

Family Income as Correlate of Junior Secondary School Students' Academic Achievement in Civic Education in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State

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Abstract

The primary aim of this research was to explore the connection between family income and the academic performance of students in Civic Education at junior secondary schools in Nsukka LGA. The investigation was guided by one research question and one null hypothesis. A correlational survey research design was utilized for this study, which was conducted in the Nsukka local government area. The total population for the study consisted of 2,877 junior secondary students. A sample of 240 junior secondary school students was selected for the study. Data collection was carried out using a checklist and an achievement test. Three experts validated the face validity of the instrument used. The collected data were analyzed using simple linear regression to respond to the research question. The findings of the study indicated a weak positive correlation between students' family income and their academic performance. The null hypothesis revealed that the relationship between family income and students' academic achievement is statistically significant. Among other recommendations, it was suggested that teachers should adapt their teaching methods and classroom environment to accommodate the diverse needs of all students, regardless of their economic background.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Civic Education, Family Income

Introduction

Civic education aims to achieve several overarching objectives, including providing knowledge regarding democratic practices and institutions, fostering important democratic values and beliefs, and promoting more active and informed political engagement. Abisala (as cited in Balogun & Yusuf, 2019) defined civic education as a collection of knowledge that offers information and learning experiences designed to empower citizens to engage in the democratic process. Mezieobi (as cited in Balogun & Yusuf, 2019) depicted civic education as a means of education within a sovereign state, enabling citizens to become socially and politically aware, integrate into the social environment, develop social skills and competencies, enhance social sensitivity, and actively fulfill their social responsibilities for optimal productivity and development, all for the benefit of the state. Sebiomo (2011) highlighted that civic education prioritizes respect and obedience towards governing authorities. When citizens respect leaders and follow their

guidance, society will progress. Civic education promotes the value system within society.

The instruction of Civic Education aids youth in becoming active contributors to the development and strengthening of their communities. Vasiljevi (as cited in Mainde & Muleya, 2021) states that Civic Education focuses on acquiring knowledge about a constitution alongside fundamental democratic institutions and regulations. Muleya (2015) posited that the teaching of Civic Education is designed around service learning to facilitate social change and transformation within society. Civic Education equips learners with knowledge aimed at altering their behavior for the collective benefit of the community. Nevertheless, reports over the years from Nsukka L.G.A Enugu State, Nigeria (Post Primary Schools Management Board [PPSMB], Nsukka Zonal Office, 2022) have indicated subpar performances among junior secondary students. Data derived from the Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) Result Report for students in Nsukka LGA, collected by the PPSMB, revealed that

38.14%, 21.91%, and 12.86% of students failed to credit Civic Education (National Values) in 2018, 2019, and 2020, respectively. It's important to note that the BECE is a compulsory national entrance exam administered by each State of the federation, taken upon completing Basic 9.

Research has demonstrated that family income levels influence students' academic performance. Consequently, Ani and Osuji (2022) concluded in their study that parental educational background and their socio-economic status, including family income, are significant factors positively affecting pupils' academic performance. This conclusion was corroborated by another study on Children and Youth in Canada conducted by Ryan (as cited in Asimwe 2017), which found a notable impact of family background variables, such as family income, on children's educational success. The connection between parental resources and children's academic performance has garnered considerable attention in economic literature across African countries. For example, Guo and Harris (as cited in Asimwe 2017) noted that in the states of Ghana and South Africa, students' academic performance in school was strongly linked to their parents' income levels. The strong relationship between parental income and students' academic achievements is a key finding in the research surrounding the factors influencing children's attainments. However, the observation that children from higher-income families tend to perform better than those from less privileged backgrounds does not necessarily imply that the former exert more effort.

It is widely recognized that family significantly impacts a child's training and development. The burden of educating a child typically falls on the family, whose educational background, profession, and occupation influence their financial situation (Ogunshola & Adewale, 2012). One crucial factor that affects children's education, competitiveness, and performance is family income (Smith, Fagan & Ulvund cited in Adzido, Dzogbede, Ahiave & Dorkpah, 2016). Family income encompasses the total of all fixed and current assets available to the family, whether earned by the father, mother, or siblings (Okesina, 2018). Family income is essential in shaping a child's educational development. Research has demonstrated that family income significantly influences students' academic performance. Aikens and Barbarian (cited in Ogunshola, 2019) argued that differences in home environments stem from the level of parental income, which impacts children's lifestyles. Research indicates that children from affluent homes experience a literacy culture characterized by

frequent joint book reading sessions with parents, regular reading activities outside of school, and visits to libraries with family members, all of which positively affect students' academic performance (Ogunshola, 2019).

