

CHANGE OF SCHOOL ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL INAKWA IBOM NORTH EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT, AKWA IBOM STATE.

By

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Abstract

The study was carried out to investigate the influence of change of school on secondary school students' academic performance in Akwalbom North East Senatorial District. The study adopted an ex-post facto research design. The population of the study was 19,135 senior secondary school two (SS2) students from the 89 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District. A sample of 258 SS2 students was purposively drawn from 18 out of 89 public secondary schools using Proportionate stratified sampling technique. The researchers collected the SS2 sampled students first and second term examination's averages in both the previous and current schools for the 2022/2023 academic session based on the variables (school location and school change) under study from the Vice principals office through the permission granted by the principals. Development of research instrument, validation and reliability of instrument were not done because the researchers made use of already existed data (students' examination averages) from teacher's test instrument. Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions while paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test statistics were used to test the formulated null hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings revealed that there

is a significant difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on school change. It was also revealed that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students in their new school in Public Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on school location. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that Educational Policy makers should lay more emphasis on the implications of change of school due to its effect on students' academic performance.

Keywords: School change, School location and students' academic performance

Introduction

Changes in school environments may affect students' social, psychological and academic performance. The social, educational, residential, and familial changes that usually accompany school changes are likely to exacerbate the factors and negatively impact academic performance. Academic achievement is one of the major factors considered by employers in hiring workers especially for the fresh graduates (Bassey, 2018). Academic performance in the secondary schools determines whether the students will proceed to university for higher degree or be able to secure a teaching job (James, 2020). Students' performance also determines quality of education that will be passing to the students by the potential teachers at primary and secondary school levels. Poor performance in institutions of learning spells doom for the students whose life becomes uncertain and full of misery (Akpan, 2016). According to Bassey (2018), Students' academic performance is affected by several factors which include students' learning skills, parental background, peer influence, changing of school, teachers' quality, learning infrastructure among others.

Musa and Okoro (2021) pointed out that kids who encountered changes in their social, residential, and family settings concurrently with school transitions showed larger losses in academic performance. Academic performance was unaffected by very steady school transitions where children moved with groups of classmates and weren't brought on by home moves or targeted at particular pupils (Ahmed and Ibrahim, 2018). Children's individual emotional, mental, behavioral, and physical

reactions to stressful life events like relocating to a new school are therefore likely to differ based on their personal features including gender and status as a student in special education (Obi and Mohammed, 2020). The curriculum and coursework are frequently interrupted or repeated when a student switches schools (Adeleke and Ojo, 2019).

In some cases, mobile students are required to repeat material they have already mastered or when it is assumed they have already mastered material on which new learning is being scaffold, this varying academic standards and expectations, or "curricular incoherence," can present problems (Bello and Idris, 2021). According to Eze and Onuoha, (2019), mobile students have trouble participating in academic activities at school. These are probably caused by the social-emotional difficulties that come with any transfer as well as the lack of cooperation between parents and schools in the academic lives of children. Furthermore, the process of transitioning to a new school presents several specific challenges for students in Nigeria. Firstly, they must cope with their own psychological and physiological responses to the stress of the transition (Udo and Ekwueme, 2018). Secondly, they need to adjust to their new educational environment while maintaining a stable sense of identity amidst unfamiliar surroundings (Obioma and Ogunsola, 2018). In addition, students must navigate the emotional impact of leaving behind familiar teachers and friends, while simultaneously forming new relationships with adults and peers in the new school (Onu and Nwosu, 2019). According to James (2020), a different school may offer a fresh learning environment that conforms more closely to a family's educational ideals and expectations or better suits the academic demands of a particular student.

Consequently, school change that associates with school location may also lead to deviations in students' academic performance. The location of a school can vary widely depending on its specific context and setting (Akpan, 2016). Schools can be found in urban or rural areas, and they may be situated in different parts of a city or town. Urban schools are typically located in densely populated areas with access to various amenities and services. They may be situated near residential neighborhoods or within the city center, making them easily accessible for students living in the vicinity. Urban schools often have smaller campuses due to limited space and may face challenges related to traffic and parking (Udo and Ekwueme, 2018). Rural schools provide a close-knit community

atmosphere, and students may need to travel longer distances to reach them (Smith, *et al.* 2022). It's pertinent to note that, the specific location of a school can significantly impact its resources, student demographics, and overall educational experience. This shows that when students are faced by school change from rural to urban area or otherwise, the academic performance of such students may be affected.

