

EDUCATION AND PEACE BUILDING TOWARDS POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGER DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to investigate whether Education has made impact on peace building towards political development in Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The questions were raised as a guide in the investigation. 3000 samples subjects were selected for this study using random sampling technique. Data were gathered from the sample which was subjected to treatment and analysis through the use of percentage statistic. Findings were made and they revealed that Education has not made any significant impact on the people in the Niger Delta area as well as that Theater for Development can provide grounds for pursuit of political development in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Thus, conclusion was reached that education has not made impact in the Niger Delta region. The recommendations were profiled accordingly.

Keywords: Education, Peace Building, Political Development

INTRODUCTION

Development in political affairs is believed to be one of the primary areas of focus of Nigeria's educational policies since 1960. Hence Nigeria's educational policy hinges on the rapid development of the federal, states and local government areas as its main concern. Several notable individuals in the Niger Delta region and indeed in the entire country seem to agree that education can be the instrument for engineering and achieving of peace for the overall political development in troubled area (like the Niger Delta region). Thus it is believed that enormous investment and administrative structures have been provided for the pursuit and realization of the goals of education particularly in Niger Delta region.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

It is not surprising that argument abound that various artistic and cultural organizations especially in high institutions appear to receive various amounts from public and private funding in the Niger Delta region towards making positive impact in providing solutions to the region's crises and the necessary political and other areas of development. That In spite of these and the federal government's agenda, the MDG goals, which include removal of non-development, experiences such as violence, abject poverty, ignorance, diseases, etc. which seem greater and more severely suffered by people living in the Niger Delta region than those in other regions of Nigeria. There are individuals who the fear that non-development in the region might be responsible for the violence crises engulfing the region. All these call for the necessity to try a more robust peace-building strategy. Thus this investigation explores the Theatre For Development (TFD) strategy, which was assumed, might successfully be used to prosecute this exercise especially as it is a skill derived from high level education which Nigeria has probably made investments. Based on the forgoing objectives, the following questions were raised to guide the investigation.

1. Has Education made any Impact in the peaceful pursuit of political development in Niger Delta region.

2. Can the Theatre for Development (TFD) provide peaceful ground to pursue political development in Niger Delta region.

Education according to West – Burnarm (1992) is a social service which Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993) state that it can be managed and organized systematically to meet customer and supplier's needs or relationships for sustainable improvement in performance quality. Allele- Williams (2004) holds that quality in any educational outcome should be predicated on features necessary on societal development.

Lagrosen, Seyed-Heshemi and Leitner (2004) look at education from the point of view of quality as a measurable variable. Thus, the authors state that education should provide service and product satisfactory according to specific invitation requirement. Onuma (2008) assert that education should meet up with any designed performance requirement revolving around absoluteness, relativity, procedure, and cultural needs and requirement of society.

Pour and Yeshodhara (2008) citing Brigham (1993), state that Educational should be an instrument of internal improvement with little or no regard for relationship between learning institutions' on the society – the ultimate consumer of the institutions' products (Willes, 1996). Argues that Learners from secondary to higher level of education should gradually be inducted into how to make decisions particularly in matters concerning the and their society. Thus, Schein (1997) believes that they influence of any person as a result of the abilities and capacities acquired in decision making and leadership, and Rice concludes that academic performance of schools is determined by the level of satisfaction and decisions on issues within the society.

INVESTIGATION METHODOLOGY

Sample

A total sample of three thousand subjects was drawn for the study. Six states out of the nine which made up the Niger Delta region were sampled by using the random sampling technique. Thus, 500 sample was drawn from each state sampled the states were Rivers, Akwa -Ibom, Edo, Imo, Cross- River, and Delta state.

The sample consisted of 1,800 males and 120 females. A Further break down of the sample showed that 300 were Judges and legal practitioners, 400 educationist including Teachers at all levels of Education, 200 applicant, 200 secondary school students, 400 tertiary level students, 150 ordinary citizens, 150 community leaders, 1,200 artist.

Instrument of the Study

Questioner and the Theater for the Development (TFD) adopted to draw the relevant data from the sampled subjects. The administration and the retrieval as well as the result from the judges on the artists were handled by the researchers and their assistants.

Data Analysis

The data which were gathered were subjected to relevant treatment and the statistic and technique of percentage was administered on the data to arrive at the findings as shown on the following tables.

