Border Communities' Socio-Economic Activities and Students' Academic Performance in Yewa Division of Ogun State

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Abstract
This study investigated students' level of participation in farming, marketing and trans-border trading activities and the influence of these on their academic performance in Yewa division of Ogun State. Two hundred and forty senior secondary school I students from eight schools, located in border towns and villages were the sample. Questionnaire and academic results of the students at the end of their junior secondary school three were used for the research. Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings showed that students' level of involvement was high in farming and average in local marketing and trans-border trading. Performance in English language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science was about average. There is no significant contribution of combined socio-economic activities of students to their academic performance. The need for policies to improve students' academic performance was recommended.

Keywords: Socio-economic activities, border communities, labour transition, and academic performance.

Introduction

Social studies is the study of people in relation to each other and to their world. It's an issue that focused and inquiry that based on interdisciplinary subject. It is a field which deals with human behavior, relationships, resources and institutions. Community study is therefore an important dimension of social studies. Border communities are unique because they are a collection of villages and towns in-between one republic state and another. They are typical groups of locations that divide a sovereign nation or state from another. Coplan (2010) noted that borders and its communities in Africa are thought to be the 'arbitrary' product of the 1885 Berlin conference, but Katzerellenbogen (2016) averred that there were many other boundaries–making processes and events, and territorial claims which were not in fact recognized based on effective occupation as specified in the conference's final act.

Notably, African borders, in particular Nigeria lack a unified social identity coupled with a notorious porousness. This accounts for the intensity of activities that characterize these border communities. In Nigeria, border communities are located in some states include: Lagos, Ogun, Oyo in South-West, Sokoto, Katsina, Kebbi, Jigawa, in the North-West, Yobe, Borno, Adamawa, Taraba in the North-East, Cross-river, Akwa-Ibom, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta in South-South.



Fig 1 Border Communities in Nigeria (Source: The Border Communities Development Agency)

In Ogun State, border communities are located in Yewa division of the State. Some of these communities (Afolayan, 1998) are: Aseri-Owode, Ajegunle, Idiroko, Maun, in Ipokia LGA; Obele, Ohunbe, Ibeku, Igbokofin in Egbado North LGA; Alari, Ifonyintedo in Egbado South LGA; Kanga, Ilara, Iwoye-ketu in Imeko-Afon LGA, among other places. Most of the border communities in Nigeria are purely rural, with very low social infrastructures and epicenter of all various socio-economic activities due to availability of human capital. It has to be born in mind that there is no significant biological difference between border and main communities but there are significant social differences as a result of the state of the environment.

Residents and settlers in borderlands in Nigeria are known to engage in legitimate socio-economic and educational activities which are farming, trading, artisan, hunting, blacksmithing, pottery, importation and exportation of goods, while average number of children and teenagers attend schools. They engage in any and some of these activities to satisfy immediate and minimize out–of-pocket expenses. Farming is the most thriving activity in the South-western borderlands. Apparently, most of the people in these areas are farmers. They engage in arable farming and cultivate, cassava, maize, beans, vegetables coupled with fishing activities on the Yewa River (Adetunji, 2014).

Also, trading is another important socio-economic activity among the people. This happens in

numerous daily and periodic markets distributed across the area. Women dominated trading in most of the communities. It serves as a secondary occupation and a meeting point for the rural dwellers from the surrounding villages and other West African countries including; Republic of Benin, Togo and Ghana (Ogun State Annual, 2018). In another note, another off-farm economic activity in border communities is trans-border trading. The nearness of these communities to the neighbouring countries has put the inhabitants on the advantage of economic relation with foreigners (Oyewole, 2003; Adetunji, 2014, & Aluede, 2019). The evolution of the enterprise was traced to the colonial era, a period when French and British colonial administrators exploited and monopolized trade in their respective colonies (colonial Nigeria and the Benin republic) to the disadvantage of local traders, and a development that catalyzed people to engage in clandestine trading activities across the respective borderlands. Aluede (2019) further ascertained that there are variations between trans-border trading in the colonial era and post-colonial periods. The involvement of both the residents and settlers notwithstanding their age has encouraged many students to participate in the illicit enterprise. Literature has ascertained that male gender participate in trans-border activity than female counterparts (Akyuz, 2017). Also, Ajayi (2000) hinted that the number of boy's involved in all these socio-economic activities narrowly outraged that of girl. Students, boys and girls actively participate in all this socioeconomic activities particularly trans-border. The quarry therefore is: to what extent do students' participation in the socioeconomic activities impact on their academic performance? Apparently, social studies educators do not talk of border communities in a neutral descriptive sense. For them, border communities are unique in terms of art, culture, custom-pattern, religion, socio-economic activities (Brunet-Jailly, 2011 & Sargent and Matthews, 2011). However, there is no much literature concerning academic performance of students in border communities from them.

