

Effects of Poverty on the Teaching Learning of Undergraduate Students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor: Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of poverty on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor. The study adopted quasi-experimental research design, the sample size comprised 92 students and data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The null hypotheses were tested with t test of independent at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the study reveals that mean scores for poverty and control groups were 55.033 and 36.133 respectively with standard deviation of 18.941 and 14.302 respectively, with mean difference of 26.50 over control groups of 7.50* indicated that poverty has positive effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students. Also, the calculated t-value of 3.049 was greater than the critical t-value of 1.99 at 0.05 level of significant with 60 degree of freedom. It implies that there was a significant difference between the mean effects on the students with multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes scores of subjects in their teaching-learning compared to those in the control group at post test. The study concluded that poverty reduces the availability of learning materials, reduces the efficiency of teachers and lead to low academic performances of students, and recommended among others that government should pursue broad-based growth strategies that will sufficiently empower the poor and bring about rapid and sustainable development as well as Psychologist, guidance counsellors and lecturers should adopt strategies that will help concern students overcome the multifaceted problem connected to poverty.*

Keywords: Poverty, Teaching- learning, Undergraduate Students, Academic Performance, Counsellors.

Introduction

Today, Nigeria is among the poorest nations of the world and faces significant challenges related to economic inequality, corruption, unemployment and underemployment, inadequate infrastructure, education and health care despite being a country rich in natural resources, resulting to a situation in which most of the people live in a very substandard existence (Uzma, Sadia & Fazeelat, 2023). The prevalence of mass poverty reflects the poor management and performance of the Nigeria economy. The level of economic performance of any country depends on two factors: the level of resource relative to population and the level of productivity (Thelma, Chitondo, Mumbi & Mutepuka, 2023). These are measures by using a combination of economic indicators that provide insights into various aspects of its economy such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Unemployment Rate, Inflation Rate, Balance of Trade, Government Debt and Budget Deficit, Income Distribution, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Economic Growth Rate, and Human Development Index (HDI). Ryan, Jacob, Gross, Perron, Moore and Ferguson (2018) affirmed that Nigeria belongs to the group of poor countries with high level of resources but low level of productivity.

Poverty generally refers to a state of deprivation where individuals or communities lack the resources, means, or access to basic necessities required for a minimum standard of living that is considered acceptable in society. This condition can manifest in various forms and dimensions, such as Income Poverty, Material Deprivation, Social Exclusion, Capability Deprivation, and Multidimensional Poverty which is the primary context of human social organization, interaction and independence (Rowan, Cohen & Raudenush, 2014). But it may also be observed at other significant levels of human organization example, socio-economic group, communication, region, nation, and group of nations Poverty cut across all countries of the world but it is more rampant in the third world countries. It is a topical issue that is attracting the attention of leaders and economist globally, thus making it not just an economic issue, but also a social as well as a political issue. The preponderance of poverty affects the living standard of people and its multiplier effect on the economy cannot be underestimated (Olszewski-Kubilius & Corwith, 2018). Poverty is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon influenced by economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental factors. It is often intergenerational and can perpetuate cycles of disadvantage, affecting individuals' well-being, opportunities, and overall quality of life. Okafor, Nwobi and Udogu (2024) added that

poverty exerts a significant influence on learning in Nigeria, creating barriers to educational access, quality, and attainment.

Nwobi and Udogu (2024) avow that efforts being made to combat poverty typically involve policies and interventions aimed at improving income distribution, enhancing access to education and healthcare, promoting economic growth, and addressing social inequalities.

A paramount effect is on the growth and development of an economy. Aside from affecting the growth of the economy, it also has effect on many sectors and the other major component parts of the economy (Ade, Salifu & Darkwah, 2023). One of the sectors so affected is the educational sector where it affects not only the government, but also the teachers and learners. The goals of education in Nigeria include: (i) to develop the child's latent physical skills, (ii) to develop character, (iii) to inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority, (iv) to develop specific vocational training and develop a healthy attitude towards honest labour, (v) to develop a sense of belonging to participate actively in family and community affairs, and (vi) to understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.

These cardinal goals of education prepares individual for self-reliance, political, social and economic development. The aforementioned goals make development attainable in a nation. Development may be difficult in poor countries without qualitative and quantitative education (McKenzie 2019). Outstanding achievement in economic development through education may not be possible if the medium through which desirable values and skills pass across to the citizen are not properly positioned and cared for.