Question 1: Has education made any Impact in the peaceful pursuit of Political development in Niger Delta region of Nigeria?

Table 1. Education and peaceful pursuit of political development

<i>Development impact rating in Niger Delta region</i>			
<i>Education elements and peace</i>	<i>High rating</i>	<i>Low rating</i>	<i>Total number of participants in the rating</i>
Education needs provisions	1350 (45%)	1650 (55%)	3000 (100%)
Investment level on Education	1580 (53%)	1420 (47%)	3000 (100%)
Job creation level	1240 (41%)	1760 (59%)	3000 (100%)
Employment opportunities	835 (28%)	2165 (72%)	3000 (100%)
Migration / Mobility level	655 (22%)	2345 (78%)	3000 (100%)
Planning and Implementation level	1305 (43.5%)	1695 (56.5%)	3000 (100%)

Question 2: Can education strategy like the Theatre for Development (TFD) provide peaceful grounds to pursue political development in Niger Delta region?

Table 2. Theatre for peace toward development in Niger Delta Region

<i>Political development for Niger Delta Region</i>							
<i>Theatre Performed for peace</i>	<i>Performing Artists</i>	<i>Teachers and student</i>	<i>Graduate staffs and applicants</i>	<i>Legal Practitioners /Judges</i>	<i>Civil Servants</i>	<i>Total participants</i>	
	1200	600	600	400	200	3000	
	Agree/ Disagree	Agree/ Disagree	Agree/ Disagree	Agree/ Disagree	Agree/ Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Drama	950 250	472 128	320 280	360 40	165 35	2267 (76%)	733 (24%)
Female & males Atilogu	1105 95	391 209	365 225	290 110	167 33	2318 (77%)	682 (23%)
Ijaw sea culture dance group	1120 80	356 244	398 202	326 74	119 81	2319 (77%)	681 (23%)
Intra mixed culture dance group	1107 93	362 238	312 288	261 139	174 26	2216 (74%)	784 (26%)
Eban acrobatic dance	965 235	422 178	360 240	223 177	124 76	2094 (76%)	906 (30%)

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The data in this study, having been analyzed on 1 and 11 above gave the indication first that education has not made impact in the peaceful pursuit of political development in the Niger Delta region. It also showed through the data on the second table that Theatre for

Development (TFD) can provide peaceful grounds to pursue political development in Niger Delta region.

The finding on table 1 and 11 above were supported by West-Burnharm (1992), Murgatroyed and Morgan (1993) and Allele-Williams (2004) who argued that education is a social service and that therefore it can be organized and managed systematically to meet society and the recipient's needs. Thus they claimed that the result of quality outcome in education pursuit should be predicated on the achievement of necessary societal development.

The finding that education has not made impact towards peaceful pursuit of political development in Niger Delta region should be a surprise particularly when viewed against the background of federal government agencies' slogans and rethoriches of development pursuit of Niger Delta region, such failure becomes pathetic when viewed against Lagrosen, Seyed-Heshemi and Leitner (2004) who argued that education should be a measurable variable as a service instrument onto the recipient and the populace in their specific needs and requirements satisfactorily within the society.

With regard to the second finding on table 11 which was that the Theatre for Development as a strategy of education can provide grounds for peaceful pursuance of political development in the Niger Delta region is a matter to be taken seriously. Because some investments have been made in providing the education strategy in high institutions where theatre is offered Nigeria should adopt the strategy as supported by Onuma (2008) and pour and Yeshidhara (2008) in Brigham (1993), who hold that education should be able to meet with any designed activity required in the society particularly in terms of its design as an instrument of improvement in relationship between learning institutions and the society.

Theatre for Development is an educational strategy which ensures success in the pursuit of peace towards the achievement of any particular goal as indicated on table II above. The finding was supported by price (2010) and Schein (1997) who posited that the level of satisfaction and decision making by leaders on issues in the society should be a pre-determination of the academic performance of the citizens.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings in this investigation the researchers arrived at the conclusion that education and peace building have not made impact on political development in Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Consequently the authors proffered that educational requirements should be provided adequately and managed organically towards realization of political development in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It was also pottered that the government should adopt tested educational strategies such as the theatre for development in finding peaceful solutions to necessary political development in the Niger Delta region of the country.

