



THE INFLUENCE OF POVERTY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN: WESTERN RURAL DISTRICT, SIERRA LEONE AS A CASE STUDY

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Abstract:

This doctoral research focuses on specific topics as indicated in the content of the proposal. This proposal pictures out the plans and strategies to be applied in writing a formidable doctoral thesis. It starts with an overview of the background of the study, together with the problem statement. Besides, it points out the purpose of the study, and clearly spells out the aim and objectives. The state of the Arts covers a brief literature review, significant and audience of the research. Furthermore, there is clear explanation of the methodology, methods to be used, and an indication of the coverage for the study, the population and sampling procedures of the research. The findings are highlighted engulf in the expected outcomes and results. There is also a snapshot of the organizational chart and plan of activities for the research.

Keywords: poverty, academic performance, school going children

1. Content of the Dissertation Project Proposal

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1.1 Background of the study

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly which constitutes representatives from almost every country in the world adopted the United Nation's Millennium Declaration in September 2000. The declaration highlighted various goals known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The representatives committed their Nations to a united world partnership in reducing extreme poverty and the declaration bounded within a set time frame that should be reached in 2015. The declaration covers the elimination or eradication of poverty as against 2010. Unfortunately, that goal was not achieved by 2015. In other word, the Millennium Development Goals did not meet all the goals within the time frame particularly that of poverty reduction strategies. The Assembly further improved the goals (from Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)), fortunately, one of the goals is the closure of extreme poverty by 2030. In a stress to strongly eradicate poverty, the SDG included a goal regarding Education. The goal targets the promotion of quality Education for Children world over.

The Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) achieved some substance and improvement in some areas in the world, but poverty eradication and poor Education quality still bear some fruits in Africa. (A report from Borgen Project.Org, November 9, 2015). Gallup World (2013) highlighted that, the poorest countries with the highest proportion of residents living in extreme poverty were all in Sub-Sahara Africa. It went on to stress that; extreme poverty is living on \$1.25 or less a day. (Gallop World, 2013)

World Bank, (2010) report shows an estimation of 414 million people living in extreme poverty across Sub-Saharan Africa. Also World Bank (2010), further indicated that, people living on \$ 1.25 a day accounted for 48.5 Percent of the population. It is awful to know the situation that, Africa remains the poorest continent on Earth. The major consequence of poverty in Africa includes hunger, sickness and lack of basic necessities. Among the leading fact about poverty in Africa, as the Borgen Project shown, there are 10 facts about poverty in Africa (Borgen Report, 2015). The third fact explained that, an estimation one in three people living in Sub-Sahara Africa are famished. The United Nation (food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)), 2010, measured that 239 million people (around 30 percent of the population) in Sub-Sahara Africa were starving. Africa bared the highest percentage in the World. The U.N millennium Project also reported, that over 40 percent of all Africans fines it difficult to eat a meal a day. The forth fact shown that there was lack of electricity. It highlights that in Sub-Sahara Africa, 589 million people are living short of electrical energy. As short, a struggling 80 percent of the population depend on biomass products like wood, Charcoal and manure in order to cook. The sixth fact covers water and sanitation problem. It is shown that, every year, Sub-Sahara Africa loses about \$ 30 billion as productivity is cooperated by water and sanitation problems. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports show that, due to continuing violence, conflict and widespread human rights abuses, about 18 million people are of concern to the agency, including Nationless People and Returnees. The eight fact of poverty in

Africa covers the point that, fewer than 20 percent of Africa women have access to education. It shows that uneducated African women are twice as likely to contract diseases such as AIDS, and 50 percent that population may likely experience immunization of their children. The last fact of Borgen project observed that, more than one million people of more of children under age five pass away every year from malaria defect account for 90 percent of all malaria deceases worldwide. The U.N millennium project has estimated that, child in Africa is defected of malaria every 30 second, or about 3000 each day. (World Bank, World Population Review Data)

As indicated the position and State of Africa, Sierra Leone is one of poorest countries in the world. In a report of World Bank for education in Sierra Leone, 2007, the executive summary, clearly stated that, the recent history of the nation is, unfortunately characterized by the civil war that happened between 1991 and 2002, in which 50 thousand citizens lost their lives, and in which the country lost most of its social, economic, and physical infrastructure. The war destroyed the nation and leaving citizens in poor environment many of them homeless, in traumatic condition and the educational system was paralyzed all over the country. Schools were burnt and teachers killed in some areas. During the civil war, Sierra Leoneans suffered terrible abuse from the Revolutionary United Front rebel fighters. The estimated number was some 70,000 casualties and 2.5 million displaced people. More than 50 percent of the population was displaced from their homes. The civilians on both sides of the battle were victims of hideous violence, as well as extensive killing, amputation of limbs, lips and ears, decapitation and gang-rape (Kaldor & Vincent 2006, page 6.). Children were used as child soldiers, and it is estimated that of the 137,865 members of Sierra Leone armed forces, 48,216 were children (Paulson, 2011).

