

**IMPACT OF SCHOOL LOCATION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC  
ACHIEVEMENT IN SOCIAL STUDIES AMONG JUNIOR SECONDARY  
SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ABAKALIKI EDUCATION ZONE OF EBONYI  
STATE.**

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***Abstract:***

*The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of location on students' academic achievement in social studies among Junior Secondary School Students in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. A co relational survey research design was used in the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. All the 2009/2010 S.S. 1 students of Public Secondary School in Abakaliki Education zone formed the population of the study. A sample of 10 Secondary Schools were chosen using simple random sampling, 258 respondents were chosen through proportionate stratified random sampling technique, which represents 10% of the total population. A researcher-developed checklist instrument duly validated by experts was used for data collection. The students' JSSCE results was also collected and analyzed. Aggregate mean scores calculated based on the grades of the students were used to answer research questions, while Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) was used to test the hypotheses. It was found that among the major ways to increase or boost student's academic achievement in schools was to motivate the students by providing studying materials, giving prizes. It was also found that students, who come from polygamous family, single parents, uneducated parents etc. perform poorly in their academics. It was recommended that parents should give birth to 2-4 children so as to provide most of their needs towards education achievement in schools.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Most students in secondary schools in Nigeria and Ebonyi State in particular are dearly confronted with challenges of coping with their academics under serious emotional strains occasioned by long walk to school (school location), poor school environment, poor family climate, and being taught by unmotivated teachers. Coupled with this, is an uncooperative - to - study attitude of parents who most times, toil to provide for the needs of the family with little or no time for their children's academic welfare. These ugly situations have led to high rate of students' dropout of school to engage in subsistence farming, becoming housemaids or even engage in other menial jobs to support their academic pursuit. Hence, many students have since taken schooling as a secondary assignment and school attendance on rotational basis. The resultant problem posed by this, is poor academic performance in school examinations like National Examination Council (NECO) and West African Examination Council (WAEC), Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination (JSSCE).

Studies on students' academic achievement at the senior secondary school level in various schools in Nigeria had consistently indicated that students have low academic achievement (Falayajo, 2004 & Olopoenia 2005). Some of the studies like Olaewe (2004) and Yoloye (2004) addressed factors capable of influencing students' academic achievement. The various findings of these studies in relation to factors capable of influencing students' academic achievement can be categorized thus: personal factors, teachers-related factors and school-related factors. Among the various personal factors, some seem to be more potent in predicting students' academic achievement (Abe, 2005). A good example of personal factor is the way the student feels about himself or herself. A student who believes in himself as being capable to achieve May likely performs better academically than others who do not.

Arnett (2000) observed that school location has both negative and positive impacts on the adolescence, which plays a critical role in academic performance of the adolescent. The positive impact of school location can help to challenge or motivate someone to excel in his/her goal in life. For example, a student who treck far away from home to school can perform poorly due to long distance.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The academic performance of students are not the same, although these students are taught generally by teachers with about same qualifications under relatively same conditions and are exposed to generally the same educational facilities in schools. The government, the educators, examiners, parents and the general public are very much concerned about the significant differences in academic achievement of students. The situation is viewed with serious concern, because human efforts, time and money spent during the process of teaching and learning are not adequately rewarded due to low academic achievement on the part of some students. These academic performances depend not only on the educational facilities in the school, student intelligence quotient, but also some other important factors of which home environment is one of them.

The poor academic performance of students in Ebonyi State Secondary School from 2000 to 2010 is quite alarming and creates some loss of hope in the public educational system. The West African Examination Council (WAEC) results of secondary schools in Ebonyi State in 2004 for example shows that out of 5,049 students who sat for senior secondary school certificate Examination (SSCE) only 12.48% of them passed with five credits including English and Mathematics.

