

IMPACT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELLING.

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Abstract

Socio-economic conditions exercise a deeper impact upon teacher education programme. This study examines the relationship between socio-economic condition and academic achievements of teachers in Nigeria. The term 'academic achievement' has been equated only with obtaining of marks in the annual examination. In the course of gathering information for this paper to be a meaningful and valuable material, it was discovered that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic condition and academic achievement of the teacher programme in Nigeria. It is therefore, concluded that the majority of teachers whose background have better socio-economic conditions performed better in teacher education program as compared to those teachers who had low socio-economic conditions and background.

Keywords: academic achievement, socio-economic condition, counselling, teacher education.

Traditionally, family status variables such as socio-economic status and parents' level of education have been regarded as predictors of children's academic achievement. Increasingly, research has suggested that, rather than having a direct association with children's academic achievement, socio-economic status and parents' level of education is part of a larger constellation

of psychological and sociological variables influencing children's school outcomes (Joan, 2009). Attendant on higher levels of education may be access to resources, such as income, time, energy, and community contacts, that allow for greater parental involvement in a child's education. Thus, the influence of socio-economic status and parents' level of education on students' outcomes

might best be represented as a relationship mediated by interactions among status and process variables (Joan, 2009).

The literature also suggests that level of education influences parents' knowledge, beliefs, values, and goals about child rearing, so that a variety of parental behaviours are indirectly related to children's school performance. For example, higher socio economic status and high levels of education may enhance parents' facility at becoming involved in their children's education, and also enable his environment and fulfill his belongings". This study examines the impact of socio-economic status in teachers programme on the academic achievements, collected through various studies and surveys, indicates that education does not seem to be strong point due to some causative factors. These factors, as cited in Economic Survey in Enugu state through studies and probed by experts, include defective curricula, dual medium of instruction, lack of highly qualified teachers, lack of library and laboratory, poor capacity buildings, overcrowded classrooms, and above all, poor socio economic status. The socio-economic status of the teachers plays a vital role in the education of their students. Due to these reasons the researcher decided to find answers to the questions set in this study. Research has found that socio-economic status, parental involvement, and family size are particularly important family factors (Majorbanks, 1996).

Parents with high socio-economic status often have more opportunities in preparing their young children for school because they typically have access to a wide range of resources in contrast to parents with lack of financial and social status. Parents with inadequate resources and limited access can negatively affect their young children's development in learning (Eamon, 2005). This justification motivated the researcher to investigate the socio-economic conditions of the parents and their impact on their children's academic achievements.

In Nigeria, curriculum is highly centralized. The government imposes pre-planned policies and curriculum upon students and teachers that adversely affect the process of education. They almost ignore the socio-economic condition of the parents and teachers with its impact on the academic achievements of their children. Mirza (2001) observed that teacher education programme needs more concentration for its improvement and development. However, this study brings out hurdles in the path of education and draws attention towards its improvement. Specially, it highlights the relationship between socio-economic conditions of the teachers and their students' academic achievements.

Literature Review

Many research studies have been conducted throughout the world to study the relationship of socio-economic condition and academic achievements of

the teachers. On this relationship, Bone (1981) studied and concluded that the students who belong to the family of high socio economic condition have high academic achievements than students who belong to poor family. Sirin (2005) conducted a research on the same topic and the result showed medium to strong relationship between socio-economic condition and academic achievements. The socio-economic condition of a family is an important factor which affects the learning achievements. Whatever the measurement is, the socio-economic status is positively correlated with both educational attainment and achievement. It can be hypothetically stated that the higher a teacher's socio-economic status, the greater his or her academic performance in secondary education is likely to be. In this hypothetical phrase, it has been observed that socio-economic condition is a cause, which correlates with academic achievement effect. According to Jencks (1979), the family is the oldest human group and the basic one. while the particular family structure may and varies from society, but the central foci of the family activities are child bearing and the initial induction of the child into the culture of a given society civilization.

Family factors of the student such as socio-economic condition, two-parent versus single-parenthood, divorce, family size, financial capacity, education and occupation of the teachers play a crucial role in the academic achievements of the students.

Majoribanks (1996), Studies have repeatedly found that socio-economic condition of a family affects the teachers' academic achievements at all levels (Eamon 2005). Students with low socio-economic condition have been found to score about ten percent lower on the national assessment of education program than students with higher socio-economic condition. Thus, students' academic achievements depend on their socio-economic condition because low socio-economic conditions prevent the access of the teachers to education resources and create additional stress and anxiety at home.

Researches in this area have shown that teachers who are single do not perform as well in school as teachers who are married. There are several different explanations for this achievement gap. Single parent teachers have less income and can provide less support to the children in comparison to married parenthood teachers. Unmarried teachers often struggle with time-management issues due to balancing many different areas of life on their own. To some, it leads to absent mindedness, unnecessary distraction, nagging, fear of the unknown and general discomfort both in school and outside the school.

Factors Affecting Academic Achievements of Teachers

According to Sabzwari (2004), the following factors play a vital role in the academic achievements of students:

Divorce

Divorce negatively affects the academic achievements of teachers. Possible explanation for this relationship is that divorce decreases or lowers the socio-economic condition of a family. Majoribanks (1996) further argues that divorce creates other anxiety and pressure that are harmful and puts a lot of hurdle in the academic achievements of the people

Family Size

Family size is another factor that negatively affects children's academic achievements. Teachers with fewer siblings are likely to receive more lecturer attention, cooperation and care and can have more access to resources than teachers from large families. These added attention and support lead to better school performance and achievements. Still with Eamon (2005), teachers from large families cannot have easy access to information regarding their educational activities. This is backed up with the usual saying that the small the size of the class the more the academic achievement, since proper attention is given to everybody by the teacher.