In addition to the severe poverty in Sierra Leone, was the outbreak of Ebola disease in 2014 that slowed down economic development process. Sierra Leone pronounced a state of emergency for the Ebola outbreak in July 2014. There was no licensed Ebola Vaccines or treatment, proven to neutralize that Virus, but early care with rehydration and symptomatic treatments improves the probability of survival (World health Organization, 2016, 01, 01). The world health organization (WHO) acknowledged Sierra Leona Ebola free March 17, 2016 (World health Organization 2016, 17.03). In almost two years, Sierra Leone had 14,016 cases and 3,995 deaths caused by the Ebola virus (World Health Organization 2015).

Sierra Leone change the Education System from 7-5-2-4 to 6-3-3-4 in September 1993 (Paulson, 2011). The poor performance in the 2008 Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) in Sierra Leone urged his Excellency the president to investigate reasons for such abysmal performance. Due to severe public examination failure, the system was changed to 6-3-4-4- in 2011 as recommended by the Gbamanja White paper (Commission of Enquiry). The teacher and parents experienced the weight that made them completely administer their full responsibilities to their school children. It is evident that Sierra Leone as a poor country, emerging from the civil war and Ebola

outbreak cannot withstand the total responsibility of adequately fulfilling its obligations in providing for its citizen. Poverty has affected the entire citizens.

Sharanya Ravichandran (July, 2011) opined that, poor quality education has also contributed strongly to the severe poverty in Sierra Leone. In fact, many schools were constructed immediately after Sierra Leone was granted independence. Therefore, they do not have many well-endowed alumni to help support the schools and fund them (Zack-Williams, A.B, 1990). Since the government funding is not adequate, there are short of school materials (books and equipment) that are needed quality basic education to children; besides, there is no financial sustenance for educational facilities. Adults' education program is too limited for countrywide adult access to education. Besides, women especially may desire to take courses and expand their knowledge in various areas. As a matter of fact, 40% percent of the total population in Sierra Leone was literate as of 2008 (UNICEF, 2010). The problem of inadequate quality education results into lack of knowledge of civic rights and responsibilities. Too much ignorance may stimulate civil wars among individuals because they lack the knowledge to bring a peaceful change. The effect of the disturbance will force the Government to divert the funding of the state from key sectors, which may leads to further poverty within this region. Sachs et al (2004) identifies four factors for poverty, which are: *"very high transport costs and small market size; low-productivity agricultures; adverse geopolitics; very slow diffusion of technology from abroad."*

As a matter of fact, Sierra Leone Economic market is almost nonexistent, despite the huge deposit of Mineral Resources. Moreover, the economy is extremely weak, and transport costs from one place to another are very expensive. Also, the dissemination of foreign technology is very weak to speedily spread technology development throughout Sierra Leone in modern times. (Sharanya R., 2011)

Many children who were recruited into the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the national army, were drawn away from educational Institutions, and were taught to fight and murder civilians as fighters (Zack-Williams, A.B., 1990). Children are supposed to be regarded by various nations as its future leaders, unfortunately at that time; Sierra Leone stopped its youth from procuring of affordable quality education and, instead, exposed them to be rogue military combatant to kill at an early age. These children lacked the potential to gain affordable quality education, as such; they cannot get the opportunity to develop in skills that will provide them with affordable jobs. This defect landed them in the environment of severe poverty. Personalities who are fortunate enough to gain and obtain their education seldom receive satisfactory circumstances in the workforce. Unlike other Less Developed Countries, many citizens from Sierra Leoneans finds it difficult to travel abroad seek good jobs for them to send money back home to their underprivileged families.

Cheytor B. (2010) explained that, the deficiency of education regarding family planning, combined with inability to provide items such as food, shelter and clothing, increases the poverty rate of that country making its citizens very deplorable and shattered. The government does not put measures to or take charge to implement measures at modifying hastened population development. This growth in people leads

to an increase in the population and creating resource scarcity. The available food resources are not adequate for the present population; with more babies born every day, it is absolutely impossible to have enough food to feed the increasing population. Rural population growth can be ascribed to growing birth rates, which is mainly caused by lack of education in planning a family. Certainly, growing of rural population rises from 2,727,174 people in 2000 to 3,460,452 in 2008, about (21% increase) (Trading Economics, 2010). Besides, most farmers do not the knowledge of using modern methods and machinery to increase agricultural output, and there are no government strategies on these upgrades for better agricultural productivity. (Cheytor B. 2010) Farmers are still independent on outdated technology, there is weakening in agricultural productivity, which causes food scarcity and leads to poverty.

Sierra Leone is a poor country that needs more improvement in education for development. It is noteworthy that, Poverty is widespread and very deep in Sierra Leone. The eleven years war from 1991-2002 enveloped the bad situation that increasing the level of poverty countrywide. As a result of corrupt governance, the violent conflict is generally supposed to have caused severe poverty in Sierra Leone.

