

Impact of Poverty and Food Security on Academic Performance of Promising Learners in Federal College of Education, Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

In this study, the impact of poverty and food security on academic performance of promising learners in Federal College of Education, Oyo, Nigeria was investigated. The study population was made up of sixty (60) respondents randomly selected in Department of Gifted and Talented, Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Oyo State who also served as the sample. The collected data were analyzed in tabular forms using simple percentage. Findings showed that lack of funds from government cause food insecurity and poverty among promising learners. Results also revealed that students who live in poverty are likely to be over-looked during the identification of giftedness. Furthermore, the health and wellbeing of promising learners also suffer because of food insecurity. It was therefore recommended that there should be moderate increase in prices of goods and commodities being sold. Government should help pay workers on time and as at when due and also bonuses and increment of salaries should be adopted.

Keyword: Poverty, Food security, Promising students.

Introduction

Absolute poverty is a condition of life so limited by illiteracy, malnutrition, disease, high infant mortality and low life expectancy as to prevent realization of the very potentials of human genes with which one is born. It is life at the margin of existence (Robert, 2015). Poverty is present when basic capability failure arises because a person has inadequate command over resources, whether through market or non-market sources (Sen, 2004). Poverty is more easily recognized than defined (Foster *et al*, 2010). Therefore, a universally accepted definition of the term poverty has remained elusive (Nsikak-abasi & Solomon, 2010).

According to Food and Agriculture Organization (2010), poverty can be regarded as the inability to adequately meet the basic human necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, education and Medicare. Food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2010). To achieve food security, food should be available, accessible and properly

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utilized at all times. Availability relates to the supply of food through production, distribution and exchange while food access refers to the affordability of and allocation of food as well as the preferences of individuals and households (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), 2010). Even when people are able to obtain food, it must be properly utilized- that is must be able to satisfy their dietary needs and preferences. Cunningham and Cunningham (2006) categorically stated that poverty is the greatest threat to food security or ability to obtain sufficient food on day to day basis.

We may distinguish between national food security and household food security. This distinction is necessary because an aggregate supply of food, from domestic sources or import or both, are prerequisite but certainly not a sufficient condition for a food secure situation in a country. In other words, adequate availability of food in Nigeria on a per capita basis does not necessarily translate to sufficient and adequate food for every citizen. Food security at household level is a subset of the national level and it requires that all individuals and households have access to sufficient food either by producing it themselves or by generating sufficient income to demand for it (Fanifosi and Amao 2016). Owoicho (2016) asserted that, family food security is availability of the basic nutrient requirements for each family member of daily energy and structural molecules for physiological activities such as growth, healing and maintenance of life for different members of the family, according age, sex, occupation and physiological statue (Shier *et al*, 2010).

According to Podder (2013) we are what we eat. It is expected that food should not cause harm such as poisoning, infection and other diseases, but supply us nutrients, provide energy, prevent or cure disorders and diseases as well as provide a sense of pleasure when eaten (Pamplona-Roger 2010). Human health depends on the sum total of the small decision we take on daily basis particularly food, and the type of food intake. Humans need food throughout life. While all foods provide nutrients for energy and health, some or their deficiencies can cause disease or disability (Shier, *et al*, 2010). Roger (2010) stated that anything can be eaten as food, but no food by itself provides all of the needed nutrients. Food has to be adequately supplied in the right type and proportion to the need of the individual. Nutritional disorder or deficiency such as anaemia, night blindness, oedema are common signs in populations infested with poverty and food insecurity. School children who experienced such conditions are in most cases victims of social vices and are educationally disadvantaged (Denga 2011).

Global hunger is severe, as nearly 30 per cent of the world's population is currently suffering from one or more forms of malnutrition, including inadequate caloric consumption, protein deficiency, poor dietary quality, and inadequate concentrations of protein and micronutrients (Chand, 2016). Food, being one of the most basic needs for living, has become one of the most important concerns for the world government, as more and more people are living in poverty and hungry. Food security has been a matter of concern in recent years due to the global food crisis and rising food prices. Food, nutrition and livelihood security are essential for a nation. Food security and nutritional security are the subsets of livelihood security. Despite, various concern by governments all over the world on ensuring that every household can at least provide three square meals for their family, food insecurity continues to be a major development problem across the globe, undermining people's health, productivity, and often their very survival (Erne and Uche, 2014).