Again in ten selected secondary schools in the area of study, poor performance was also noticed in junior secondary school certificate examination in social studies. In the first school, (Girls Secondary School Ndulo Ngbo), 86 student sat for social studies in Junior Secondary School Certificate Exam (2009) no distinction was recorded, 46% got credit while 54% got just pass. In Urban Model Secondary School Abakaliki 546 students sat for social studies in JSSC Exam, no distinction was recorded, 46% got credit while 54% got ordinary pass. In Community Secondary School Nwofe Agbaja, 339 students sat for the same exam, no distinction was recorded, 37% got credit while 63 got ordinary pass. In Girls High School Abakaliki, 347 sat for the same exam no distinction was recorded 45% of them got credit while 65% got ordinary pass. In Abakaliki High School, 221 students sat for the examination, no distinction was recorded, 44% of them got credit while 66 got ordinary pass. In Army Day Secondary School, 415 students sat for the examination 46% got credit, 54% got ordinary pass while no distinction was recorded. In Boys Secondary School Ezzangbo, 69 students sat for the exam, 62% got credit 58% got just pass while no student got distinction. In Izzi High School Ishieke, 210 students sat for the examination, 48% got credit, 62% got ordinary pass while no distinction was recorded. In Nnodo Boys Secondary School Abakaliki, 219 students sat for the examination, 44% of them got credit, 66% got pass and no distinction. Finally in Model Comprehensive Secondary School Ugwuachara, 112 sat for Social Studies in JSSCE, no distinction was recorded, 39% got credit while 61% got ordinary pass.

Having observed the poor performance of the students in public exams, one is doubt whether their poor performance is caused by poor school facilities, students' manner and or more importantly on the home environment of the students which provides the first socializing and educational experience the child has. It is against this background that this research is conceptualized. The study therefore seeks to find out the impact of school location on student's academic achievement among junior secondary school students in Abakaliki Education zone in Ebonyi State.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to correlate the impact of school location and student's academic achievement of students in social studies. Specifically, this study intends to determine:

1. Determine the impact of school location and students' academic achievement in social studies.
2. Ascertain the impact of school location and student's academic achievement in social studies.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

1. The study will enhance the work not only of teacher, school administrators, curriculum planners, guidance counselors etc but also remind parents of their expected role on their children's educational pursuits.
2. It is hoped that this work will aid the curriculum developers, educators and other practitioners in education industry to have empirical basis for formulating education policies that can provide equal opportunities to students from both high and low socio-economic background.
3. Provide information, facts and figures which will enable teachers, parents and indeed stakeholders to make rational decisions to deal successfully with existential educational achievement, problems and issues.
4. The study is hoped to enable parents appreciate the need to train their children through good role models, motivating affection and supervision of their children's learning.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study covers impact of school location and student's academic achievement in social studies among junior secondary schools in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State.

The study focuses on Impact of school location and Student's Academic Achievement in Social Studies among Students of Upper Basic Schools in Ebonyi State. The study covers location, gender among others: as determinant of knowledge among Students' in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the study:

What is the level of Student's academic achievement in Social Studies among Students' in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State by Location?

What is the Level of Student's Academic Achievement in Social Studies among Students' in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State by Gender?

## **1.7. Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses are stated to guide the study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

HO<sub>1</sub> There is no statistical significant relationship between student's location and their academic achievement score in Social Studies.

HO<sub>2</sub> Significant relationship does not exist between student's gender and their academic achievement in Social Studies.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The related literature was reviewed under the following sub- headings:

- (i) Conceptual Framework
- (ii) Theoretical Framework
- (iii) Review of Empirical Studies
- (iv) Summary of the Reviewed Literature

### **Concept of Academic Achievement**

According to Kobal and Musek (2000), there are two broad groups of definitions that are routinely employed in assessing academic achievement. The first group

could be considered more objective because it refers to numerical scores of a students' knowledge, which measures the degree of a students' adaptation to school work and to the educational system (Kobol and Musek, 2000).

The second group is a more subjective or psychological one, as its determination of academic success is reliant upon the students attitudes of his significant others, and towards success and himself. Consequently, academic achievement could be defined as self perception and self-evaluation of one's objective academic success (Kobol & Musek 2000).

Academic achievement has been defined as the scholastic standing of a student at a given moment (Adeyemi, 2011). This scholastic standing could be explained in terms of grades obtained in a course or group of courses. It is also the level of attainment of a person in an examination, that is, how an individual is able to demonstrate his or her abilities in an examination (Al-Methen & Wilkinson, 1992). Achievement is a measure of output and the main outputs in education are expressed in terms of learning, that is, changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals as a result of the experience within the school system.

According to the on-line encyclopedia, Wikipedia (n.d), academic achievement is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved the educational goals. It is the ability to study and remember facts and the ability to communicate your knowledge verbally or on paper. It also refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by the teachers or examiners.