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THE INFLUENCE OF POVERTY ON STUDENTS BEHAVIOUR AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The overall goal of this study is to provide an insight into the influence of poverty on student behaviour and academic achievement. Thus, poverty was seen as the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possession. Poverty is said to exist when people lacks the means to satisfy their basic needs. It was observed that situational poverty, generational poverty, absolute poverty, relative poverty, urban and rural poverty are types of poverty. Therefore, it was concluded that accidental, historical, political, international, social, individual, demographic, geographic and environmental are causes of poverty. It was therefore recommended that emotional and social challenges, acute and chronic stressors, cognitive lags, health and safety issue are the risk factors of poverty that affect the behaviour and academic achievement of students.

Keywords: Poverty, Behaviour and Academic Achievement

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decades, the unfortunate reality is that the income gap has widened between Nigerian families. Educational outcomes are one of the key areas influenced by family income. Children from low-income families often start school already behind their peers who come from more affluent families. The incidence, depth, duration and timing of poverty all influence a child's educational and behavioural attainment, along with community characteristics and social networks. However, both Nigerian and international organizations have shown that the effects of poverty can be reduced using sustainable interventions.

Meanwhile, poverty remains a stubborn fact of life even in rich countries. According to Harris (2006) complex web of social relationships student experience with peers, adults in the school and family members exerts a much greater influence on their behaviour. This process starts with student core relationship with parents or primary caregivers in their lives, which form a personality that is either secure and attached or insecure and unattached. Securely attached children behave better in school (Bali, Granger, Kivlighan, Mills-Koonce, Willongby & Greeberg, 2008). Once students are in school, the dual factors of socialization and social status contribute significantly to behaviour. The school socialization process typically pressure student to be like their peer or risk social rejection, whereas the quest for high social status drives students to attempt to differentiate themselves in some areas, for example, socio-economic status forms a huge part in this equation. Children raised in poverty rarely choose to behave differently, but are faced daily with overwhelming challenges that affluent children never have to confront and their brains have adapted to suboptimal conditions in ways that undermine good school performance.

One of the social issue facing students of poverty is emotional trauma. The emotional climate can often be very stressful and emotionally depriving. The lack of emotional nurturing can lead to feelings of alienation, inadequacy, depression and anxiety. Aggressive or impulsive behaviour and social withdrawal can also result, which in turn can affect their behaviour and academic achievement. The overall goal of this study is to provide an insight into the influence of poverty on student behaviour and academic achievement.

Meaning of Poverty

The human conditions which we might classify as being in poverty have a long history with a variety of interpretations; these conditions are influenced by a number of factors including resources, contemporary standards and public perceptions of what is minimally acceptable. The history of poverty is extraordinary long, including many well-known quotes: “the poor will always be with you” (Matthew 26: verse 11, NKV). The persisting theme is that those living in poverty have a standard of living that is “unacceptable” because it is unjust. To this day, poverty remains a social problem.

Notions of acceptability and standards of living remain contentions. This implied that, the role of the society in ensuring the care and general well-being of all persons, different persons of all income groups, have various notions as to what is “unacceptable”. Sen, (1983) stated that poverty is a standard at which one cannot achieve adequate participation in communal activities and be free from public shame from failure to satisfy convention. Poverty is the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. Poverty is said to exist when people lack the means to satisfy their basic needs (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013).

Although poverty is a phenomenon as old as human history its significance has changed over time. Under tradition (i.e, non industrialized) modes of economic production, widespread poverty had been acceptable as inevitable. The total output of goods and services, even if equally distributed, would still have been insufficient to give the entire population a comfortable standard of living by prevailing standards with the economic productivity that resulted from industrialization, however, this ceased to be the case, especially in the world’s most industrialized countries, where national outputs were sufficient to raise the entire population to a comfortable level if the necessary distribution could be arranged without adversely affecting output (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013).

Types of Poverty

The following are types of poverty:

- a. Situational poverty
- b. Generational poverty
- c. Absolute poverty
- d. Relative poverty
- e. Urban poverty
- f. Rural poverty

Situational Poverty

Is generally caused by a sudden crisis or loss and often temporary. Events causing situational poverty include environmental disasters, divorce or severe health problem (Whitener, Gibbs & Kusmin, 2003).