It is believed that the absence of enough food or prevalence of strong hunger is the strongest manifestation of poverty in communities. Poverty is mostly felt in the rural areas than the urban towns. It is important to note, the SLIHS (Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey) report displays that the employment position of household heads, the sector in which they are employed, and their level of education, and all determines the degree of household poverty. There is strong indication of poverty among the farmers as they engage in subsistence farming on smallholdings and using unsophisticated implements, as well as heads of household with little or no formal education. In addition, old age limit the labour power, so it experiences the practicability of poverty.

In addition, the high tendency of poverty in Sierra Leone have social indicators such as infant and mortality, illiteracy rates, poor access to education, health care and safe drinking water – all these reflect the low level of human development. Besides, the maternal mortality and fertility rates are very high among women and infant -one of the worst in the world. The contra captive occurrence frequency and the age at girls' first delivery remain low. Males' attendance of school is higher than females for both underprivileged and privileged households. There is also indication of extreme poverty to women, particular those in the rural areas.

According to (SL-PRSP March 2005), Poverty in Sierra Leone has many causes that are closely interrelated. As investigated the extensiveness and harshness of poverty in the country came with a combination of result that includes wrong domestic policies, opposing external developments and other natural factors. The most often mentioned causes of Poverty during the Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPAs), Focus Group Discussions in Sierra Leone includes: Bad governance- especially corruption, the 11 years civil war, Unemployment (or the lack of Economic Opportunities) Inadequate Social Service, the debt burden, and Vulnerability to risks and shocks as unstable prices,

heavy reliance on donor aid, illness and seasonal factors that affect livelihoods. (SL-PRSP page 42)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Poverty has diverse effect on the academic performance of school going children (Yvonne Beaumont Walters, Kola Soyibo, 1998). Anders (2011) defined Poverty as *“the strongest indicator of a child going to prison”*. Poverty can have an impact on student performance. The parents of poor children may not be able to help their kids do schoolwork. Besides, there are also issues like too much stress, compartment problem, health concerns, and delays in cognitive development that can result from such a background. Poverty affects education, the economy and future of citizens (Sean Slade, 2016). At least nine in 10 teachers surveyed, the National Education Union believes poverty is significantly affected their pupils’ learning (Martin George, 2018). The Human Development Index (United Nation, 2015) indicates that, Sierra Leone is one of the ten poorest countries in the world. Base on the World Bank, (2007) report, poverty in Sierra Leone can be divided into two categories: the food/extreme poverty line, and the full poverty line. Statistics from 2003/04 shows that 70 % fall below the full poverty line, while 26% live under the food/ extreme poverty line. Freetown has the lowest proportion of poverty estimated at only 15 percent. While outside Freetown however, are 70 percent living in poverty (The World Bank, 2007).

With this unfortunate situation, it is clear that, Sierra Leone bears a large proportion of poverty. Poverty has become more of a trap in recent decades, both for adults and their children. It is more difficult nowadays for a deprived family to get out of poverty and stay away from poverty. Children born into poverty are more likely in the current era to inherit their parents’ economic status (Edward Royce, 2009). So in reality poverty deepen its effects on the education of school going children if it finds its base at home. Researchers from UNICEF and Statistics Sierra Leone (2010) acknowledged that there are multiple reasons why student do not achieve academically in schools. One of the reasons identified that negatively affect performance is parental attitude and support. They state that the home has a great deal of influence on girl’s participation and level of success attained in their education careers (Johnson Adlyn O., 2013).

Despite all the knowledge in poverty, researchers pointed what they do not know. Poverty and education are inseparably connected, because poverty makes people stop going to school in order to seek sustenance. As such, this situation leaves them without literacy and numeracy skills they need to advance their occupation. Their children born will experience similar situation years later, with little option to get enough income; and few options in life for sustainability (Childfund International India, 2018). To be educated is a strong pillar and security for families and communities to live out of poverty. Knowledge provides children the authority to vision out a better future and develop confidence required to track a full education, which in future will help generation to come (Childfund International. 2018). Poverty reduction entails ensuring access to quality education (Mihai, 2014). As indicated by Sayed (2008), the

link between poverty and education is complex, but the lack of learning is perhaps one of the most powerful determinants of poverty. However, the millions of children without access to education are not only poor, but don't have access because of the multidimensional nature of poverty (Maile, 2008). As reported, in 2010, President Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma of the Republic of Sierra Leone by then, states in his speech at the Africa Union Summit that: *"By making all children attend school, we will be ensuring that our people have the knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed choices to sustain our achievement and secure the future of this continent. Getting all our children to school is a moral and developmental imperative"* (Paulson, 2011,)

There is lack of adequate information; contemporary researchers are urging us to research on the influence of poverty on the academic performance of school going children. Ebele U. F. and Olofu P. A., (2017) mentioned in their introduction that, the way a student takes his or her studies, greatly determines his/her level of academic achievements. The level of preparation and learning strategies developed and employed consciously by students, go a long way to influence their level of academic performance. This gives us the impression that the study habit is a factor that influences student academic achievement, which also reflects on the academic performance. Ebele and Olofu cited that, Mark and Howard (2009) are of the opinion that the most common challenge to the success of students in all ramifications is a lack of effective or positive (good) study habit. They further maintain that if students can develop a good study habit and with good discipline, they are bound to perform remarkably well in their academic pursuit. Husain (2000) stresses that lack of effective or positive (good) study habits is a critical study problem among students at all levels.