Individual differences in academic achievement have been linked to a number of factors such as differences in intelligence or personality. Students with higher mental ability as demonstrated by intelligent quotient (IQ) tests (quick learners) and those who are higher in conscientiousness (linked with good family climate and motivation) tend to achieve highly in academic settings. It is therefore believed that students' academic problems arise from environmental influences such as poor classroom conditions, poor teaching, peer group influences, poor infrastructural facilities, lack of home support (bad family climate) and subject contents. It is for this reason that a student tends to perform better in a particular subject and in another subject, performs poorly. Thus academic achievement is also seen as a measure of subject output.

### **Gender and Academic Achievement**

One of the most topical issues in the current debate all over the world has been that of gender differences and academic achievement among students in schools. Over

the years, there has been a growing awareness of the role of women at home, in schools, and community in general. However worries have equally been expressed about the role of women in the political, social, cultural, psychological, economic, spiritual, scientific and technological one of the most topical issues in the current debate all over the world has been that of gender differences and academic achievement among students in schools. Over the years, there has been a growing awareness of the role of women at home, in schools, and community in general. However worries have equally been expressed about the role of women in the political, social, cultural, psychological, economic, spiritual, scientific and technological.

Gender is the position of a man or woman in the society. It refers to roles or responsibilities ascribed or allowed to either a man or woman by society. Imoh, (2002) cited in Ahukanna (2010) refers to gender as those cultural constructs or conditioning which are product of nurturing, socio-cultural norms, roles and expectations that vary within and between cultures. It is also referred to as the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. This includes the ways in which the different whether real or imagined have been valued, used and relied upon to classify women and men and to assign roles and expectations to them.

Obasi (2006), generally describes the various roles played by males and females and the related power they hold in the society through these roles, for example, women are usually expected to take on caring, domestic chores and remain close to home, while the men are expected to be the main bread winners, working outside the home with greater freedom to move, around in public places. As a result of their physiological role of child bearing, the women are often looked down upon by the society as not effective and efficient. Hence, situations arise where employers would not want to employ a married woman.

In African culture, girls are not familiar with toys that promote interest in science and technology. Their major duty is home management and child-bearing. They are expected to cook and clean while the boys engage in activities such as playing football, making bows and arrows, playing with catapults, flying kites and so on. Bozimo (1991) noted that these activities promote scientific knowledge and thus give them an edge over girls. Babalola and Adedeji (1997) also confirmed that women, throughout the ages and everywhere in the world, have always been considered inferior to men. Scottish local authorities did not introduce gender policies until the early 1990s (Ridwell 2000). Jekayinoluwa (2005) lamented that schools and the nation at large are making profound contributions to the creation of

positive learning environment that could motivate learning achievement more in boys than girls.

## **School location and Academic Achievement**

### **Location and Knowledge of Students in Social Studies**

Performance of students whose parents are living in the urban areas is higher than the achievements of those students whose parents are living in rural areas who has lesser school facilities. Agreeing with this finding Acheampong and Lcvvin in Mulkeen, (2005); Armah, (2013), stated that Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa is concentrated in rural areas where 75% of the poor reside. Although rural areas can provide family-oriented settings, lower crime rates, fresh air, and an enhanced quality of life, many teachers refuse rural postings due to concerns about the quality of housing, classroom facilities, healthcare, school resources, and opportunities for professional development. In support of the above, Ikwumelu and Oyibe (2014) are of the view that, the achievement gap between urban and rural schools is a pressing problem today because past approaches at closing this gap have been largely urban biased in character. Students' knowledge of Social Studies in Junior secondary school in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State differs between urban and rural schools and also skewed toward the traditionally elite schools located in urban centres.

### **Concept of Social Studies**

The concept of Social studies can be understood within the context of the objectives which underlie the philosophy and aims of the society's education, (National Teachers Institute, NTI, 2000). This is true of all countries which have Social Studies in their school curricula. Every society's educational aims and goals are developed to help achieve its national objectives. Eboh (1993) opines that Social Studies, being a subject that deals with the problems of human survival, differ in concept according to the needs of different societies. Consequently, in Nigeria and other parts of the world, Social Studies have no single universally accepted definition. While some educators believe that Social Studies is just another way of studying Geography and History in a more digestible form, some others maintain that it is simply another name for Civics. (Ikwumelu, 2003). Thus, Wronski in Bozimo and Ikwumelu (2005) opines about what Social studies is, or should be, vary from country to country, even within a single nation experts are divided on the issue. The subject has thus been described differently by different persons as extended civics, elementary social science and general studies.



The conflict and confusion that characterize the scholarly definitions of Social Studies education made Barr and Barth (1977:18), to lament that “the field of Social studies education is so caught up in ambiguity, inconsistency, and contradiction that it represents a complex educational enigma ...it (Social Studies) is a schizophrenic bastard child”.