Generational Poverty

This occurs in families where at least two generations have been born into poverty. Families living in this type of poverty are not equipped with the tools to move out of their situations (Whitener, Gibbs & Kusmin, 2003).

Absolute Poverty

This is a level of poverty defined in terms of the minimal requirements necessary to afford minimal standards of foods, clothing, health care and shelter (Babylon Free Dictionary, 2012). For the measures to be absolute, the line must be the same in different countries, cultures and technological levels. Such an absolute measure should look only at the individual's power to consume and it should be independent of any changes in income distribution.

Relative Poverty

Refers to the economic status of a family whose income is insufficient to meet its society's average standard of living. (Whitener, Gibbs & Kusmin, 2003)

Urban Poverty

This occurs in metropolitan areas with population of at least 50,000 people. The urban poor deal with a complex aggregate of chronic and acute stressors including limited access to employment opportunities and income, inadequate and secure housing and services, violent and unhealthy environments, little or no social protection mechanisms and education opportunities. (Whitener, Gibbs & Kusmin, 2003, Worldbank, 2011).

Rural Poverty

This refers to poverty found in rural areas, including factors of rural society, rural economy and rural political systems that give rise to the poverty found there (Janvry, Sadoulet & Murgai, 2002). Poverty remains a predominantly rural problems (Stefan, 2009) with a majority of the world's poor located in rural area (Janvry, Sadoulet & Murgai, 2002). It is estimated that 76 percent of the developing world's poor live in rural areas, well above the overall population share living in rural areas, which is only 58 percent (Ravallian, Chen & Sangraula, 2007). Individual living in rural areas tend to have less access to social services, exacerbating the effects of rural poverty (Idriss, Mouhiuddin & Panuccio, 1992).

Causes of Poverty

There are various causes of poverty. They are:

Accidental Causes

Such as drought, disease, birth defects, handicaps etc.

Historical Causes

Such as colonialism.

Economic Causes

Such as energy prices, food prices, shelter prices etc.

Political Causes

Such as bad governance, corruption, absence of the rule of law, rights violations, war, oppression, misguided agricultural policies, lack of investment in economic infrastructure and education.

International Causes

Such as trade policy, protectionism etc.

Social Causes

Such as racism, sexism, discrimination, ethnic division.

Individual Causes

Irresponsible behaviour, self-destructive behaviour.

Demographic Causes:

Such as overpopulation or a high percentage of people who are too young or too old to be economically active.

Geographic Causes

Such as lack of access to fertile land, fresh water, minerals, energy and other natural resources.

Environmental Causes

Such climate change, soil erosion and desertification (Spagnoli; 2008).

How Poverty Affects Behaviour and Academic Achievement

There are four risk factors of poverty that affect the behaviour and academic achievement of students. They are

1. Emotional and social challenges.
2. Acute and chronic stressors
3. Cognitive lags.
4. Health and safety issues.

Emotional and Social Challenges

Many low socio-economic students face emotional and social instability. Typically, the weak or anxious attachments formed by infants in poverty become the basis for full-blown insecurity during the early child-hood years. Very young children require healthy learning and exploration for optimal brain development. Unfortunately, impoverished families tends to be a higher prevalence of such adverse factors as teen motherhood, depression and inadequate health care all of which lead to decreased sensitivity toward the infant (Van Ijzendoorn, Vereijken, Bakermans-Kranenburg & Riksen-Walraven, 2004) and later, poor school performance and behaviour on the child's part. A strong reliable primary caregiver who provides consistent and unconditional love, guidance and support, safe, predictable, stable environments, ten to 20 hours each week of harmonious, reciprocal interactions is most crucial during the 6-24 months of infants' lives and helps them to develop a wider range of healthy emotions, including gratitude, forgiveness and empathy. Children raised in poverty are much less likely to have these crucial needs met than their more affluence peers and as a result are subject to some grave consequences. Deficits in these areas inhibit the production of new brain cells, alter the path of maturation and rework the healthy neural circuitry in children's brains, thereby undermining emotional and social development and predisposing them to emotional dysfunctions (Gunnar, Frenn, Wewerka & VanRyzin, 2009, Miller, Seifer, Strauds, Sheinkopf & Dictstein, 2006).