According to SheeRa (2012), study habits can be affected by factors such as:

1. Age of a student;
2. Home environment;
3. Studying materials;
4. Television and computer games;
5. Social network (Facebook);
6. Students' determination and aspiration;
7. Financial and economic status of parents;
8. The environmental condition like entertainment center, games center etc.;
9. The rule of the schools;
10. The teaching style of teachers;
11. The leisure of the students;
12. Some activities in schools;
13. Availability of library;
14. The nature friends and peer group;
15. Assignments and homework restriction;
16. Students' parents educational background;
17. Parents not interested and supportive in helping their children study;
18. Household chores;
19. Family problems;

20. Procrastination and poor time management;
21. Students' comfort level;
22. The noise level;
23. The lighting level and the availability of items that might be necessary to study or to enhance concentration.

Poverty effect on academic performance in secondary school student offering integrated science is yet to be researched. As educationalists, in order to be responsible to the necessities of our students, it will be helpful to reflect on the restraints that poverty often places on people's live and livelihood, particularly youngsters, and how such circumstances affect learning and academic achievement. Poverty disturbs intervening elements that, in turn, affect outcomes for people (Duncan and Brooks-Gunn, 1997). It's a fact that, poverty does affect education. Also, it's certain that, children who are poor go to school without food; and besides come back home without achieving much from the lessons in class. Besides, it's hard to argue that children living in insufficient resources, and are attending schools that lack support, under resourced, and understaffed are usually below standard (Sean Stade, July 24, 2016). Children who grow up in low socio-economic conditions typically have a small terminology than Middle class children do, which increases the possibility for academic failure (Walker, Greenwood, Hart and Carta, 1994). Avoiding breakfast is highly predominant among urban minority youth, and it destructively affects students' academic achievement by unpleasantly affecting understanding and increases absenteeism (Basch, 2011). Children existing in insufficiency experience greater chronic stress than do their wealthy colleagues. Parent with low income finds it difficult to meet the demands of their families (Blair and Raver, 2012). Suffering and pressure affects brain development, academic success, and social capability (Evans, Kim, Ting, Tesher, and Shannis, 2007)

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of poverty on the academic performance of school going children in Junior Secondary school level three in the integrated science subject.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the facilities available in school for academic performance?
2. What are the facilities available at home for academic performance?
3. What are the environmental conditions that influence academic performance of students?
4. What are the measures taken to improve academic performance?

2. Aim and Objectives

2.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to improve the quality of Education of school going children in Sierra Leone.

2.2 Objectives

The study is intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. Assessing the facilities available in school for academic performance of school going children.
2. Examine the facilities available at home for academic performance of school going children.
3. Assessing the environmental conditions that influence academic performance of school going children
4. Determine the measures taken to improve academic performance of school going children.

3. Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

This study will review literature on the following topics:

- School facilities and academic performance;
- Home facilities and academic performance;
- The environmental conditions and academic performance;
- The cause of poor academic performance;
- The measures taken to improve academic performance.

In an update of Merriam Webster on May 3, 2018, poverty is defined as: *“the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions”*. Wikipedia, 2018, defined poverty as *“the scarcity or lack of a certain (variant) amount of material possessions or money”*. Poverty is a multidimensional concept, which may take in social, economic, and political element of society. In sanitary economic terms, income poverty is when a family income cannot meet a federally conventional edge that varies across countries. Naturally, it is measured with respect to families, and not the individual, and is related to the number of persons in a family. Economics often look up to classify the families whose monetary position (defined as command over resources) drops below some marginally acceptable level (UNESCO, 2011). Poverty clearly is the absence or the inability to achieve a socially acceptable standard of living (Lorenzo Gionanni, 2005). He explained the keywords of the definition such as: Lack, Inability, Standard of Living as thus: Lorenzo explained ‘lack’ as a base circumstance state for the definition of poverty is that where persons do not have command over economic resources. For instance, a person may be considered poor if he/she does not have basic food or shelter or, consistently, if he/she lacks income to purchase these basic needs. As for Inability: Lorenzo cited it as the best related with the competence failure to contribute in a society- a concept developed by Sen (1985) or complex (freedom self-respect, social inclusive etc.). The inability to achieve these working makes the individual poor. As for ‘Standard of Living’ he showed that, poverty depends on: (a) what is thought to constitute a socially satisfactory standard of living at a particular place and time for a particular society. In a society where so many people own cars, the practice of using a public transport may be a signal of poverty. (b) How such standard

is scaled, i.e. what is the mechanism or the conventional variable used to “capture” the standard of living.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Right (UNHCR, 2002), look at poverty as a human disorder characterized by the persistent or chronic deficiency of the resources, competencies, choices, security and power essential for the pleasure of an satisfactory standard of living and other civil, traditional, economic, political and social rights.

