in English Language. As a result, many of these students had to reseat the same national examination, sometime severally. Still as they do that, very few become successful and have chances of continuing to higher studies.

The problem of poor performance of students' in English language in national examination has decrease the quality of education in Nigeria and also has received a considerable attention of scholars (Wilson, 2011, Omari, 2010 & Osaki, 2012). In these recent years, the performance of students in the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) in English language has been worst in the successive years (Adeymi, 2013). The release of this poor result has fuelled the beginning of fierce

discussions and raging debates on the possible causes. In fact, these debates and discussions have often been ascribed to students' weakness in English language through which knowledge in school is transferred to learners. The blames of students' poor performance in English language has been attributed to the teachers of English due to poor teaching method (pedagogy). In the same manner, students themselves have been put to blame because of lack of attention and poor listening habit during the teaching process in the classroom.

Several studies have been conducted on the effects, relationship or influence of various factors such as personal, psycho-social academic, teachers and even social factors on such students; performance. Various and varied results have been the outcome of those research endeavors, yet some gaps still exist in the area of school variables such as school location, gender and school type on the English language performance of this same group of student at the senior secondary school level.

It is on this premise that the study intend to compare students' academic performance in English language by school location in secondary schools in Ogoja Local Government Area. The problem of this study posed as a question is: What is the difference in students' academic performance in English language on the basis of school location?

School environment may be classified into urban, semi-urban and rural. This classification sometimes goes a long way to influence government distribution of social amenities like electricity, water, hospital and educational institution. It is a common knowledge that many of these social amenities are concentrated in urban areas than rural areas. Based on this, Owoye (2011) carried out a study on school location and academic achievement of secondary schools students in Ekiti State, Nigeria (between 1990-1997). The study population was drawn from the results of the West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) conducted between 1990 and 1997 in 50 secondary schools in both urban and rural area of the study. One validated instrument tagged: "students Location Questionnaire" (SLQ), was used for data collection. One hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data collected were analyzed using mean and t-test. The result showed that there was a significant differences between students' academic achievement of rural and urban secondary schools in senior school certificate examination ($t=2.73$, $p<0.05$). The study has proven that students in urban area had better academic achievement than their rural counterparts. It was recommended that government should bridge the gap between the rural and urban location by providing the rural dwellers with the social

amenities which will enhance better academic performance of students in their final examination like SSCE. The community should assist the government by providing taxis and buses to facilitate movement of teachers and students to their schools.

Again, Adepoju (2012) studied the motivational variables and academic performance of urban and rural secondary school students in Ibadan, Nigeria. The objective was to examine the degree of relationship among motivational variables and academic performance of students in secondary school certificate examination. One hundred (100) secondary school students were sampled for the study. It was found that there was an enhanced relationship of each of the motivation variables in respect to academic performance.

In another development, Mosha (2014) conducted a study of factors affecting students' performance in English Language in Zanzibar rural and urban secondary schools. The study employed qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data were collected using interview, classroom, and observation, questionnaire and documentary review. Result of the study reveals that students were highly motivated to learn English for future expectations such as local and international communication, academic advancement and employment prospects. However, student' performance was affected by shortage of English teachers and absence of teaching and learning materials.

In the same vein, Onoyase (2015) studied the academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary school in Oshimili South Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. A survey design was employed in the study. Five hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The researcher collected data on the senior school certificate examine 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 six secondary schools in the study 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 (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data. The study showed that; there was a significant difference in the academic performance among students in urban, semi-urban and rural secondary school in English Language, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Geography.

Mehera (2004) also explored a study on the achievement of students in mathematics at secondary level with the objective to assess the students' achievement in mathematics, the nature of major learning environment, scientific attitude and attitude towards subject. The study sample stood at 600 students of urban and rural areas of Burdwan district in West Bengal. It was found that achievement in Mathematics was significant relatively to major learning environment. Urban schools, Better learning environment and better attitude towards mathematics were found significantly higher in urban school than rural school. No sex wise difference was found in achievement of students in mathematics.

Bratte (2000) found that students in urban schools are academically better than their counterparts in rural schools because urban schools have more infrastructural facilities required by children such as books and other learning materials.

Some parents in the urban are also able to employ private teachers for their children at home after school hours. In the same vein, Onoyase (2015) maintained that, the reason why urban students performed well in academic than rural students is because, they do attract some amenities like pipe borne water, electricity, good roads and well equipped schools. The reason is able because rural schools lack good educational facilities for effective teaching and learning. On the same leg, Mofon (2001) stressed that many rural schools are in terrible state of despair and lacking basic learning facilities. The poor environment and poor infrastructural facilities contribute immensely to poor teaching and poor teaching and poor academic performance.