Family income is among several parental factors linked to academic performance in students. According to Mayer as cited in Ani and Osuji (2022), children of wealthy parents are more likely to thrive than those from less affluent backgrounds, likely due to richer parents investing more in their children's education, resulting in better outcomes. This suggests that family income can either positively or negatively affect students' academic achievements. When parents fulfill their children's educational needs, those children tend to perform better than their peers. Aremu, as mentioned in Adzido, Dzogbede, Ahiave, and Dorkpah (2016), emphasized that academic failure can be discouraging not only for students and parents but also has severe consequences for society, including a lack of skilled manpower across various sectors of the economy and politics. Secondary education is intended to serve as a foundational stepping stone toward advanced education in higher institutions. It constitutes both an investment and a tool for fostering rapid economic, social, political, technological, scientific, and cultural development within a country. Francis, as cited in (Okesina, 2018), suggested that while low-income families might recognize the significance of education in society, they are also acutely aware of their limited resources to meet educational expectations.

A family struggling to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing is unlikely to encourage their children's academic success; instead, they may pressure their children to seek employment with the limited education they have acquired to support the family. Furthermore, parents who do not understand the value of education are likely to undermine their children's academic success and, ultimately, their future prospects (Machebe, Ezegbe & Onuoha, 2017). Academic achievement is the knowledge obtained, assessed through grades assigned by teachers and/or through educational goals set to be accomplished over a designated time frame (Narad & Abdullah, 2016). Academic achievement is characterized as success that follows exposure to a particular learning experience (Halpern, 2020). Achievement can be applied in various contexts. Achievement assists schools in making decisions regarding students' class placements, entry into specific programs, or advancement to higher grade levels.

A typical parent with a limited income can only manage a small fraction of a child's educational expenses, which may mean that they can afford

school fees while the child lacks essential items such as proper footwear, school uniforms, nutritious meals, textbooks, and spending money (Onabanjo cited in Ogunshola, 2019). A child who lacks these necessities may ultimately experience low academic performance in school. Douglas (as cited in Ogunshola, 2019) noted that inadequate nutrition and housing conditions leading to overcrowding can hinder students' academic performance. This suggests that such a child is unlikely to excel academically. In contrast, children from families with higher or middle-income levels are usually better provided for regarding a supportive learning environment at home, thanks to the availability of additional educational resources. Kamau (2013) also mentioned that there is a positive correlation between family financial status and students' academic success. However, other research presents opposing views by indicating that family income does not affect academic performance (Ogunsola et al., 2014). Okesina (2018) similarly found that family background does not impact the academic success of senior secondary school students. These conflicting results highlight the need for further research in different contexts to yield more conclusive evidence. In light of this, it is reasonable to suggest that varying levels of family income may be linked to the low performance of Civic Education students in Junior Secondary Schools within the Nsukka LGA. Therefore, this study explored the relationship between family income and students' academic achievement in Civic Education.

Research Question

What is the relationship between family income and students' academic achievement in civic education?

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between family income and students' academic achievement in Civic Education in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State

Methodology

The research employed a correlational survey approach. According to Mc Burney & White (2018), correlational design is utilized in research studies that seek to present static snapshots of situations and determine the relationships between various variables described. The research was conducted in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State. This location was selected because, based on the reviewed empirical studies, there has been no research conducted on the relationship between family income and the academic performance of Junior Secondary

School students in Civic Education within Nsukka local government area. Additionally, the consistently poor performance of students in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) each year in Nsukka Local Government Area necessitates further investigation (Source: From Nsukka Local Government Area (Statistical Unit, Post Primary Schools Management Board) (PPSMB), Nsukka Zonal Office, 2022).

The study's population includes all junior secondary school (JSS) students in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State, totaling 2877 JSS students (Statistical Unit, Post Primary Schools Management Board [PPSMB], Nsukka Zonal Office, 2022). For the study, a sample of 240 JSS 3 students was drawn from three schools in the area. To achieve this, the study utilized a multi-stage sampling technique. In the initial stage, simple random sampling was used to select three schools. In the subsequent stage, purposive sampling was applied to choose JSS 3 students from the remaining students in the Junior Secondary School section of the selected schools. JSS 3 students were chosen for the research because they have completed several examinations, unlike JSS 1 and JSS 2 students, making them more capable of responding to the questionnaire with objectivity. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's sampling formula.

The tools for data collection included a checklist and a civic achievement test. The test instrument was administered to students from the selected schools. The checklist outlined various indices used to assess the family income level. The civic achievement test items were adapted from past BECE questions spanning multiple years. The content validity of the instrument was confirmed using a test blueprint. The civic achievement test consists of 22 questions, each with four options—three incorrect options and one correct answer—to be completed within 15 minutes, yielding a total score of 22 marks, with each question assigned equal weight.