Parents' Qualification Level

Parents' education and especially the education level play a vital role in the academic performance of their children. Educated parents can easily understand the hurdle in the way of their children's (teachers) education and they know how to motivate and

create their children (teachers') interest in the academic activities. According to Mirza (2001), educated parents only easily manage their timetable and spare a suitable period of time to check and balance the academic activities of their children (teacher) but also involve themselves in it. Here, they can maintain the idea in educational methodology, which says that given enough time, opportunity and entry behaviour, every student is a potential achiever.

Financial Background

Teachers' income level is another factor that affects the academic achievements and performance of their programme. In the words of Crosnoe (2004) if the teachers' income level is good and satisfactory, there would be fewer worries for them to provide learning resources and materials for their programme. In contrast, teachers with low income often cannot provide easily for their children such learning resources and materials which become hurdles in the academic performance of their children.

School Environment

Intimate setting therefore, can increase teacher-student bonding which has also been shown to have positive effect on students' academic successes. The conditions of the tertiary schools in Nigeria are of great concern, especially schools in rural areas, where there are poor buildings and crowded classrooms. It is almost impossible for the teachers

to give attention to each and every student. So this problem needs the attention of government, and education policy makers (Mirza, 2001).

Students' educational outcome and academic success is greatly influenced by the type of school that they attend. School factors include school structure, school composition, and school climate. The school one attends is the institutional environment that sets the parameters of a students' learning experience. Depending on the environment, a school can either open or close the doors that lead to academic achievement. Crosnoe, Johnson, and elder (2004), suggested that the school sector (public or private) and class size are two important structural components of schools. Private schools tend to have both better funding and smaller class sizes than public schools. The additional funding of private schools leads to a better academic performance and more access to resources such as computers which have been shown to enhance academic achievement. Smaller class sizes create more intimate settings and therefore, can increase teacher-student bonding which has also been shown to have a positive effect on student success (Crosnoe 2004).

Students from low socio-economic backgrounds who attend poorly funded schools do not perform as well as students from higher social class. School composition or the general makeup of a school is another important factor regarding academic achievement (Crosnoe, 2004; Bali and Alvarez 2004;

Eamon, 2005). The racial make-up of a schools' student body has been shown to influence test scores and students' attachment to their school (Crosnoe 2004, et al). Student test scores and school attachment increase when a student' own race matches the most common race of their schools' student body. This is especially true for minority students. Research on the influence that the race of teachers and other school faculty has on student achievement has produced mixed results. But, there is still a considerable amount of evidence linking the race of teachers to student's performance (Crosnoe, 2004, et al). Teacher diversity affects non-minority and minority students differently. For non-minority students, teacher diversity can hinder or have no effect on their academic performance. however, a larger amount of minority teachers has been shown to positively affect the test scores and school attachment of minority students.

Counselling

1. One of the biggest problems with children in today's society is youth apathy. Parental involvement in school can help solve this problem by emphasizing the importance of a good education, and getting their children excited about learning.

2. For most children to succeed in school, their parent's interest in their learning is of paramount importance. But this interest ought to be with what happens on a daily basis, because this is

how the child lives, and this is how he understands his life.

3. The essential ingredient in most children's success in school is a positive relation to his parents." (Bettelheim, 1987) parents' personal educational backgrounds and economic backgrounds have a significant effect on their children's education. However, if parents are a positive influence in their children's everyday lives, and most importantly in their everyday education, the future of our society will look brighter every day.

Conclusions

This study examined the relationship between socio-economic conditions of teachers and their academic achievements.

1. Those who have high socio-economic status in society and access to the internet as well as with other facilities at home perform well in teacher programme as compared to those students who do not have these facilities.
2. The internet has broadened their mental horizons and develops their faculties more comprehensively as compared to those teachers who have only printed books at their disposal.
3. In this way, families with limited resources cannot provide access to the teachers as compared to the families that possess more facilities

because they can easily promote and support children's' development and school readiness.

4. Finally, it can be safely said that socio-economic condition has great impact on the educational achievements of the teachers' programme.

Recommendations

In the light of the study, the researcher would like to give the following recommendations:

1. For the improvement and better result, government should remove the gap between private and public institution system, by equipping the public school with up-date educational facilities.
2. Government should also organize school boards or system to control corruption in educational system in Nigeria.
3. Education policy makers, planners and service providers should see to the overall uplifting of the physical and socio-economic conditions of government schools to attract the general public, especially the low income earners.
4. i. The mass media should play its role to draw attention of the policymakers towards the education system and especially on the impact of the socio-economic condition of the

teachers on the academic achievement of their programme.

ii. Lastly, it is suggested strongly that the mass media, both electronic and print, has to play a practical and effective role to bring out social awareness among people regarding the poor literacy condition in Nigeria on account of socio-economic problems.

iii. Government should provide financial support and should give scholarship, especially, to the teachers who cannot afford the expenses of educational programme. In order to raise the standard of the teachers, government should take the following steps seriously:

i. The physical condition of the schools should be improved, adequate facilities should be provided to teachers and students for the teaching-learning process such as audio- visual material, spacious rooms, labs and hall for seminars.

ii. Health and hygienic conditions should be improved, to maintain discipline; teacher should also be involved in games and other sports activities with the students. In order to improve the academic achievements of the students at secondary level, government should develop an effective and strict monitoring and evaluation system to check and balance the education system.

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