Social studies vary from people to people and country to country. As a result, the definition of Social studies has not enjoyed universal acceptance from educators and social scientists (Okam in Bozimo and Ikwumelu (2009) are of the view that Social studies deals principally with human beings interacting with one another and with their environments.

At the primary school level, Social studies programme is considered as those common learning of man’s interaction with his social and physical environment. It is the study of how man influences and is influenced by his physical, social, political, economic, psychological and cultural environments.

### **Objective of Social Studies: Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Objectives**

#### **Cognitive Objectives**

Cognitive objectives of Social Studies focus on the intellectual domain, and they are stated as generalisations rather than a collection of specific facts.

The selection and organisation of the cognitive objectives for Social Studies could be achieved by constructing a hierarchy of major and minor ideas by bringing together the generalisations from a number of disciplines or by grouping generalisations around themes.

#### **Affective Objectives**

Affective domain is unique because it touches on values, attitudes, beliefs and interests. The affective objectives of Social Studies education are therefore the ones that are capable of exposing the students to a wide variety of ideas, objects, and behaviours, from which they can select and integrate the ones that would constitute their life philosophy.

#### **Psychomotor objectives**

The psychomotor objectives focus on the development of some skills in the students, such as the skills required for investigating social process, communicating and interpreting social data, as well as manipulative skills. Makinde (1979, p39) maintains that in psychomotor domain, "the interplay of cognitive and affective domains result in the development and performance of

various skills". According to him the application of skills such as knowledge, observation, judgement and creativity come under the psychomotor domain”

## **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter will be discussed under the following sub-headings: research design, area of the study, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrument for data collection, validation, and reliability of the instrument and method of data analysis.

### **3.1 Design of the Study:**

The design of this study was a co-relational survey design. A correlational research design according to (Akuezuilo and Agu, 2003) is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group in order to establish the extent of relationship existing among them. This design was used, because it sought to establish the relationship that exists between two or more variables that is the relationship that exists between home environment and students’ academic achievement in Social studies.

### **3.2 Area of the Study:**

The area of the study is Abakaliki Education Zone. Abakaliki Education Zone is one of the three Education Zone in Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State is found in the South-Eastern Geo-political Zone of Nigeria. The State is bounded in the North, South, East and West by Cross River, Enugu, Abia and Imo State respectively. Abakaliki Education Zone which is the area of the study has 74 public secondary schools and numerous private secondary schools. The Universal Basic Education Board (UBEB) at Abakaliki centrally controls these Junior Secondary Schools and each Secondary School is headed by a principal, who perform all management function either directly or through delegation. The area is heavily populated with farmers and low percentage of civil and public Servants. The researcher decided to use Abakaliki Education Zone as area of the study because of the severally reported cases of poor academic achievements of students in the area.

### **3.3 Population of the Study**

The target population for this study comprised all the six hundred and thirty eight (638) Public Junior Secondary school students in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. Out of this, the sample of study was drawn.

### **3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The Simple random sampling technique was used to draw four public secondary schools in the area of the study that had approximately two hundred and fifty-eight (258) students. Out of this four schools, two schools were assigned to the experimental group while the remaining two schools were assigned to the control group using simple random techniques by balloting.

### **3.5 Instrument for Data Collection**

The instrument that was used for this study was researcher developed questionnaire designed to obtain the home background of the students titled home environment identification checklist (H.E.I.CL) and Social Studies Achievement Test (SOSAT). Consultations with two experts in curriculum studies/measurement and evaluation and ideas gathered from literature review Guided the construction of the instruments. The questionnaire is made up part 'A' and part 'B', Part A was on the personal data of the respondents. Part B is on parental factors with which has section A-G. section A on parental level of occupation has 3 items, section B on parental level of education has 6 items, section C parental level of education has 8 items, section D family size has 4 items, section E marital status has 7 items, section F level of income has 3 items and section G parent's expectation has 6 items while Social Studies Achievement Test (SOSAT) has 30 item objective questions centred on Social Studies. The result obtained from the SOSAT will be used to determine the academic achievement scores of the students.

### **3.6 Validation of Instrument:**

The instrument, Social Studies Achievement Test (SOSAT) and Home Environment Identification instrument were face validated by three experts. Two of the experts were from the Arts and Social Science Education Department (Social Studies Option) of the Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki and they reviewed the items of the instrument in terms of clarity of language, adequacy of items in terms of coverage, while the other expert from Measurement and Evaluation Unit of Science Education Department did face the validity of the instrument in terms of content coverage and construct possibilities. The experts restructured some items while the wrong ones were dropped.

