

Influence of School Location on Secondary School Students' Academic Achievement in English Language Summary Writing in Makurdi, Benue State

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Annotation: *The study investigated the influence of school location on secondary school students' achievement in summary writing. The study was guided by one research question and one hypothesis. The study employed the Ex-post-facto research design. The population of the study comprised one thousand, six hundred and fifty-nine (1659) SS II students. The sample size of the study was one hundred and seventy six (176) SS II students drawn from four intact classes, in four co-educational schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue state. The Instrument adopted for the study was English Language Summary Writing Achievement Test (ELSWAT). Data collected were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation for the research question and Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to test the hypothesis. The findings showed that students in the urban areas performed better than those in rural areas. Based on the findings, it was recommended that rural schools should be improved upon in terms of social facilities that could aid teaching. Also, students should be encouraged to read widely so as to improve their summary writing skills irrespective of their location.*

Keywords: *school location, urban area, rural area, academic achievement, English summary writing and students.*

Introduction

The most widely used language in Nigeria is English. The majority of Nigerian schools use it as their official language and primary means of communication. Politics, law, business, education, and the government have all continued to be conducted in English. In a country with multiple official languages like Nigeria, it is the only effective form of communication. The English language's primary function in the sphere of education is where its greatest influence can be seen. The Federal Republic of Nigeria makes English a key subject in junior and senior secondary schools and uses it as the language of teaching for all other subjects—aside from Nigerian languages—in recognition of the fundamental role English plays in education. Another policy in Nigeria is that before being admitted to any course of their choice at any higher institution, applicants must have earned a credit pass in English (NERDC 2007)

This implies that a student's academic goals are mostly dependent on their level of English proficiency. Because of this, Ezekoli and Igbor (2016) note that students who struggle with the language of instruction are likely to struggle in a variety of courses that are taught in the target language. According to the National Policy on Education (FRN 2013), the goal of teaching the English language is to provide students with permanent literacy and the fundamental language skills necessary for effective communication. Competence in all four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—is necessary for language proficiency. While reading and writing are referred to as literacy skills, listening and speaking are considered oracy skills.

Writing is a useful language skill that is crucial to language education. It's the ability to write insightful texts like narratives, letters, reports, descriptions, invitations, or educational materials. Writing is a kind of communication that depends on the context, the goal, and the audience. It also comes in a variety of formats, such as essays or compositions, letters, memos, personal notes, and summary (Aliyu 2010).

In education, the ability to write summary is crucial. It is focused with identifying the core idea of a piece of writing and connecting those ideas to supporting ones. The ability to comprehend the key ideas and rhetorical organization of a text and the ability to create a short and clear restatement of the author's substance are two abilities that must work together in this integrative activity (Enright, Garbe 2000). The concept implies that creating a decent summary requires the capacity to recognize and pick out key information, including the text's core themes. Students should ensure that the fundamental point is not lost, and the original text's content is not altered. Writing summary is essential for academic achievement since it helps students work more efficiently in other disciplines, makes it much easier for them to prepare for exams, and develop their vocabulary and reading comprehension as they identify the key points of a text.

Summary writing is an inherent part of comprehension. This is because summary writing promotes active reading which influences comprehension (Mokeddem, 2016). This suggests that summary writing and reading comprehension have a close relationship. One cannot write a decent summary without comprehending it, and writing a summary is a test of comprehension. This indicates that before producing a summary, one must understand the text's message and choose only the important parts to be summed up (Aimunmondium 2009, Cho 2012, and Ekawat 2012) writing a summary involves two first steps: reading and comprehension. This explains why producing a summary typically requires reading. When students participate in summary, Thiede and Anderson (2003) found that they are self-evaluating their reading comprehension and using solutions to address breakdowns in comprehension. So it stands to reason that summary improve learning and comprehension in the classroom.

A concerted effort should be made to assist students in achieving a passable level of proficiency in summary writing given its significance to students and the difficulty of the work. It will be challenging for students to keep up with academic demands if they are unable to create effective summaries. Therefore, developing summary writing abilities is essential for students to thrive in the classroom.

According to Nwogu and Nwoke (2000), good summary writing requires the identification of the appropriate skills that must be cultivated. This indicates that in order for students to succeed in English language exams, they must develop strong summary writing skills. These skills include the capacity to separate essential ideas/points from supporting details, the ability to write the points down clearly and succinctly, the ability to paraphrase and restate, and the ability to choose and articulate these points extremely fast. In order for students to be able to write effective summary, teachers must introduce them to these skills. From the aforementioned, it can be inferred that students' achievements in summary writing are a significant factor in determining their academic performance.

However, given the persistent complaints from teachers, parents, and the general public about students' failure, it appears that students' achievement in summary writing is low. Although they

might be able to identify the main concept in a piece of writing, students may struggle to paraphrase. According to Ukume (2018), secondary school students struggle to write summary, and this struggle is seen in their high failure rate. It is almost impossible to excel in school without summary writing skills, hence the location of the school may be to blame. Every school has a unique atmosphere. Locational differences between schools may indicate that the schools are subject to different socioeconomic and demographic limitations. According to Akpan (2001), a child's immediate environment has a significant impact on how he develops socially. The location of a school can have an impact on a student's academic success, the researchers added. According to Uzoegwu (2005), the location of schools affects the availability of learning facilities, infrastructures, qualified teachers, and class sizes. This implies that having access to or not having access to these facilities may enhance or hinder students' success while writing summary. In their respective research, Egbe (2015) and Zumyil (2019) found that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean test scores of students in urban and rural locations, favouring urban schools. According to Ulaka (2015) and Nnamani (2017), a student's school performance is unaffected by their location. According to Akabogu (2002), students in urban areas outperformed those in rural areas in terms of reading comprehension test scores. According to Ogbonna (2009) and Adedukun (2019), students in rural areas performed better than those in urban areas.