Education should be for all. Though education should be for all at times we discover that not all that are supposed to be in school are in school. Even some people who are in school are underperforming. Education on the other hand, is a process through which individuals acquire skills, competencies and aptitude. It is the right of every child to be educated, be it formally or informally (Lee, Hong, Choi & Lee, 2023). Education has been regarded as a culture to man, people, and the nations of the world at large. This is why man has to educate himself and his offspring in the society. Lacour and Tissington (2011) pointed out that poverty was one of the factors militating against man from carrying out his educational activities perfectly. At national level, Kranjac and Kranjac (2021), noted that “a nation can be considered poor when her economics standard is very low and this automatically makes the nation

underdeveloped”. In considering the effect of poverty on the teaching learning process of students, to be precise, the family background is the most important phenomenon that needs to be seriously considered in order to enhance the effective study of the relationship between poverty and students’ teaching learning process. In view of this, some factors that need to be considered in the home or family background are parents’ academic qualification, socio-economic class and facilities available in the home. As regards poverty in the family level, we are referring to the family background. Even before the indigenous education or western type of education, the home has always been the agency through which man learnt various aspect of life to enable him live a meaningful life in his environment. The home which provides the basic traditional way of educating the young ones is still regarded as the first school of a child before he enters the larger society.

The teaching learning process in tertiary institutions refers to the interaction between lecturers, students, instructional materials, and the learning environment for the purpose of achieving educational objectives. In higher institutions, the teaching learning process is aimed at developing students’ intellectual abilities, critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving skills, and professional competence (Aina & Maphosa, 2023). Unlike the teacher-centered approach commonly practiced at lower levels of education, tertiary education emphasizes learner-centered strategies where students actively participate in discussions, research activities, seminars, practical exercises, and independent learning.

In tertiary institutions, lecturers function not only as instructors but also as facilitators and mentors who guide students toward knowledge acquisition and skill development. Students are expected to take responsibility for their learning through active participation in lectures, assignments, tutorials, laboratory work, field studies, and collaborative projects (Blašková, Blaško & Kucharčíková 2021). The integration of information and communication technology (ICT), such as e-learning platforms, digital libraries, and virtual classrooms, has further enhanced the teaching learning process by improving access to educational resources and communication between lecturers and students (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020).

The effectiveness of the teaching learning process in tertiary institutions depends on several factors, including the quality of instruction, availability of learning facilities, classroom environment, students’ motivation, and institutional support systems. Positive lecturer–student relationships, effective teaching methods, and conducive learning environments contribute

significantly to students' academic achievement and overall educational experience (Maphosa & Kalenga, 2022). However, challenges such as financial difficulties, inadequate facilities, overcrowded classrooms, stress, and poor mental health may negatively influence students' participation and learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the teaching–learning process in tertiary institutions is essential for national development because it equips students with the knowledge, values, and competencies needed for employment, entrepreneurship, leadership, and societal growth. Consequently, improving teaching and learning in tertiary institutions requires continuous investment in educational infrastructure, staff development, counseling services, and technological innovation to support students' academic and personal development (UNESCO, 2021). From the above idea, it becomes imperative to conduct an empirical study to ascertain the effects of Poverty on the teaching learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, in Edo State.

Literature Review

Poverty

It is not easy to have a universal definition of poverty; this is because there is intense debate about poverty by researchers and some institutions. However, according to (Koehler, 2017) it is generally agreed that poverty can be defined in terms of three distinguishable degrees. These are: extreme poverty, moderate poverty and relative poverty. Extreme poverty means that households cannot meet basic needs for survival. Such people are perpetually hungry, unable to access health care; they lack basic shelter for their families and some articles of their clothing such as shoes. Extreme poverty occurs only in developing countries. Moderate poverty on the other hand generally refers to conditions of life in which basic needs are met, but just barely. Relative poverty is construed as a household income level below a given proportion of average national income. In high income countries they lack access to cultural goods, entertainment, recreation, quality healthcare, education and other perquisites for upward social mobility (Jones, Wilson, Clark & Dunham, 2018).

Effects of Poverty on Student Behavior

Gweshengwe, Hassan and Maricar (2020) have suggested that students having grown up living in persistent poverty will suffer detrimentally in their physical, psychological, and educational health. Low achievement in schools due to factors such as poverty has been

linked as an indicator to crime and violence among adolescents. There are many stressors poverty creates such as economic strain, family conflict, frequent moves, transitions, exposure to discrimination, and other traumatic events that can have an adverse effect on students' behavior. The poverty-related stress students experience can lead to truancy and deviant behavior.