Low-socio-economic children are often left home to fend for themselves and their younger siblings while their caregivers work long hours; compared with their well-off peers, they

spend less time playing outdoors and more time watching and are less likely to participate in after school activities (U.S census Bureau, 2000). Unfortunately, children won't get the model for how to develop proper emotions or respond appropriately to others from watching cartoons; they need warmth, person to person interactions. The failure to form positive relationships with peer inflicts long-term socio-emotional consequences (Szewcyk-Sokolowski, Bost & Wain-Wright, 2005). Economic hardship makes it more difficult for caregivers to create the trusting environments that build children's secure attachments. Behaviour research shows that children from impoverished homes develop psychiatric disturbances and maladaptive social functioning at a greater rate than their affluence counterparts do (McCoy, Firck, Loney & Ellia, 1999).

Effects of Emotional and Social Challenges on the Behaviour and Academic Achievement of Students

Strong, secure relationships help stabilize children's behaviour and provide the core guidance needed to build lifelong social skills. Children who grew up with such relationships learn healthy, appropriate emotional responses to everyday situations. But children raised in poor homes often fail to learn these responses, to the detriment of their school performance. For example, students with emotional dysregulation may get so easily frustrated that they give up on a task when success was just moments away. Social dysfunction may inhibit students' ability to work well in cooperative groups, quite possibly leading to their exclusion by group members who believe they aren't "doing their part" or "pulling their share of load". This exclusion and the accompanying decrease in collaboration and exchange of information exacerbate at risk students' already shaky academic achievement and behaviour (Harris, 2006).

Acute and Chronic Stressors

Stress can be defined as the physiological responses to the perception of loss of control resulting from an adverse situation. Stress is healthy for us all, it supports our immune functions and helps develop resiliency. However, acute and chronic stress that children raised in poverty experience leaves a devastating imprint on their lives. Acute stress refers to severe stress resulting from exposure to such trauma as abuse or violence, whereas chronic stress refers to high stress sustained overtime. Low socio-economic children are more subject to both of these types of stress than their more affluent peers, children living in poverty experience significantly greater, chronic stress than do their more affluent counterparts (Almeida, Neupert, Banks & Sevido, 2005). This kind of stress exerts a devastating insidious influence on children's physical, psychological emotional and cognitive functioning areas that affect brain development, academic success and social competence. Students subjected to such stress may lack crucial coping skills and experience significant behavioural and academic problems in schools.

Effects of Acute and Chronic Stressors on the Behaviour and Academic Achievement of Students

A child who comes from a stressful home environment tends to channel that stress into disruptive behaviour at school and be less able to develop a healthy social and academic life (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). Socio-economic status correlate positively with good parenting which research has found improves academic achievement (DeGarmo, Forgatch & Martinez, 1999). Unfortunately, chronic stress of poverty impairs parenting skills and negative parenting in turn impairs children's school performance. Parents who are struggling just to stay afloat tend to work extra hours, do multiple jobs and are less able to devote their time, energy and resources to their children. These deficits have been associated with higher levels

of externalizing behaviours and poor academic performance on children's (Hsueh & Yoshikawa, 2007).

Exposure to chronic or acute stress is debilitating. The most common adaptive behaviours include increase anxiety, increased in sense of detachment and helplessness. Students from low-income families who experience disruptive or traumatic events or who lack a measure of connectedness to family, to the community or to a religious affiliation demonstrate increased helplessness over time (Bolland, Lian & Farmichella, 2005). Children who have had greater exposure to abuse, neglect, dangers, loss or other poverty – related experiences are more reactive to stressor. Each stressor builds on and exacerbates other stressors and slowly changes the student. It is the cumulative effect of stressors that often makes life miserable for poor students.

Cognitive Lags

Cognitive ability is highly complex. It can be measured in many different ways and is affected by numerous factors, not least of which is socio-economic status. Socio-economic status is strongly associated with a number of indices of children's cognitive ability, including IQ, achievement tests, grade retention rates and literacy (Smith, Brooks-Gunn & Klebanov, 1997). There is a gulf between poor and well-off students performance on just about every measure of cognitive development, from the Bayley Infant Behaviour scales to standardized achievement tests. The correlations between socio-economic status and cognitive ability and performance are typically quite significant and persist throughout the stages of development, from infancy through adolescence and into adulthood (Gottfried, Gottfried, Bathurst, Guerin & Parramore, 2003).