The study sought to ascertain the impact of school location on students' achievement in summary writing due to the discrepancies in researchers' conclusions regarding the relationship between school location and student achievement.

Purpose of the Study

The specific objective of this study was to find out if the mean achievement scores of students in urban schools would differ with that of students in rural schools in summary writing.

Research Question.

- i. What would be the difference between the mean achievement scores of students in rural and urban schools in summary writing?

Research hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference between the mean achievement of students in rural and urban schools in summary writing.

Methodology

The study adopted the Ex-post-Facto research design because the independent variables/rural and urban schools have already occurred. The Ex-post-Facto research design usually aims at the discovery of possible causes of behaviour pattern by comparing subjects in which the pattern is present with similar subjects in whom the behaviour pattern is not present or absent to a lesser degree (Emaikive 2015). The population of the comprised 1659 SS II students in the twenty one (21) public secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. The sample size consists of 176 Senior Secondary School two SS II students chosen from four intact classes, in four co-educational schools in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. Multi-sampling technique was used in drawing the respondents for the study. The instrument for data collection was the Summary Writing Achievement Test (SWAT). Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while the hypothesis was tested using 0.05 level of significance using the ANCOVA.

Results.

Research Question Six: What are the mean achievement scores of urban and rural students in summary writing?

Table 9: Mean analysis of the influence of location on students' achievement in summary writing

Location	Pre-test			Post-test		
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean Gain Score
Urban	99	5.48	2.38	15.09	6.14	9.61
Rural	77	3.27	1.65	9.12	7.33	5.85

Table 9 shows that the students in urban schools had pre-test mean achievement score of ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 2.38$) and post-test mean achievement score of ($M = 15.09$, $SD = 6.14$), while students in rural schools had pre-test mean achievement score of ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 1.65$) and post-test mean achievement score of ($M = 9.12$, $SD = 7.33$). The mean gain scores of 9.61 and 5.85 for the students in urban schools and those in rural schools respectively indicate that the students in urban schools had higher post-test mean achievement score than the students in rural schools. Post-test achievement standard deviations of 6.14 and 7.33 for the two groups of students respectively indicate that the variation in the individual achievement scores of the students in rural schools is higher than those of the students in urban schools.

H₀₆: There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of urban and rural students in summary writing.

Table 10: Analysis of covariance of the influence of location on students' achievement in summary writing

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Approach	7689.739 ^a	4	1922.435	201.406	.000	.825
Intercept	5086.467	1	5086.467	532.888	.000	.757
Pre-test	1.438E-005	1	1.438E-005	.000	.999	.000
Treatment	6102.274	1	6102.274	639.310	.000	.789
Location	289.641	1	289.641	30.345	.000	.151
Treatment * Location	80.608	1	80.608	8.445	.004	.047
Error	1632.210	171	9.545			
Total	36747.000	176				
Corrected Total	9321.949	175				

a. R Squared = .825 (Adjusted R Squared = .821)

Table 10 reveals that location had a significant influence on students' achievement in summary writing, $F(1, 171) = 30.345$, $p = .000$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of urban and rural students in summary writing in favour of the mean achievement score of the students in urban schools.

Discussion of Findings.

The results of this study indicate that pupils in urban areas performed better than those in rural areas in terms of achievement differences between urban and rural students. In the test of the hypothesis, it was discovered that this was statistically significant. In other words, the null hypothesis was not accepted, indicating that urban students outperformed rural students in terms of academic performance. This finding may be due to the fact that students in urban areas benefit more from the availability of resources nearby, making it easier for them to summarize a text or conversation and hence outperform students in urban areas in terms of academic achievement. As opposed to students in rural areas, who struggle with reading just their textbooks and taking notes for exams?

The results of this study conflict with those of Ulaka (2015) and Nnamani (2017), who found in their respective studies that students' achievement in language and other academic disciplines was not significantly influenced by their geographic location. Studies by Ogbonna (2009) and Adedkun (2019), whose findings similarly showed that students from rural areas outperformed those from urban schools, are at odds with the findings of the current study. However, the findings supports Egbe (2015) and Zумыil (2019) who found that urban students outperformed rural students in terms of academic achievement.

Conclusion

Based on the findings from this research, it can be concluded that the achievement of students in public examinations as put forward by the general public and attested by the West African Examination Council's Chief Examiner's Reports over the years. Particularly, the poor achievement is from students in schools situated in rural areas. However, if the situation is properly managed, and resolved, the achievement of schools located in the rural areas will greatly improve.

Recommendations.

In view of the findings drawn from this study, the following recommendations have been made;

1. Qualified and experienced teachers should be posted to schools in rural areas, to improve students' summary writing skills.
2. Government should provide social amenities in rural areas.
3. School management should provide teaching and learning materials.

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