Fanifosi and Amao (2016) observed that reducing food insecurity continues to be a major public policy challenge in developing countries. Many countries experience food insecurity with food supplies being inadequate to maintain their citizens' per capita consumption. This study revealed that sub-Saharan Africa was the most vulnerable region with regards to food insecurity. Hunger is a pervasive problem in developing countries, which undermines people's health, productivity, and often their survival (Shala, and Stacey, 2011). As a results of this, much of the development agendas of these countries especially in SSA focused on directing scarce resources to providing food to people in need or enabling them to acquire it themselves (Yusuf, *et al* 2015). Similarly, household food security is considered to exist when all members, at all times, have access to enough food for an active, healthy life (Falegbe, 2015). Individuals who are food secured do not live in hunger or fear of starvation. Food insecurity, on the other hand, is defined by the United States Department of Agriculture

(USDA) as a situation of "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways". According to Valdes (2010), Food security incorporates a measure of resilience to future disruption or unavailability of critical food supply due to various risk factors including droughts, shipping disruptions, fuel shortages, economic instability, and wars. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, or FAO, identified the four pillars of food security as availability, access, utilization, and stability (Tewe, 2017). The United Nations (UN) recognized the Right to Food in the Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and has since said that it is vital for the enjoyment of all other rights.

Food is the basic need and necessity of life that must be satisfied before any other developmental issue. Inadequate nutrition is considered as measure of poverty in many societies or synonymous to poverty, Food security maintains political stability, and ensures peaceful coexistence among people while food insecurity results in poor health and reduced performance of both children and adult with gifted and talented. Poverty dimension of food security is one of the targets of the sustainable developmental goals and is widely considered as important measure for evaluating the progress of a country in terms of wellbeing. It is on this premise that this study aims to assess the impact of impact of poverty and food security on academic performance of promising learners in Federal College of Education Oyo Nigeria.

Materials and method

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of poverty among gifted and talented learners?
2. What are the impacts of food security on gifted and talented learners?

Research design

It is the structural and technical arrangement of investigations including steps to be taken in obtaining and Interpreting answers to research questions. This study will employ the use of descriptive survey design. The choice of descriptive survey design is the most appropriate sociological research design for measuring the attitudes and behaviour of a large number of people. The survey asks limited questions on large people since it is seldom possible to question everyone concerned with a certain parent social-demographics factor hence a sample is therefore used.

Population of the Study

The population for this study consists of students in Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Oyo State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The simple random sampling technique was used in the study to select sixty (60) respondents randomly in Department of Gifted and Talented, Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Oyo State.

Instrumentation

The research instruments for this study were four (4) Likert Scale questionnaire. The questionnaire for this study was divided in two sections; A and B. Section A consisted of instructions and Bio-data of the respondents while section B, the number of questions / items to be responded to. Each question had four options:

- i. Strongly Agreed (SA)
- ii. Agreed (A)
- iii. Disagreed (D)
- iv. Strongly Disagree (SD)

Validity of instrument

The question items were given to two experts in the Department of Agricultural Education for Adjustment and corrections. The corrected copy of the questionnaire was presented to the Supervisor for further adjustment and correction and thus, the validity of the instrument was established.

Reliability of the instrument

The instruments submitted to the supervisor for the reliability test, using the test-re-test approach. The validated questionnaires were distributed to the selected students from the selected schools for the sampling of the opinion before the final copies were produced.

Procedure of Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered by the researchers with the cooperation of the teachers in each class through the permission granted to researchers by the head of department.

Method of Data Analysis

Data was analysed in tabular forms using the simple percentages. The analysis revealed the frequency as observed by the respondents with respect to each question of the questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

The descriptive analysis of the responses of the respondents were presented in Tables 1 and 2.

Research Question 1. What are the effects of poverty among gifted and talented learners?

Table 1. Effect of poverty among gifted and talented learners

S/N	Items	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	Total	%
1	Poverty affects the gifted and talented student health, stress level, access to high qualify schools and teachers option for academic enrichment	31	52	26	43	0	0	3	5	60	100
2	Students who live in poverty are likely to be over-looked during the identification of giftedness	21	35	33	55	0	0	6	10	60	100
3	Poverty is a significant problem within our society affecting educational opportunities of gifted children	32	53	27	45	0	0	1	2	60	100
4	The gap between high achiever and low growth of the promising students are due to lack of resources, support and access to a well -funded gifted schools	17	29	36	60	1	2	6	10	60	100

5	The lack of interest in western education on the parents part	12	20	15	25	14	23	19	32	60	100
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Table 1 Item 1: indicated that 95% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 5% disagreed. The findings showed that the respondents agreed that Poverty affects the gifted and talented student health, stress level, access to high qualify schools and teachers option for academic enrichment.