Gordon, et al (2003), agreed on the definition of absolute poverty as a state considered by severe deprivation of basic human needs, which include food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It rest on income, but also on access to social services.

Georgia (1997) shows poverty to be the lack of freedom, enslaved by devastating regular liability, by depression and fear of what the future will bring.

The instrument of the study will be centered in this definition which sticks that, poverty has various displays, including: lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods, hunger and malnutrition, ill health, limited or lack of access to education and other basic services, increase mobility and mortality from illness, homelessness and inadequate housing, unsafe environments, social discrimination and exclusion, characterized by lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, social cultural rights. (United Nation-UNCHR, 2012)

3.2 School facilities and academic performance

Steve Suitts, 2015 cited that, *“We’ve reached the juncture in our public schools where the education of low-income students is not simply a matter of equity and fairness. It’s a matter of our national future, because when one group becomes the majority of our students, they define what that future is going to be in education more than any other group.”* Poverty can greatly affect education. For instance, there are some families who can’t have enough money for their children to attend school. Sometime the children work in order to help out the family. Eric Jensen of the Center for New York City Affairs, clarify that high-poverty schools are more likely to fight for school climate concerns such as absenteeism and truancy, bullying, and trust and meeting matters that can weaken the learning surroundings. Research by the National School Climate Center has constantly demonstrated that a constructive school climate is linked to academic achievement, effective risk-prevention efforts, and positive youth development. Sharanya Ravichardran (2011) reasoned the severe poverty in Sierra Leone to be engulfed in four key factors such as: Corruption within the government, insufficient infrastructure, lack of education and inadequate civil rights. It is important to note that, the raw material, elementary legacy, quality, motivation, mental readiness, psychological trustworthiness, and economic strengthen relationship with other factors increase production. Therefore the superiority of teachers in our school system is affects both external and internal factors, which again in turn affect their output as implementers of curriculum materials in the system’s production cycle (UNESCO, 2006).

3.3 Home Facilities and Academic Performance

Kristina Birdsong (2016) highlighted 10 surprising facts of poverty and its influence on children in our schools. In highlighting, there is a fact involved the condition at birth. In view of the Cognitive capacity which is not just a matter of genetics, but can be strongly influenced by external influences like prenatal drug use, environmental toxins, poor nutrition, and exposure to stress and violence. All of these are more prevalent in low-income households, and affect cognitive development from the prenatal stage through adulthood. In addition, the verbal exposure renders some influence in the child's vocal power. A famous 1995 study by Hart and Risley confirmed that by the age of four, children from deprived households hear 32 million fewer spoken words than their better-off peers. More fresh investigation has revealed that excellence of conversation varies as well. Parents with higher education and income are more possible to involve children with questions and dialogue that offer creative responses, while parents in poverty often lack the time and energy for anything more than simple and goal-oriented directions. Furthermore, the environmental sensation determines the thought and analysis of issues. Children brought up in deficiency often experience life as a sequence of unstable situations over which neither they nor their caregivers have any mechanism. As such, they fail to improve an idea of themselves as free personalities talented of creating choices and acting on them to shape their lives, as an alternative reacting to emergencies that are only magnified by their underprivileged ability to plan ahead or imitate. This doesn't just upset educational achievement – some studies have shown that a low sense of mechanism over one's life has key health effects in all areas, irrespective of finances or access to healthcare (Kristina Birdsong, 2016).

Poverty has become of a trap in recent decades, both for adults and their children. It is more difficult today for a poor family to get out of deficiency and stay out of shortage. And children born into poverty are more likely in the current era to inherit their parents' economic status. (Edward Royce, 2009).

3.4 The Environmental Conditions and Academic Performance

The link between environment factors and basic subsistence are immediately apparent-disease in Africa is largely environment-related, as are high rates of infant mortality and low life expectancy, (Sleele et al., 2002). The environment shared by students, their home lives, and the school is an active example. A student's learning environment coverage includes their family, neighborhood, social, and local communities that will form the culture in the school, and in turn, its competence to engage and help the child. Schools can be a place of change for a community, but the community can also be a locus of change for the schools. We must stimulate that change to be confident, positive, and focused on the attainment of each child.

Steve Suitts (2015) agreed that, there are very high standards in schools, but if the standards in the community do not match the standards of the school, there is failure and poor quality of education. Every lesson taught in school will also be repeated when they go back to their communities. It will be necessary to invest in the education of our communities by improving the quality of our schools.