### **3.7 Reliability of the Instrument**

Determine the reliability of the instrument, split half and Kuder – Richardson 20 (K-20) statistics were used to determine their reliability coefficients. The instruments were administered to thirty students in a trial testing. Their responses

were collected and used for analysis of expected results. The split half analysis gave a reliability coefficient of 0.74 (Refer to appendix III). The analysis of the achievement test was done using Kuder-Richardson 20, which gave a reliability coefficient of 0.96 that was judged to be of high internal consistency for the instrument. This made the instrument suitable for use. See appendix V.

### **3.8 Method of Data Collection:**

The researcher administered the questionnaire instrument using Direct Delivery Technique (DDT) with the help of three well trained research assistants, one each from the three areas that make up the Abakaliki Education Zones in the State. Each research assistant covered his or her own area. The direct method of questionnaire administration was adopted in the distribution of the instrument. The researcher and the assistants visited the respondents in their schools and administered the instrument on them. They waited for the respondents to respond to instrument before collecting it back on the spot. The direct method was adopted in the data collection to minimize the loss of the instrument. The research assistants were instructed on how to distribute and collect copies of the instrument from the respondents and thereafter hand them over to the researcher for analysis.

### **3.9 Method of Data Analysis:**

The research questions were answered in individual basis using Mean and standard deviation, while the hypotheses were tested using t-test rho. Items that scored 2.50 were accepted while items that scored less than 2.50 were rejected as the decision rule.

## **Presentation of Results**

### **Research Question 1:**

What is the level of Academic Achievement of Social Studies among Junior Secondary school students in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State by Location?

**Table 1: Correlation coefficient between achievement and location**

<b>Location</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Mean (<math>\bar{X}</math>)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Urban	230	59.42%	17.23	High
Rural	270	58.24%	17.94	High

The result of the analysis presented on table 4 reveals that students in the urban area achieve higher in Social Studies than their counter parts in the rural area. This is because the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 59.42% obtained by the urban students is higher than the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 58.24% obtained by the rural students.

**HO<sub>1</sub>** There is no significant difference in the mean achievement score of Social Studies Students among Junior secondary school students Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State based on location.

**Table 1: t-test Analysis on Location as Determinant of Social Studies Achievement.**

<b>Location</b>	<b>N</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>t-cal</b>	<b>t-crit</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Urban	230	59.42	17.23	498	1.75	1.96	Accepted
Rural	270	58.24	17.94				

The result of t-test analysis presented on table 1 reveals that there was no significant difference in the mean achievement score of urban and rural Social Studies Students in the achievement of Social Studies in Abakaliki Education of Ebonyi State. This is because from their responses, the t-calculated value of 0.75 obtained is less than t-critical value of 1.96 shown on the table. Therefore, the researcher failed to reject the null hypotheses.

### **Research Question 2:**

What is the level of Academic Achievement of Social Studies among Students among junior secondary school in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State by Gender?

**Table 1: Description of Social Studies Achievement by Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Mean (<math>\bar{X}</math>)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Male	227	59.67%	16.89	High
Female	273	58.04%	18.19	High

The result of the data analysis presented on table 1 reveals that the level of achievement (Knowledge) possessed by male social studies students is higher than their female counter parts. This is because the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of

59.67% obtained by the male students is higher than the mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) of 58.04% obtained by the female students. Both male and female had high level of Achievement; hence gender was not a determinant of Social studies knowledge among students of Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State.

### Testing of Hypotheses

**HO<sub>2</sub>** There is no significant difference in the mean achievement of Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State based on gender of the respondents.

**Table 2: t-test Analysis on Gender as Determinant of Social Studies Achievement**

Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	dF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	227	59.67	16.89	498	1.04	1.96	N Sig
Female	273	58.04	18.19				

The result of t-test analysis presented on table 6 reveals that there was no significant difference in the mean achievement score of male and female in Abakaliki Education Zone of Ebonyi State. This is because from the responses of the students the t-calculated value of 1.04 obtained is less than t-critical value of 1.96 as shown on the table. The researcher therefore did not reject the null hypotheses.

### Summary of Findings

From the analysis above, the following findings were made:

1. The performance of students in social studies is being affected by school location.
2. Gender does not influence or affects the Academic Achievement of students in social studies.

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