In line with this, Smith, *et al.* (2022) examines the relationship between school change and students' academic performance. A comprehensive search of academic databases was conducted, resulting in a selection of 20 relevant studies that met the inclusion criteria. The studies encompassed various school change scenarios, including school transfers, school closures, and educational reforms. The academic performance of students was assessed using standardized test scores, grade point averages (GPAs), or other objective measures. The meta-analysis revealed a moderate negative effect size (-0.30, $p < 0.001$), indicating that school change is associated with a decrease in students' academic performance.

On the other hand, Bassey (2018) investigated the relationship between school change and students' academic performance over time. A cohort of 500 students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds was followed over a three-year period, covering various school changes such as transitioning to a new school, grade promotion, and changes in educational programs. Academic performance was assessed using standardized test scores, teacher evaluations, and self-reported measures. The longitudinal analysis revealed a complex relationship between school change and students' academic performance. While some students' demonstrated temporary declines in performance immediately after school change.

Johnson and Anderson (2023) investigated the relationship between school location and students' academic performance. A sample of 1,000 students from various school locations, including urban, suburban, and rural areas, was selected for the study. Academic performance was assessed using standardized test scores and grade point averages (GPAs). The instrument used for data collection was a self-developed questionnaire consisting of items related to school location, academic performance, and student demographics. The validity and reliability of the instrument were established through expert review and pilot testing. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were conducted to explore the relationship

between school location and academic performance. The findings indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between school location and students' academic performance. Specifically, students from urban schools demonstrated higher average test scores and GPAs compared to students from suburban and rural schools.

Conversely, children's developments are influenced by multiple environments such as; schools, peer groups, neighborhoods, and families. Stability in these environments is very important for children's development. Children rely on the "secure base" provided by their parents, teachers, and many others. They try to cope with the constant changes that are part of normal development as they grow physically, cognitively, and emotionally. Changes in school environments, as well as the changes in social groups, family structure, residential setting, or educational placements that usually accompany school changes, are sources of instability and stress for children. These changes challenge children to maintain a cohesive sense of self, deal with losses of relationships with peers and teachers, form new ones, as well as adjust to inconsistent academic standards and expectations. However, despite the challenges posed on students' change of school, the question is; what are the factor pre-disposing changes of school amongst students? What is the influence of School change and location on Students' Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District?

Purpose of the Study

This study assessed the influence of School change on Students' Academic Performance; determine the difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools based on school change as well as the difference in the academic performance of students on school change in Public schools based on school location in senior secondary schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District.

The following research questions and hypotheses guided the study.

1. What is the difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change?
2. What is the difference in the academic performance of students on school change in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school location?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change.
2. There is no significant difference in the academic performance of students in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school location.

Methods

The study adopted an ex- post facto research design. Ex-post facto design aimed at ascertaining the influence of school change on academic performance of students in AkwaIbom North-East senatorial District. The design was considered appropriate because the researcher will not manipulate the variables as they already existed. The population of the study was 19,135 senior secondary two (SS2) from 89 public secondary schools in the district. Purposive stratified sampling technique was used to select the sample size of 258 from 18 out of 89 secondary schools. Purposive was used because the study focused on students that changed school. Data collection was students documentary results from the administrative records of the Vice principal academics of the schools for the 2022/2023 academic session. Data for the current performance was collected from the cumulative hard-copy result records of the students from the Vice principal academics of the sampled schools. Instrument validation was not done because the researcher made use of the already existed data. (Students grade point averages). Data collected was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while paired sample t- test and independent sample t-test were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significant.

Results

Answering of Research Questions

Table 1: Summary of Mean and Standard deviation for Students’ academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change

	School change	n	Mean	S.D	Mean difference
Academic performance	Previous	258	58.60	15.31	
	Current	258	44.69	13.91 13.76	

Source: Computed by the Researcher using data from the respondents.

The result as indicated on Table 1 revealed the students performance mean and standard deviation scores in their previous schools (\bar{x} = 58.60, S.D=15.31) and the performance mean and standard deviation scores in their current schools (\bar{x} = 44.69, S.D=13.76). With the mean difference of 13.91, this implies that there is a difference in the Students’ academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change.