Effects of Poverty on Student Performance

Poverty has an adverse effect on student performance and studies have shown that students in poverty are below grade level at much higher rates and that they generally have poor or average grades. These educational deficits provide a serious handicap for students in poverty (Dike, 2017). Crosnol and Cooper, 2020 suggested that there are several factors involved that play a part in students' performance as follows: health and nutrition, vocabulary, effort, hope-and-growth mind-set, cognition, relationships, and distress.

Students in poverty are more likely to be exposed to food with little to no nutritional value which effects cognitive functioning which, in turn, has adverse effects on academic achievement. Limited vocabulary also affects academic ability and exposure to language is less likely in low socioeconomic cases.

Impact of Poverty on Undergraduate Learning

The impact of poverty on undergraduate learning today is multifaceted and profound, influencing various aspects of their educational experiences and outcomes (Brito & Noble, 2014). Here is an assessment focusing on some key dimensions:

1. Access to Quality Education:

- **School Resources:** Poverty often correlates with underfunded schools, lacking proper facilities, materials, and qualified teachers.
- **Technological Divide:** Adolescents from impoverished backgrounds may lack access to computers, the internet, or other technology crucial for modern learning.

2. Health and Well-being:

- **Nutritional Deficiencies:** Poor nutrition can lead to cognitive impairments and affect concentration and academic performance.
- **Healthcare Access:** Lack of access to healthcare services can result in untreated health issues that impact learning.

3. Psychosocial Factors:

- **Stress and Anxiety:** Economic instability and living in unsafe environments can contribute to chronic stress and anxiety, affecting learning abilities and emotional well-being.
- **Peer Influence:** Adolescents in poverty may face pressures from peers engaged in risky behaviors, distracting them from academics.

4. Family Dynamics:

- **Parental Involvement:** Economic struggles often force parents to work multiple jobs or irregular hours, reducing their ability to support their children's education.
- **Home Environment:** Unstable housing, overcrowding, or lack of quiet study space can hinder academic focus.

5. Educational Attainment and Future Opportunities:

- **Dropout Rates:** Adolescents from low-income families are more likely to drop out of school due to financial pressures or the need to work.
- **Career Prospects:** Limited access to higher education and vocational training opportunities can perpetuate cycles of poverty.

6. Digital Divide:

- **Access to Technology:** In an increasingly digital world, lack of access to computers and the internet can widen educational disparities, affecting research capabilities and digital literacy.

7. Cultural and Social Capital:

- **Cultural Exposure:** Limited access to cultural resources such as museums, libraries, or extracurricular activities can restrict broader learning experiences.
- **Social Networks:** Adolescents in poverty may have fewer opportunities to build networks that could provide mentorship or open doors to educational opportunities.

Educational Implications for Teachers of Students in Poverty

The pedagogical implications for teachers of students in poverty have been related to the implementation of varied instructional strategies designed to ensure that students are able to efficiently acquire, rehearse, and connect knowledge. Successful instructional principles

include frequent review sessions, division of material in small steps, modeling, constant assessment, scaffolding, independent practice, and numerous questions which demand a response from students. (Cooper & Miralay, 2022) Students in poverty may have limited access to technology, resources, and required school materials. This deficit must not be overlooked and attention should not be drawn to it so as to place even more stress on the students.

Enhancing family involvement and focusing on strengths are vital for enhancing the success of students in poverty, as well as exposing the students to rigorous curriculum that demands higher order thinking. Research has shown that students exposed to curriculum that is learner-centered are less likely to fall into truancy than those exposed to lower-order instructional strategies. Students in poverty who are viewed as having intellectual deficiencies based solely on socioeconomic status are less likely to succeed in school. Unbiased instructional support is necessary in order to enhance the likelihood of increased student performance. (Chioke, Umeokafor & Abasili, 2021)

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study:

1. What is the effect of poverty on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor in Edo State at post-test?
2. What is the effect of the multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor in Edo State at post-test?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate student's scores of subjects who are poor and those in the control group at post-test.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate student's scores of subjects with multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes and those in the control group at post-test.

Methodology

The study adopted quasi-experimental research design. The pre-test, post-test experimental, and control group design was adopted. The target population of the study comprised all the male and female undergraduate students 100 level of Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, Edo State. The sample size comprised 92 students which includes 30 experimental 1 (very poor), 31 experimental 2 (multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes) and 31 control group not in any of the two categories were selected using enumerative census sampling method. This is because the researcher can manage the entire population.