Going hand in hand with language acquisition, reading is one of the most important factors affecting the development of a child's brain. Reading skills are not hardwired into the human brain, every sub skill of reading, including phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, phonics and comprehension must be explicitly taught. This teaching requires attention, focus and motivation from the primary caregiver. Again, the time and expertise to make this happen are unfortunately in short supply among poor families. Evidence suggests that poverty adversely alters the trajectory of the developing brain (Noble, Wolmetz, Ochs, Farah & McCandliss, 2006).

Effects of Cognitive Lags on Student Behaviour and Academic Achievement

Many children raised in poverty enter school a step behind their well-off peers. The cognitive stimulation parents provide in the early childhood years is crucial, as we have seen poor children receive less of it than their well-off peers. These deficits have been linked to underdeveloped cognitive, social and emotional competence in later childhood and have been shown to be increasingly important influences on vocabulary growth, IQ and social skills (Bradley, Corwyn, McAdoo & Coll, 2001). Standardized intelligence tests show a correlation between poverty and lower cognitive achievement and low-SES kids often earn below average scores in reading, math, science and demonstrate poor writing skills. Although the effects of poverty are not automatic or fixed, they often set in motion a vicious and stubborn cycle of low expectations. Poor academic performance often leads to diminished expectations, which spread across the board and undermine children's overall self esteem.

The dramatic socioeconomic divide in education doesn't help matters. High – poverty and high minority schools receive significantly less state and local money than do more prosperous schools and students in such schools are more likely to be taught by teachers who are inexperienced or teaching outside their specialties (Jerald, 2001). This gap is more evident in the subjects of math and reading.

Health and Safety Issues

Children living in poverty are often subject to such health and safety issues as malnutrition, environmental hazards and insufficient health care. Health and achievement overlap, every cell in the body needs a healthy environment to function optimally. When body cells are besieged daily by stressors, they slow their growth trajectory and contract. Kids raised in poor homes have more cells in their body “under siege” than do kids from middle or upper income families. The consequent adaptations that these kid immune systems make diminish their ability to concentrate, learn and behave appropriately.

Substandard housing in poverty neighbourhood leaves children exposed to everything from greater pedestrian risks to environmental hazards (Evans, 2004). Poor housing quality may cause respiratory morbidity and childhood injuries and may elevate psychological distress in children (Evans, Wells & Moch, 2003). Poor children are more likely to live in old and inadequately maintained housing and to be exposed to lead in peeling paints, a factor associated with decreased IQ (Schwartz, 1994).

Children from low-income families have generally poorer physical health than do their more affluent peers. In particular, there is a higher incidence of such conditions as asthma, respiratory infections, tuberculosis infections and hearing loss and obesity (Simves, 2003, Wang & Zhang, 2006).

Effects of Health and Safety Issues on Students Behaviour and Academic Achievement

The greater incidence of health issues among lower-income students leads to increase in:

- a. School absences
- b. Tardiness rates
- c. Incidents of illness during class.
- d. Rates of undiagnosed and/or untreated health.

However, each of these issues can occur among middle and upper income students, they are both more common and more severe among students living in poverty. As a result, low-SES kids are often missing key classroom content and skills (Broadman, 2004).

CONCLUSION

Poverty remains a stubborn fact of life. Unfortunately, poverty is very much related to academic achievement in Nigeria. Students who come from impoverished families are more likely to have problems in school than students who come from middle or upper class families. This is a tragedy for our nation because Nigeria has very high rates of poverty, and it is very difficult for the impoverished families to escape poverty once they are in it. Poverty involves a complex array of risk factors that adversely affect the students in a multitude of ways. The aggregate of the risk factors makes everyday living a struggle; they are multifaceted and interwoven, building on and playing off one another with a devastatingly synergistic effect. In other words, one problem created by poverty begets another, which in turn contributes to another, leading to a seemingly endless cascade of deleterious consequences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the submissions above, the following recommendations were made.

1. Government should bridge the gap between the have and the have-not

2. Parents should provide ten to 20 hours each week of harmonious, reciprocal interactions with their children.
3. Government should develop rural communities, as poverty remains a predominantly rural problem.
4. Parents should develop strong, reliable, consistent and unconditional, guidance and support for their children.
5. Government should provide mid-day-meal to students, provide low- income housing to poor families and develop good welfare package for children.

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