Table 2: Summary of Mean and Standard deviation for performance of students in their current school in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school location

	School location	N	Mean	S.D	Mean difference
Academic performance	Rural area	120	44.26	13.77	
	Urban area	138	45.06	0.80 13.79	-

Source: Computed by the Researcher using data from the respondents.

The result as indicated on Table 2 revealed that students’ performance mean and standard deviation scores in current schools in rural area (\bar{x} = 44.26, S.D=13.77) and their counter parts in urban area schools had the performance mean and standard deviation scores (\bar{x} =

45.06, SD=13.79). With the mean difference of -0.80, this implies that there is very slight difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school location.

Testing of Null Hypotheses

Table 3: Summary of Paired Samples t-test of performance scores in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change

School change	n	Mean	S.D.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision at .05 Alpha Level
Previous	258	58.60	15.31	.000	(S) Ho1 Rejected
Current	258	44.69	13.76		

S= Significant at .05 alpha level

Source: Computed by the Researcher using data from the respondents.

In Table 3, the sig. (2-tailed) value for the difference in mean difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change is .000. This significant level is less than .05 alpha level in which the decision is based. This indicated that there is a significant difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change. Therefore, the formulated null hypothesis 1 was rejected.

Table 4: Summary of Independent Samples t-test of performance of students in their current school in Public Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on school location

School location	n	Mean	S.D.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision at .05 Alpha Level
Rural area	120	44.26	13.77	.643	(S) Ho2 Retained
Urban area	138	45.06	13.78		

S= Significant at .05 alpha level

Source: Computed by the Researcher using data from the respondents.

In Table 4, the sig. (2-tailed) value for the difference in the academic performance of students in their current school in Public Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on school location is .643. This significant level is greater than .05 alpha level in which the decision is based. This indicated that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students in their current school in Public Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on school location. Therefore, the formulated null hypothesis 2 was retained.

Discussion of the Findings

The result from Research question one shows that there is a difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on school change. The result of the test of hypothesis one (H_{01}) also revealed that there is a significant difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on school change. The findings agreed with the findings of Smith, *et al.* (2022) on the relationship between school change and students' academic performance who reported that there was a significant school change and students' academic performance. The finding is also in supported with the findings of Bassey (2018) on the relationship between school change and students' academic performance over time who reported that there is a significant relationship between school change and students' academic performance.

The result could be attributed to the fact that School change often disrupts students' familiar routines, social networks, and academic environments. Adjusting to a new school environment, different teaching styles, and new classmates can take time. During this adjustment period, students may experience temporary declines in their academic performance as they adapt to the changes. Also, School change may involve shifts in curriculum, teaching methods, or educational programs. These changes can impact students' familiarity with the content and instructional approaches. If students are not adequately prepared for these changes or provided with necessary support, it can affect their academic performance. Additionally, School change can also impact students' social and emotional well-being, which, in turn, can influence their academic

performance. Moving to a new school may disrupt students' social relationships, leading to feelings of loneliness, stress, or anxiety. These emotional challenges can affect their ability to concentrate, engage in learning, and perform academically. School change often involves transitioning to new teachers and building new relationships. Positive and supportive teacher-student relationships are crucial for students' academic success. If students struggle to establish connections with their new teachers or experience a lack of support, it can affect their engagement, motivation, and academic performance.

The result from Research question two shows that there is a very slight difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change. The result of the test of hypothesis two (H_{02}) also revealed that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students in their current school in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school location. The findings disagreed with the findings of Johnson and Anderson (2023) on the relationship between school location and students' academic performance who reported that there was a significant relationship school location and students' academic performance.

The result could be attributed to the fact that effective teaching, supportive leadership, individual student factors, family support, and a positive school culture can create an environment conducive to academic success, regardless of the geographical location of the school. Therefore, even though school location may have some indirect influences on students' academic performance, it is important to recognize that it is not the sole or primary determinant.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is hereby concluded that there is a significant difference in the Students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools, AkwaIbom North East Senatorial District based on school change. Also school location had no statistically significant effect on students' academic performance.

Based on the findings and the conclusions reached, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educational Policy makers should lay more emphasis on the implications of school change at senior secondary school level due to its effect on students academic performance
2. Parents and teachers should take cognizance on the changes that occur in children's lives along with school change and provide appropriate support based on the curricular that occur
3. Schools should have counseling units to ensure that students who change school are guided and assisted properly.

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