3.5 The Causes of Poor Academic Performance

According to Sharanya Ravichandran (2011), the reasons for persistent poverty in Sierra Leone are overwhelm in four key elements such as: Exploitation within the government, inadequate infrastructure, deficiency in education, and inadequate civil rights. The lack of schooling has also been a causative factor to the severe poverty within Sierra Leone. Many schools in the countryside areas were constructed immediately after Sierra Leone was granted independence. As such, they do not have numerous well-endowed ex-students to help sustain the schools fund (Zack-Williams, 1990). Research from UNICEF and Statistics Sierra Leone (2010), acknowledge that there are multiple of reasons why students do not achieve academically in schools. One of the reasons identified that negatively affect performance is parental attitude and support. Poignant (2006), study revealed that pupils' desire for success is closely linked with their interest and attitude. A student who evinces a capacity and liking for certain school subjects perform well in the school. McCoach (2002) in a study using normal adolescents in school attempted to predict academic achievement and attitude towards school. The author is conducted this study in the light of the fact that *"although ability is the best predictor of academic achievement, it explains less than 50% of the variance in students' grades"* (McCoach, 2002). The author reported a correlation between academic performance and self-perception and most importantly suggested that his research that there is high correlation between good academic self-perception and academic performance (McCoach, 2002). Overall poverty has various manifestations, that includes lack of income and useful resources adequate to ensure sustainable livelihoods, hunger and malnutrition, ill health, limited access to education and other basic services, increase mobility and mortality from infection, homelessness and insufficient housing, unsafe environments, social discrimination and exclusion, categorized by lack of contribution in decision-making and in civil, social cultural rights, (United Nation-UNCHR, 2012).

3.6 Measures to Improve Academic Performance

Researchers like Suitts (2015), opined that, the only things that will stop increasing numbers of public school students living in poverty are thoughtful, systemic variations in, and educational policy, as well as in our educational practices. Confirming equitable funding of our nation's public schools, regardless of zip code or geographic location, and mounting national outcry against the normalization of poverty seem like good places to begin (A report on the spring, 2015, ASCD whole child symposium).

4. Significance and Audience

The usefulness of this study cannot be ever emphasized as it does not only investigate the challenges of poverty but bring out solutions and recommendation that will help improve the quality of education in schools. It will be expected that the study finding recommendation will be beneficial to: The Ministry of Education comprising of

Curriculum planners, school Heads, Teachers, UNESCO, Non- Governmental Organizations, and other International bodies.

5. Methodology

Research Design- the Applied Research employing a quantitative research methodology will be used to gain understanding into the poverty influence to the academic output. Poverty and academic performance will be viewed as the central phenomenon requiring exploration and understanding considering the nature of my target phenomenon (poverty and academic performance). Strauss and Corbin (1998) who described Qualitative methods as something used to achieve the intricate details about sensations such as feelings, thought, processes, and emotion that are problematic to source or learn about through more conventional process.

Some quantitative research methodology in trying to find the records of past result of performances will also be employed. So in reality a mixed methodology to cumulate a comprehensive results and analysis of the findings will be used.

5.1 Method

The method I will use for this study is the collective case study that will cover various cases of study in the school, home and environment. This approach will go with the assumption that it will cover the number of cases that will lead to better comprehension and better theorizing (Brant Linger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach, & Richardson, 2005).

5.2 Coverage

The study area will cover East End of Freetown and its environs. The researcher will use information from school heads, teachers, students and parents or guardians. The experiences revealed will be directed to the subject of the research. Freetown is selected as it is Sierra Leone's major urban, economical, educational and political Centre, as it is the seat of Government of Sierra Leone. Freetown is the capital city of Sierra Leone. It is a major city for a port on the Atlantic Ocean, and is situated in the Western Part of the country. The population of Freetown is, 1,055,964 at the 2015 census. The population of Freetown is diverse with various tribes living together ethnically, culturally, and religiously different. The city home all of traditional groups, and is divided into three municipal regions: the East, Central, and West End. There are 8 sub regions wards: East End 1, East End ii, East End iii, Central 1, Central ii, West 1, West iii, and West iii. The East End is more populous than the other three regions within Freetown. Due to the war and poor condition in the provinces, the people have migrated to Freetown looking for greener pasture and livelihood. This made a dramatic increase in the number of school going pupils, and the demand of schools. It also created a high burden to the sponsorship of education, employment of teachers, and provision of school materials by the Ministry of Education.

5.3 Population and Sample

The population will comprise of principals of all junior secondary schools, Parents or Guardian, Integrated Science teachers, and year three students in the junior secondary school of Freetown municipality during the 2018/2019 academic year.

The Sample will comprise of 390 respondents in 15 (fifteen) schools in all, out of which, 15 administrations (one from each school), and 30 teachers (two teachers from each school), 300 students (20 in each school), 45 parents or guardians (3 from each school).