The subjects were identified with researcher's screening instrument, which was the Multifaceted Poverty Experiences Outcomes Questionnaire (MPEOQ). The instrument used for data collection is the Undergraduate Personal Data Inventory (UPDI) which is to elicit specific information about an individual's poverty history and how long.

The teaching–learning situation was measured through the administration of pre-test and post-test assessments to the experimental and control groups. Before the treatment, participants were given a pre-test to determine their initial learning condition and academic performance. After the intervention was administered to the experimental groups, a post-test was conducted for all groups to assess changes in learning outcomes. Measurement of the teaching learning situation was based on:

1. Students' academic performance in the pre-test and post-test.
2. Students' level of participation and response to the learning process during the intervention.
3. Comparison of the learning outcomes of the experimental groups with those of the control group to determine the effect of the treatment.

The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts from Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, and Measurement and Evaluation Departments, all from University of Benin. The stability of the instrument was determined using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient which yielded a reliability index of 0.79, 0.84 and 0.81 respectively. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The null hypotheses were tested with t test of independent at 0.05 level of significance

Results

Research Question One: What is the effect of poverty on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, in Edo State at post-test?

Table 1: Mean Effect of poverty on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, in Edo State at post-test

Group	Pre – test			Post – test		Gain score
	N	X	SD	X	SD	
Poverty	30	28.533	12.673	55.033	18.941	26.50*
Control group	31	28.633	12.357	36.133	14.302	7.50*
Mean difference		-0.10		18.90		

Result in Table 1 indicated that the pre-test mean scores for poverty groups and control group were 28.533 and 28.633 with standard deviation of 12.673 and 12.357 respectively and mean difference of -0.10 at pre-test. This implies that both poverty groups and control groups were relatively at the same level of teaching-learning before test. However, the post-test mean scores for poverty and control groups were 55.033 and 36.133 respectively with standard deviation of 18.941 and 14.302 respectively, with mean difference of 26.50*. The higher mean gain score of poverty group of 26.50 over control groups of 7.50* indicated that poverty has positive effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, in Edo State.

Research Question Two: What is the effect of the multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, in Edo State at post-test?

Table 3: Mean Effect of Multifaceted Poverty Experiences Outcomes on the Teaching-Learning of Undergraduate Students in Tertiary Institutions at Post-Test

Group	N	Pre-test Mean (x̄)	Pre-test SD	Post-test Mean (x̄)	Post-test SD	Gain Score
Experimental Group	31	26.500	10.589	41.967	18.576	15.467*
Control Group	31	26.633	10.357	36.133	14.302	9.500*
Mean Difference		-0.133		5.834		5.967

*Gain Score = Post-test Mean – Pre-test Mean

Result in table 3 indicated that the pre test mean score for multifaceted poverty groups and control group were 26.50 and 26.633 with standard deviation of 10.589 and 10.357 respectively and mean difference of – 1.333 at per – test. This implies that both multifaceted poverty groups and control groups were relatively at the mean scores for multifaceted poverty and control groups were 41.967 and 36.133 difference of 5.834. The higher mean gain score of multifaceted poverty group of 15.467* on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in tertiary institutions

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the mean effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate student's scores of subjects who are poor and those in the control group at post-test.

Table 2: t-test Analysis of the Mean Difference on Teaching-Learning Scores of Subjects who are Poor and those in the Control Group at Post-Test

Variable	N	x	SD	Df	Standard	t-cal.	t.tab.	P.	Error
value									
Teaching	30	55.033	18.941						
Learning				59	4.333	4.362	2.00	0.000	
Control Group	31	36.133	14.302						

The results in Table 2 show that the calculated t-value of 4.362 was greater than the critical t-value of 2.00 at 0.05 level of significant with 59 degree of freedom. This shows that the result is significant. Thus the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the mean effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate student's scores of subjects who are poor and those in the control group at post test is thereby rejected. It implies that there was a significant difference between the mean effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate student's scores of the poor and those in the control group at post-test. However, the results revealed those students' scores with teaching-learning from the poor gained high level of effect compared to those in the control group .

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate student's scores of subjects with multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes and those in the control group at post-test.

Table 4: t-test Analysis of the Mean with Multifaceted Poverty Experience Outcomes on the Teaching-Learning and those in the Control Group at Post-Test

Variable	N	X	SD	Df	Standard Error	t-cal	t-tab	p-value
Multifaceted Poverty Group	31	41.967	18.576					
				60	2.580	3.049	1.99	0.003
Control Group	31	36.133	14.302					

The results in Table 4 showed that the calculated t-value of 3.049 was greater than the critical t-value of 1.99 at 0.05 level of significant with 60 degree of freedom. This shows that the result is significant. Thus the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference between the mean effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate student's scores of subjects with multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes and those in the control group at post-test is thereby rejected. It implies that there was a significant difference between the mean effects on the students with multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes scores of subjects in their teaching-learning compared to those in the control group at post test. However, the results revealed that students with multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes gained high level in their teaching-learning assessment.