Notably, the geo-economic activities of border communities in Yewa Division in Ogun State pose an environmental problem to teaching-learning in their schools. This is because, from the above review, it is established that students in borderlands engage in what could be described as “from school-to-market lifestyle" (Oyewole, 2003) especially trans-border trading. This is done in preparation for school-to-labour transition. Border communities have “narrow bases of education and mass illiteracy”. But little or nothing is known empirical in regards to the contribution of these socio-economic activities of border communities to students' academic performance and attitude to schooling. Coplan (2010) wrote that “it is worthy to note that African border communities' studies have suffered from some particular disadvantages”. Also, Venken, Kaisto and Brambilla (2021) expressed their displeasure over prolonged neglect of study on borderlands and its communities. They reflected in their work that the experiences of children and young people (students) in the turmoil of border changes and border crossings remain under-researched. The paper is therefore, concerned with empirical investigation of the contributions of socio-economic activities of border communities to students' academic performance.

Statement of the problem

The study investigated the relationship and contribution of the socio-economic activities to the level of students' academic performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Yewa division of Ogun State. In addressing this problem, the following research questions were raised:

i. What is the level of students' involvement in the socio-economic activities in Yewa division?
ii. What is the level of students' performance in English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science?
iii. Is there any significant contribution of the socio-economic activities of students-farming, trans-border trading and local marketing to their academic performance.

Method

This study design is ex-post facto, whereby students' involvement in socio-economic activities has occurred. Four local governments in Yewa Division of Ogun State that have largely border communities were purposively selected. Eight secondary schools that are in border communities in these four LGAs qualified for inclusion in the study. Thirty SSS1 students were selected using simple random technique (from their registration numbers in the register) in each school. They were purposively stratified to include male and female students. The total sample was two hundred and forty students. Two instruments were used for the study, namely questionnaire and students' scores in four major subjects (English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science) at the end of JSSIII in their respective schools. These scores were collected by the researchers from the school authorities. A researcher-designed questionnaire of 30 items for each of, farming, trans-border trading and local marketing titled; "Students' Participation in Socio-Economic Activities (SPISEA)" was used to elicit information from the respondents. The items used 5 likert type scale of *Very often* to *Not at all*, and weighted 54 establish level of involvement in their activities. It was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation. Trial test was conducted in a LGA with border communities in the State using 30 students. Test- retest method was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Thus, reliability coefficient of 0.8 obtained is very high. The questions covered the students' experience on farming with their parents, their participation in trading between Nigeria and Republic of Benin, and their involvement in local marketing across border communities. This took approximately 15 minutes to fill out, sampling by ticking on the preferred response. Data collected were scored and graded as appropriate, using percentage, t-test, correlation and regression.

Results

Result are presented according to the research questions.

Research Question: What is the level of students' involvement in the socio-economic activities in Yewa division?

Students' level of involvement in socio-economic activities is presented in table one.

Table 1: Students' level of involvement in socio-economic activities in Yewa border communities

SCHOOL	FARMING MAX (150)	TRANS-BORDER TRADING MAX (150)	LOCAL MARKETING MAX (150)
1.	87(58%)	48 (32%)	73 (49%)
2.	124(83%)	50 (33%)	102 (68%)
3.	131 (87%)	57(38%)	99 (66%)
4.	102 (88%)	63 (42%)	97 (65%)
5.	82 (55%)	63 (42%)	97 (65%)
6.	97 (68%)	85 (57%)	111 (74%)
7.	86 (57%)	43 (29%)	90 (60%)
8.	104 (69%)	58 (39%)	119 (79%)
ALL	813 (67.8%)	448(37.3%)	790 (52.6%)

Table 1 indicates schools that are anonymised with numbers 1-8, and the various levels at which the students were involved in each socio-economic activity in the area. Farming has the highest level of activity that the students were involved often by both male and female. It has 813 total score amounting to 67.8%. Interestingly, students' level of involvement in local marketing is about average. It sum score is 790 which amounts to 52.6%. Meanwhile, trans-border trading as an activity has a low level of students' involvement. Its extent is 448 sum scores, amounting to 37.3%. In farming, schools 4, 3 and 2 are highly involved, while schools 5, 7 and 1 are least involved. In trans-border trading only school 6 was a little above average, while others were below average. For local marketing, schools 8 and 6 were highly involved, while there is no discernible pattern among the schools in the three activities, save to say that school 1 is consistently low in all the activities.

Research Question 2: What is the level of students' performance in English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science?