5.4 Instrumentation

The instruments that will be used in this investigation study will include interview guide, observation, questionnaires and discussion of certain issues.

The use of this interview guide is justified for respondents (parents or guardians) who might be incompetent to respond to the items in questionnaires. With the interview method, (face to face) it is possible for the researcher to probe or go into getting the required information and to rephrase the questions where they create any doubt.

Observation will be used to assess the geniality of the interviewee 'responses. The facilities in the school and homes of selected students will be observed by the researcher. The research will also observe the teachers methods and class participation of students in some classes.

A questionnaire guide will be meant for the teachers, administrators, students and some parents. These four categories of people are believed to be able to read (literate) and write, so they can share information in writing.

For more information, the research may also discuss with target group: it will be done officially or sporadically for example the Board chairman, parent teachers association chairman etc.

5.5 Sampling Techniques

Simple random technique will be used to select the secondary school, students and teachers of integrated science. Also proportionate will be used to select the respondents from parents.

5.6 Data Collection Methods

The researcher will administer the exercise in collaboration with school leadership. The questionnaires will be protected or gauge its feasibilities. The questionnaires will be adjusted for final administration based on the pretest results. The questionnaires will be distributed to the selected respondents (administrators, teachers, students and parents) for completion in meeting collaboration with school leadership in each secondary school. The completed questionnaires will be collected and be ready for analysis.

5.7 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected will be treated or analyzed by quantitative and qualitative means. The data elicited from questionnaires, interview, observation and discussion will be carefully assembled, collated and thoroughly looked at. Trends that be revealed from these will thus be analyzed through quantitative and quantities expressions.

6. Expected Outcome/Result

The expected outcome could also reflect the results of various studies conducted by many researchers as indicated in the following research results:

Studies emanating from various sources in Canada have repeatedly shown that socioeconomic factors have large, persistent effect over school achievement. An article of Pediatric Child Health, 2007 cited Philips and Lethbrige (2007), who have studied income and child outcome with pupils at the age 4 to 15 years. In that study, greater incomes were increasingly associated with improved outcomes for children. The main effects were for cognitive and school processes (teacher-administered math and reading scores), followed by behavioral and health measures, and then social and emotional measures, which had some connections. Additionally, other studies in American found strong interaction effects between SES and acquaintance to risk factors. For instance, parents from deprived backgrounds were not only more likely to have their babies born prematurely, but these prematurely born children were also suspiciously at higher risk for school failure than children with a similar newborn record from higher income families (McLoyd VC (1998)

In conclusion of the "10 facts about how poverty impacts education", Kristina Brodsong (2016), stated that, education is a key to avoidance poverty, while in fact; poverty remains the biggest obstacle to education. It is significant to highlight that children of poverty do not have broken brains or restricted intelligence. They have brains that have not matured, which can be quickly altered through neuroscience interventions like fast forward. These students have marvelous potential to prosper with the right combination of Education and interventions.

Misty Lacour and Laura D. Tissington (2011) highlighted also that; poverty shows the extent to which an individual does lacking resources. Resources can include financial, emotional, mental, spiritual and physical resources as well as support systems relationships, connection, role models, and knowledge of concealed rules.

This shows that, Poverty directly upsets academic achievement due to the lack of resources available for student success. Low achievement is closely connected with lack of resources, and many studies have documented the correlation between socioeconomic status and low achievement of school pupils.

M.S. Faroog, A.H. Chaudhry, M. Shafiq and G. Berhanu (2011) revealed that Socio-Economic States (SES) and parents 'education have a significant outcome on students' overall academic attainment as well as achievement in the subjects like Mathematics and English. The high and average socio-economic level affects the performance more than the lower level. It is very exciting that parents' education means

more than their career in relation to their children's academic performance at school. It was established that girls perform better than the male students.

In addition, Donna A. Valentine (2008) ascertained that, the consequences of the research may influence personalization programs for students living in poverty, assistance in the selection of suitable leader proficient development and lead to further research that will do with the failures and successes of students who live in poverty.

Also, Ebele Uju F and Olufu Paul A. (2017) found in his studies that, there is significant relationship between study habits and students' academic performance. It was recommended that teachers and school guidance counselors should collaboratively guide students on the way to develop good study habits; in order to enhance their academic success.

Yvonne Beaumont Walters, Kola Soyibo (1998), explained that, student performance is very much reliant on SEB (Socio Economic background) as per their statement that, high School Students level of performance is with statistically important differences, linked to their gender, grade level, school location, school type, student type and socio-economic background (SEB).

Peter and Mullis (1957) found that Parental Education had a significant effect on academic outcomes of adolescents (Peters and Mullis, 1997). This result on student achievement is believed to be due to the effect the mother's education has on the "*specific ways of talking, playing, interacting, and reading with young children*" (Smith et al., 1997).