To ensure the instrument's validity and alignment with the research questions, it underwent face validation by three experts—two from the Department of Social Science Education and one from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation Unit). They were tasked with validating the instrument for data collection in terms of its appropriateness and language, ensuring it was suitable for the intended audience. Their feedback, suggestions, and corrections contributed to the refinement of the final draft of the instrument. The instrument was also tested on a group of 15 students from Udenu Local Government Area, which is outside the study area but

is presumed to share similar characteristics with students in the research area. The reliability coefficient of the achievement test was calculated using Kr20, resulting in a coefficient of 0.83, indicating that the instrument is reliable and was utilized for this research. The researchers employed a direct delivery and retrieval method for administering the instruments. The gathered data was analyzed using simple linear regression. The coefficient derived from the linear regression analysis was

utilized to address the research question. An R value of 0.70 and above indicates a strong relationship, 0.30 to 0.69 signifies a moderate relationship, and 0.01 to 0.29 reflects a weak relationship (Asuero et al., 2006). The hypothesis was testing using t-test associated with the linear regression at a significance level of 0.05. If the significance value falls below 0.05, it indicates a significant difference; if not, no significant difference is present.

Results

Table 1: Simple linear regression analysis of the relationship between family income and student's academic achievement in Civic education in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate
1	.232 ^a	.054	.050	5.82588

a. Predictors: (Constant), Inc

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The examination presented in Table 1 illustrates the simple linear regression coefficient that reflects the connection between family income and student academic performance in Civic education within secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. The findings revealed a coefficient of 0.2321, indicating a weak yet

positive correlation between family income and students' success in civic education.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between family income and students' academic achievement in Civic Education in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t
1	(Constant)	23.548	1.137		20.704
	Inc	2.831	.769	.232	3.682

a. Dependent Variable: Academic_Achievement

The data presented in Table 2 indicates a p-value of 0.00, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold. This suggests that we can reject the hypothesis of no significant relationship, thereby confirming a significant association between family income and students' academic performance in civic education within the Nsukka local government area of Enugu State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings indicated a weak positive correlation between family income and students' performance in Civic Education. This suggests that although there is some inclination for students from wealthier families to excel in Civic Education, the connection is not particularly strong. Various factors

could account for this observation. Firstly, Civic Education typically emphasizes values, attitudes, and civic skills that might not be directly impacted by economic resources. A student's grasp and appreciation of civic ideas might be more closely related to their exposure to civic experiences, the quality of teaching, and the school environment, rather than their family's financial status. Secondly, the weak correlation might imply that other factors are more critical in influencing academic performance in Civic Education. For example, parental engagement, educational support at home, students' interest in the subject matter, and the quality of instruction could be more significant than family income alone. Furthermore, the effects of family income might be lessened by other elements such as

access to educational resources, community assistance, and school quality. In certain situations, schools and communities may offer sufficient resources and support that help bridge the disparities between students from varying economic conditions. Supporting this finding, Ani and Osuji (2022) discovered that parental socio-economic status strongly impacts pupils' academic performance. Additionally, Kamau (2013) found a positive correlation between family financial status and students' academic success. Conversely, Ogunsola et al. (2014) stated that family income does not affect academic achievement.

However, the null hypothesis indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between students' family income and their academic performance. This finding implies that family income has a considerable effect on students' academic outcomes. Students hailing from higher-income families may have better access to quality schools, private tutoring, educational materials, and technology, all of which can give them an advantage in their studies. Such resources can enable students from affluent families to achieve higher academic results compared to their counterparts from lower-income backgrounds who may not have access to these supports. Furthermore, family income may influence the level of stress and stability found in a student's home life. Families with higher incomes may face less financial strain, allowing parents to dedicate more time and resources to their children's education. This stability can create a more favorable learning atmosphere at home, which in turn fosters improved academic performance. Socio-economic status, often tied to family income, can also impact the educational levels and expectations of parents. Families with greater financial means may have parents who are more educated themselves, which could lead to heightened expectations for their children's academic achievements and increased involvement in their education. This involvement may take various forms, including assisting with homework, participating in parent-teacher conferences, and promoting academic endeavors. This finding aligns with Ogunshola's (2019) research, which revealed a significant correlation between parental income levels and students' academic success in public senior secondary schools. In contrast, Okesina (2018) found no significant difference regarding the impact of family background on the academic performance of senior secondary school students.

Conclusion

According to the results of this research, it was determined that there is a positive correlation between students' family income and their academic performance. This suggests that schools and educators play an essential role in supporting academic success, irrespective of students' socioeconomic backgrounds. Based on the study's findings and the conclusions made, it is recommended that teachers customize their teaching methods and classroom settings to address the needs of all students, regardless of their economic status.

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