Ajaji (2006) found that there is a significant among academic performance of students in urban and rural secondary schools in mathematics. The differences 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 on rural areas. Akiri (2008) summarized that, provision of education in rural areas is faced with difficulties and problems such as: qualified teachers refusing appointment in isolated villages; villagers refusing to send their children to school because they are dependent on them for help; parents heisted to entrust their daughters to male teachers: lack of roads, books and teaching materials.

Ojoawo (2006) studied the effects of differential distribution of resources on school performance in an examination and found that location of schools in Oyo State had significant effect on schools academic performance and there was significant difference in the performance between the students of rural and urban schools.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study was to determine the influence of school location on students' academic performance in English language in secondary schools in Ogoja Local Government Area

III. RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the difference in students' performance in English language on the basis of school location?

IV. STATEMENTS OF HYPOTHESIS

HO: There is no significant difference in students' performance in English Language on the basis of school location

V. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the 836 senior secondary two (SS2) students of the 2016/17 academic session in all the 46 public and private secondary schools in Ogoja Local Government Area. Through stratified random sampling, a sample of two hundred (200) students was drawn for the study. Out of this number, 124 representing 62% were males; while 75 students

representing 38% were females. The instrument used for data collection was achievement test tagged English Language Achievement Test (ELAT) carved from 2015 English Language Mock Examination. The data obtained was analysed using independent t-test. The results revealed that there is a significant difference academics performance in English language on the basis of school location.

VI. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

HO: There is no significant difference in students' academic performance in English language on the basis of school location.

To test this hypothesis, the independent variable was school location; while the dependent variable was students' academic performance. This was measured using twenty (20) objective items adopted from Mock, 2015 English language question paper. Since research interest was to determine whether there is difference in the students' performance in English language on the basis of school location. To this end, the independent variable was classified into two groups (urban and rural school location) on the basis of students' academic performance in English language. Therefore, the independent t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The results of the test are presented on table 1.

Table 1

Result of independent t-test analysis of the difference in students' academic performance in English language on the basis of school location.

School location	no. of items	X	SD	df
Urban	198	3.05**	1.96	198
Rural	20	13.32	3.74	20

*Significant at 0.05 level, df = 198. T-critical = 1.96

From table 1 above, the calculated t-value was 3.05 greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 ($p < 0.05$, $df = 198$). Since the calculated t-value was greater than the critical t-value. To this end, the null hypothesis was rejected and the study revealed that there is significant difference in students' academic performance in English language on the basis of school location.

VII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The null hypothesis stated that, there is no significant difference in students' academic performance in English language on the basis of school. The findings of hypothesis one indicated that there is a significant difference in students' academic performance in English language on the basis of school location. This finding is in line with the finding of Bratte (2000) who found that students' in urban school performed very well in their academics than their counterparts in rural schools because the infrastructural facilities present in urban area tend to pull the elite of the society to such area. Such elite usually have the economic power and so are able to provide all the educational

facilities required by their children in the school, example books and other learning materials. They are also able to employ private teachers for their children at home after school hours.

This findings is also consistent with the finding of Onoyase (2015) who maintained that, the reason why urban students' performed well in academic than rural students is because, they do attract some amenities like pipe born water, electricity, good roads and well equipped schools. The reason is also because rural schools lack good educational facilities for effective teaching and learning. In the same vein, Mofon (2001) stressed that many rural schools are in terrible state of despair and lacking basic learning facilities. The poor environment and poor infrastructural facilities contribute immensely to poor teetering and poor academic performance.

This finding also corroborate with the finding of Ajayi (2006) who found that there is a significant different among academic performance of students in urban and rural secondary schools in mathematics. The differences 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 rural areas. In the same manner, Boit (2012) asserted that higher qualified teachers prefer to serve in urban areas rather than rural areas and also that teachers do not accept postings to rural areas. This is because their conditions are up to the expected standard as their social life in the areas is virtually restricted as a result of inadequate amenities and facilities such as playground that are without equipment, libraries without books while laboratories are glorified ones. Also, Akiri (2008) supported that, the provision of education in rural areas if faced with difficulties and problems such as, qualified teachers refusing appointment in isolated villages; villagers refusing to send their children to school because they depend on them for help; parents' hesitation to entrust their daughters to male teachers; lack of roads, book and teaching materials. This would certainly influence the academic performance of student in rural schools

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VIII. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the study, it was concluded that there is a significant difference in students' academic performance in English language on the basis of school location.

IX. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings from the study, it was recommended that Government should ensure that both urban and rural schools are provided with equal facilities so as to enhance the effective learning of English language.

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