The U.S Department of Education (2001; 8) indicated also in its results that, poverty badly affected student achievement. The U.S Department of Education (2001) found the following significant findings concerning the effects of poverty on student attainment in a study conducted on third through fifth grade students from 71 high-poverty schools: The students counted below standards in all years and grades tested; student who lived in poverty scored meaningfully poorer than other students; schools with the highest percentages of deprived students scored significantly worse initially, but closed the gap a little as time progressed (Misty Lacour and Laura D. Tissington, 2011).

Nishimuko (2007) made reference to MLA project (2000) as he agreed that, the worth of education also relies on the quality of teachers, with specification in lists of stage, sex, qualifications, experience and language of the instruction force as features that directly and indirectly influence children's learning performances. Hanushek (2000) also argues that improving teaching quality is an important theme in improving student performance. He contends that the quality of a school could be affected by class size, teacher knowledge and teachers' salaries. In emphasizing further, the funding teachers receive through a process of evaluations, Supervision and feedback, also influence the quality of teaching and it contributes to ensuring proper accountability in teaching. McCoach (2002) in a study using normal adolescents in school attempted to predict academic achievement and attitude towards school. The author conducted this study in the light of the fact that "*although ability is the best predictor of academic achievement, it explains less than 50% of the variance in students' grades*" (McCoach, 2002).

The author reported a correlation between academic performance and self-perception and most importantly suggested that his research that there is high correlation between good academic self-perception and academic performance (McCoach, 2002). Generally poverty has various appearances, including: absence of income and productive resources adequate to guarantee sustainable livelihoods, hunger and malnutrition, ill health, inadequate or lack of access to education and other basic services, increase mobility and mortality from infection, destitution and inadequate housing, unsafe environments, social discrimination and exclusion, branded by lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, and collective cultural rights. (United Nation-UNCHR, 2012)

7. Impact of the Research

This study will help curriculum planners to have curriculum reform in various subjects particularly, science education in the country. With the implementation of the recommendations to follow, great improvement in education will be realized. Therefore, the researcher will engage in vigorous activities for the dissemination of the research work. The researcher will promote the work through internal seminars, regular report to stakeholders, journals articles, conference publication, exhibitions, outreach and public engagement in fields.

8. Organization Chart

Chapters		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification • Dedication • Acknowledgement • Table of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of Tables • List of Abbreviation • Abstract
Chapter One	Introduction	1.1 Background of the Study 1.2 Statement of the Problem 1.3 Aim And Objectives 1.4 Significant of the Study 1.5 Limitation and Delimitation 1.6 Definition of terms
Chapter Two	Literature Review	2.1 Introduction 2.1.1 Concept/Meaning of Poverty and Performance 2.1.2 Relations of Poverty And Performance 2.1.3 Classification of Poverty And Performance 2.1.4 Snapshot of Research Area
		2.2 School Facilities and Academic Performance 2.3 Home Facilities and Academic Performance 2.4 The Environment Condition And Academic Performance 2.5 The Cause of Poor Academic Performance 2.6 The Measures Taken To Improve Academic Performance 2.7 Summary

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Chapter Three	Theories Review	3.1 Functional theory 3.2 Pillar theory 3.3 Influence theory 3.4 Multiple intelligent 3.5 Summary
Chapter Four	Methodology	4.1 Introduction 4.2 Research Design 4.3 Population And Sample 4.4 Research Instrument 4.5 Procedure 4.6 Method of Data Analysis
Chapter Five	Result And Discussion	5.1 Result 5.2 Discussion
Chapter Six	Analysis of results	6.0 Analysis of the findings
Chapter Seven	Summary Of Finding Conclusion and Recommendation	7.1 Summary of finding 7.2 Conclusion 7.3 Recommendation and Suggestion for the Further Studies
References/Bibliography		

9. Calendar of Activities

Years	2018							2019												2020	
Months	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	
Review of Literature	█																				
Preprinting of Proposal			█	█	█	█	█														
Designing of Research Tools					█	█	█														
Testing Research Tools					█	█	█	█													
Data Collection						█	█	█													
Coding								█	█												
Analyzing of data									█	█	█										
Writing Dissertation											█	█	█								
First Draft of Dissertation														█	█						
Final Draft of Dissertation																█	█				
Supervisor's Approval Defense																			█	█	

10. Conclusion

Poverty appears to be a disease that affects deeply and severely the academic performance of learners. The effects of poverty are eminent in the sources of the expected outcome and results which shows that, poverty contributes greatly in the failure of school children in attaining their academic achievements. As a result, there was an experience of massive public examination failure in Sierra Leone over the years. This research is necessary to seek possible ways of increasing academic performances in schools. The results of the final findings of this research will be very useful to policy planners, curriculum planners, and international organizations, non-governmental organizations and many more stakeholders. It is true that, poor countries like Sierra Leone, need special help in developing the schools, empowering parents, and supporting school pupils in their pursue of knowledge. Poverty can only be reduced, by promoting education in the country. Education is a weapon that will surely help to solve the problem of poverty nationally and internationally.

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