Discussion

The finding from research question one revealed that the post-test mean scores for Poverty and control groups were 55.033 and 36.133 respectively with standard deviation of 18.941 and 14.302 respectively, with mean difference of 26.50. The higher mean gain score of Poverty group of 26.50* over control group of 7.50* indicated that Poverty has positive effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate student's. The corresponding hypothesis affirmed that there was a significant difference between the mean of poverty scores of subjects in in their teaching-learning assessment and those in the control group at post-test. However, the results revealed that students who are from poor background are more on their subjects scores process on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, in Edo State. The finding is in line with the finding of Okafor, Nwobi & Udogu (2024) who reported that living in poverty is correlated with school dropout, poor social

skills, lack of acceptance from peers, focus and concentration, decrease in self-confidence, always poorly dressed and lacks most of study materials and as such affect academic performance. Also, the study of Rowan, Cohen and Raudenush (2014) who stresses that poverty directly affects academic achievement due to the lack of resources available for student success.

The finding from research question two accepted that the post-test mean scores for multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes and control groups were 41.967 and 36.133 respectively with standard deviation of 18.576 and 14.302 respectively, with mean difference of 5.834. The higher mean gain score of multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes group of 15.467 over control group of 9.50 indicated that multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes has positive effect on the teaching-learning assessment of undergraduate students in tertiary institutions in Edo State. The corresponding hypothesis revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes scores of subjects to the teaching-learning assessment and those in the control group at post test. However, the results revealed that students with multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes gained high level in their teaching-learning assessment.

The finding is in agreement with the finding of Okafor, Nwobi & Udogu (2024) assertion that poverty has significant relationship with the academic performance of undergraduates in Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe, Anambra State. The finding is also in agreement with the finding of Uzma, Sadia, and Fazeelat (2023) who observed that there is significant effect of poverty on the academic performance of students in universities in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Furthermore, the beta value is negative, which indicates a negative effect of poverty on the academic performance of students.

Implications for Counselling

Realizing that no nation can develop above the level of her education, it is imperative that counselling be used to create awareness of how poverty can be reduced.

1. Counselors should identify students facing poverty-related challenges and assist them in accessing scholarships, bursaries, welfare programmes, and other forms of financial support that can improve their academic participation and performance.

2. Counselors should provide guidance on coping strategies, stress management, and proper financial management to help students overcome the emotional and psychological effects of poverty and remain focused on their studies.
3. Counselors should encourage students to acquire vocational and entrepreneurial skills that can promote self-reliance, income generation, and long-term academic and personal development.

Conclusion

The study examined empirical to ascertain the effects of Poverty on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, in Edo State: Implications for counseling. Based on the study poverty has positive effect on the teaching-learning of undergraduate students in Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor, Edo State and that there was a significant difference between the mean poor students' scores of subjects to the teaching-learning and those in the control group at post-test. However, the results revealed that students multifaceted poverty experiences are more compare to the students from rich homes in their teaching-learning process. The researcher concluded that that Poverty and multifaceted poverty experiences has positive effect on the teaching-learning process and that there was a significant difference between the mean multifaceted poverty experiences outcomes scores of subjects to the teaching-learning process and those in the control group at post-test in their academic performance.

Based on these results, it is concluded that poverty reduces the availability of learning materials, reduces the efficiency of teachers and lead to low academic performances of students.

Recommendation

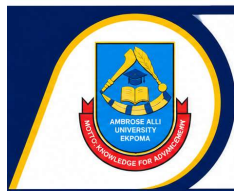
It is however recommended that:

1. Government should pursue broad-based growth strategies that will sufficiently empower the poor and bring about rapid and sustainable development.
2. Developing economy like Nigeria should tackle poverty by engaging in productive activities and transforming the economy from consuming and trading economies to producing economies.
4. Educational sector should be subsidized and there should be free tuition and the supply of necessary educational materials to the students.

5. The government must ensure that programs and projects in line with poverty alleviation are effectively implemented.
6. Psychologist, guidance counsellors and lecturers should adopt strategies that will help concern students overcome the multifaceted problem connected to poverty.

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