Item 2: from the table above, indicated that 90% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 10% disagreed with it. The findings showed that the respondents agreed that Students who live in poverty are likely to be over-looked during the identification of giftedness.

Item 3: from the table above, 98% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 2% disagree with it-an indication that Poverty is a significant problem within our society affecting educational opportunities of gifted children.

Item 4: from the same table above indicated that 88% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 12% disagreed showing that the respondents agreed that the gap between the high achievers and the low growth in the promising students was due to lack of resources, support and access to a well- funded gifted school.

Item 5: the same table above, indicated that 45% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 55% disagreed with it, indicating that the respondents had interest in western education.

Research Question 2: What are the impacts of food security on gifted and talented learners?

Table 2: The impact of food security on gifted and talented learners

S/N	Items	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%	Total	%
6	The health and well- being of gifted and talented learners also suffer because of food insecurity	34	57	22	36	0	0	4	7	60	100
7	Students who are food insecure are more likely to report indicators of stress and depression	23	38	34	57	0	0	2	3	60	100
8	Increase in age will increase food insecurity status among gifted learners	17	28	28	47	8	13	7	12	60	100
9	Availability of food enhance gifted learners style of living	21	35	33	55	2	3	4	7	60	100
10	Access to sufficient food helps gifted learners dietary needs	24	40	31	52	2	3	3	5	60	100

From the above **Table 2 Item 6:** the 97% of the respondents strongly agree with the statement while 3% disagreed. The findings showed that the respondents agreed that the health and well- being of gifted and talented learners also suffer because of food insecurity.

Item 7: The same table above, indicated that 95% of the respondents strongly agree with the statement while 5% disagree with it, implying that the Students who were food in secured are more likely to report indicators of stress and depression.

Item 8: from the table above, 75% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement while 25% disagree with it. The findings showed that Increase in age increase food insecurity status among gifted learners.

Item 9: the same table indicated that 90% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 10% disagree with it. The findings show that the respondents agreed that Availability of food enhance gifted learners style of living.

Item 10: from the table above, indicate that 92% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement while 8% disagree with it. The findings showed that Access to sufficient food helps gifted learners' dietary needs.

Discussion

Poverty increased the stress level of the gifted and talented student health, access to high quality schools and teachers option for academic enrichment. Students who live in poverty are likely to be over-looked during the identification of giftedness, Poverty is a significant problem within our society affecting educational opportunities of gifted children, the gap of high achieving, low growth student are due to lack of resources, support and access to a well- funded gifted schools and the lack of interest in western education on the parents' part. According to Bird & Shepherd (2013), Such social exclusion can be minimized through strengthened connections with the mainstream, such as through the provision of relational care to those who are experiencing poverty. The World Bank's "Voices of the Poor", based on research with over 20,000 poor people in 23 countries, identifies a range of factors which poor people identify as part of poverty. These include abuse by those in power, dis-empowering institutions, excluded locations, gender relationships, lack of security, limited capabilities, physical limitations, precarious livelihoods, problems in social relationships, weak community organizations and discrimination. Analysis of social aspects of poverty links conditions of scarcity to aspects of the distribution of resources and power in a society and recognizes that poverty may be a function of the diminished "capability" of people to live the kinds of lives they value. The social aspects of poverty may include lack of access to information, education, health care, social capital or political power.

Moreover, responses gathered in Table 2 believed that food security has impact on gifted and talented learners, The health and well- being of gifted and talented learners also suffer because of food insecurity, Students who are food insecure are more likely to report indicators of stress and depression, Increase in age will increase food insecurity status among gifted learners, Availability of food enhance gifted learners style of living and access to sufficient food helps gifted learners dietary needs. The result above is in line with the statement that Factors that are highly associated with food insecurity are individuals living in households below the poverty line, individuals who rely on income support, as well as individuals who are in renting housing (Gallegos, 2014).

Conclusion

In conclusion, results of this study revealed that factors that are highly associated with food insecurity are individuals living in households below the poverty line, individuals who rely on income support, as well as individuals who are in renting housing. This agrees with view of Gallegos (2014). Furthermore, findings aligned with the notion that neighbourhood poverty is detrimental to food insecurity rates (Morrissey et al., 2016). Individuals who live in food insecure neighbourhood may experience lower achievement and economic opportunities. Poverty rates have been shown to be useful information for policymakers. It can also be used to self -identify students who are experiencing food insecurity in order to help make the necessary changes to address their basic human needs. Based on these findings, the study recommended that there should be moderate increase in prices of goods and commodities being sold. Additionally, Government should help pay workers on time and as at when due and also bonuses and increment of salaries should be adopted.

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