Table 2: Students performance in English Language, Mathematics, Social Studies and Integrated Science

SCHOOL	ENGLISH LANGUAGE		MATHEMATICS		SOCIAL STUDIES		INTEGRATED SCIENCE	
	$\bar{X}$	S.D	$\bar{X}$	S.D	$\bar{X}$	S.D	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1.	2.87	0.86	2.60	1.00	2.40	1.10	2.60	0.97
2.	2.73	1.11	2.70	1.18	2.67	1.16	2.50	1.17
3.	2.47	0.97	3.03	0.77	1.60	0.62	1.40	0.72
4.	2.80	0.89	2.77	1.0	2.20	0.93	2.17	1.09
5.	3.03	1.03	3.00	1.11	2.93	1.02	2.93	0.91
6.	2.80	0.93	2.53	1.04	2.67	0.76	2.50	1.01
7.	1.97	0.85	2.50	1.04	2.23	1.01	2.80	0.89
8.	2.23	0.97	2.33	0.92	2.33	1.06	2.80	0.89
ALL	2.61	1.00	2.68	1.04	2.38	1.03	2.46	1.05

Table 2 shows that the students' scores were converted to grade point average. They performed best at Mathematics than other subjects as it overall mean score is 2.68. It appeared on the table that the students' performance in English language is better as their performance mean score is 2.61 which is much closer to that of Mathematics. Performance in Integrated Science in the area sampled is good as it has sum mean score of 2.46. Meanwhile, the performance of students at Social Studies is poor when compared with other students' mean score. It has mean score of 2.38. Obviously, school 5 performed best with mean score 3.03 in English Language, followed by schools 1, 4, 6, 3, 2 which performed better. But performances of school 8 and 7 are relatively good when compared with other schools. Further, looking at schools performances at Mathematics, school 3 performed best with mean score of 3.03, followed by schools 5, 4, 2, 1, 6 and 7 which are better, while school 8 performance is good. According to the table, performance of school 5 is best at Integrated Science with mean score 2.93. Also, performance of school 5 with mean score 2.93 is best at Social Studies. Schools 2, 6, 1, 7, and 8 performed better, while school 1 performed good with mean score 1.60.

Research Question 3: Is there any significant contribution of the socio-economic activities of students-farming, trans-border trading and local marketing to their academic performance?

Table 3: Summary of contribution of combined socio-economic activities of students to their academic performance

		Model
		1
R		0.052[9]
R Square		0.003
Adjusted R square		-0.002
Std. Error of the Estimate		3.156
Change Statistics	R square change	0.003
	F change	0.635
	df1	1
	df2	238
	Sig. F change	0.426

Anova[b] of contribution of combined socio-economic activities of student to their academic performance

Model	**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1 Regression Residual Total	6.324 2371.076 2377.400	1 238 239	6.324 9.963	0.635	0.426[a]

Coefficients of contribution of combined socio-economic activities of students to their academic performance

Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**T**	**Sig.**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1 (constant) TOTEMSI	9.112 -5.54E-02	0.734 0.070	 -0.052	12.418 -0.797	0.000 0.426

From the table, the R-squared is-0.002 which is very low, that is, the proportion of variation in the dependent variable to the model is very low thereby the model does not fit the data. This inwardly means that there is no significant contribution of combined socio-economic activities of students to their academic performance.

Discussion and Conclusion

From the results presented in the tables above, the study shows that farming becomes the socio-economic activity that the students get involved very often due to the rural nature of the area. The study agrees with Oyewole (2005) which emphasized the fact that most significant proportion of students (male and female) involved in farming. This they do to keep their personal standard of living intact and settle minor economic demands. This further supports the works of Considine & Zappala (2002) that students from disadvantaged family at border used to engage in farming profession to boost income as poverty rate is high in such areas.

The result of research question two shows that the performance of students was best in Mathematics. This is not in agreement with the work of Graetz (1995) that students who participate in socio-economic activities are less likely to perform better in specialized Mathematics and Science subject. It is to note that school-related factors suggested in the separate works of Bojuwoye (1992) and Oyedeji (2006) have much assistance on the overall performance of the students.

The result of the analysis of research question three using regression shows no major contribution if socio-economic activities to their academic performance. The statistical finding indicates that three out of one thousand students were affected academically. It is in disagreement apparently with the work of Vella (2006) that the more students involve in socio-economic related activities, the much stronger the effect on their academic performance. The experience of students in socio-economic activities is an attempt to prepare them for quickly high successful school-to-labour market transition (Coleman and Jenck, 2001). It is not totally augur well to state that socio-economic activities have no effect or contribution to the academic performance of students but appear lesser on subject specific indicator on few students' performance which cut across the entire four core subjects that served as independent variable. Taking a cognizance decision from the foregoing, it is glaring that parents in Yewa border communities in Ogun State are

more significant in terms of socio-academic activities. In addition, the most significant time of the students was spent in their academic pursuit.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, there is still the need for Government and other policymakers and educational/stakeholders to put up an educational standing order to restrain students from involving in extensive socio-economic activities especially trans-border trading. Policies should be made as per neighborhood and community based frameworks for addressing students from disadvantaged background. Likewise, similar research needs to be carried out in other border communities of Nigeria to ascertain the level of contribution of socio-economic activities to academic performance of students.

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