

# Analysis of Rural/Urban Students’ Academic Performance in Oyo State, Nigeria: Implication for Educational Planners

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**Abstract:**-This study examined the quantitative analysis of students’ Academic performance in rural/urban public schools in Oyo State. The study examine two subjects English language and Mathematics that are core subjects and prerequisite for admission in to tertiary Institutions in Nigeria. Four research questions were raised and tested. Descriptive survey research design was employed. The population for the study consisted of all students in Oyo State Senior public schools. Stratified random sampling techniques was employed to sample 40 ( 20 rural and 20 urban) public senior schools. 6996 students’ results and 4083 rural students results. Students pro forma was used to collect students’ results in English Language and Mathematics. The findings revealed that: the level of students’ performance in Oyo state public senior schools in English language and Mathematics was low; the percentage of failure rate in English Language and Mathematics that with credit level when comparing results of rural and urban.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made. Continuous assessment should be given consideration; teachers should be trained and retrained, enabling environment should be provided. And government should employed qualified teachers in core subjects.

## I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The performance of students in any academic task has always been of special interest to educators, parents and society at large. The primary concern of any educator who is entrusted with the responsibility of selecting students for any advance training programme in a given field is the ability to estimate as accurately and as early as possible, the probability that such candidates will succeed or fail. The major obstacle to the development of education in Oyo State is persistent poor academic performance of students in senior school certificate examination. The problem of poor academic performance is so great that it has become a necessity for many students to pass the number of subjects required for admission into tertiary institutions at once (Ajayi, 2011).

A closer look at the Senior School Certificate Examination results (SSCE) released by West Africa Examinations Council will further substantiate one’s lamentation about the present poor performance in different school subjects of secondary school students (Olagunju, 2012).

Table 1: Performance in the Senior School Certificate Examination May/June, 2007-2012 English Language and Mathematics with 3 other subjects. Credit A1-C6; Pass D7-E8; Fail F9

Year	Total No. of Candidates	Passed English Language and Mathematics with 3 other subjects	Percentage of Candidates that passed
2007	1,275,466	325,754	25.5
2008	1,369,426	188,442	13.76
2009	1,373,009	356,981	25.9
2010	1,351,557	337,071	24.9
2011/12	1,540,250	587,630	38.93

Source: Federal Ministry of Education, 2012; Statistics Office, WAEC, Lagos, Nigeria May/June (2011/2012).

No wonder, most of the employees in organizations are not creative.

What happens to the educational system that produced Professors, Engineers, Teachers, Medical Doctors and other experts of repute that are often acknowledged and referred to as ICONS, while the same thing cannot be replicated by the same system for the growth and development of nation today? Why are the parents not sensitive to their civic responsibility of educating their children? Why are the children not interested in the growth and development of their lives? Why is their low performance of students at both internal and external examinations?

The quality of the products of the present educational system in Nigeria is so poor, most notable is their written and spoken skills in English Language and this is well shown in the SSCE – WAEC examinations results. It is not an overstatement that the rate of failure in English Language at the senior school certificate examination level in Nigeria is alarming. Regrettably, communication in English language is a sine qua non to good academic performance while in school and during a fulfilled life thereafter (Akinbode, 2006).

Students, particularly girls, run away from the subject. Okereke further attributes students' poor performance to factors such as the society's view that Mathematics is difficult, shortage of qualified Mathematics teachers, lack of Mathematics laboratory among others (Okereke, 2006). The ability of the students to think critically and tackle Mathematical problems is also lacking and not well developed. These two core subjects, English language and Mathematics, are very important for the present technological challenges (Olagunju, 2012) and even government, parents and guardians are complaining about this situation.

This deplorable condition, when compared with huge sums of money spent on education annually, demands an urgent attention when aimed at addressing the abnormal (Adeniji, 2003). This situation informs many research efforts like those of Akinwumiju and Orimoloye (1997); Obilade (2006) and Oladebo (2006) which are pre-occupied with factors that are responsible for the dismal state of education in the country.

Scholars have defined academic performance in many ways. According to Maruff (2012), academic performance is the combined outcome of attitude and interest, though the two variables are positively correlated, a high value of one necessarily means a high value of the other. Academic performance of students is a vital indicator which policy makers, educational planners and other stakeholders in education are interested in.

According to Aremu (2012), researchers who focus on the academic performance of students have continued to examine diverse phenomena that have been found to predict performance. He also contends that there has been a number of reviewers or researchers that have critically examined the

relationship between certain explanatory constructs and academic performance with diverse findings. Yet, the battery of variables used to predict students' academic performance in formal face-to-face educational situations, may not adequately serve as predictors of academic performance (Kumar, 2012). The researcher therefore, deem it fit to examine the academic performance of students in public rural and urban schools in Oyo State, Nigeria. Some researchers found no difference in the performance of students while some found difference in the performance of students. Based on this conflicting reports and having considered the huge amount of money spent on Education yearly, the researchers are interested in looking into the quantitative analysis of rural/urban student performance in Oyo State with the view of finding necessary solution which may improve performance of students.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to examine the performance of students in public rural schools with their counterpart in Urban public schools and to find out whether there is any difference between the student's performance in Rural/Urban with respect to English language and Mathematics in Oyo State.

## III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The perennial poor performance of candidates in the Senior School Certificate Examination in the last five years has generated serious concern among educators, researchers and the general public. The performance year in year out is nothing to write home about that prompted parent to enroll their children in private schools while richer ones prefer to enroll their children in first class schools. Studies in the past devoted much attention to student factors in predicting students' academic performance with little or no attention on Rural/Urban dichotomy factors. In order to fill this yearning gap, this study is set to investigate the state of performance of students in Rural schools with their counterparts in Urban schools

## IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Is there any significance difference between students' academic performance in Rural/Urban SSCE English Language and Mathematics in Oyo State public schools.
2. What is the performance of Students in both English language and Mathematics in SSCE in Oyo State Urban public schools.
3. What is the performance of Students in both English language and Mathematics in SSCE in Oyo State Rural public schools.

## V. METHODOLOGY

### *Research Design*

A descriptive survey research design was employed in this research. This research design is preferred as there was

no manipulation of the variables by the researcher. The main focus of the study lies on testing contributions and drawing inferences from the data that were collected after the events had already occurred.

*Population*

The population for this study consisted of all the students in Oyo State public Senior Secondary School (SSS3) students and teachers in all the public senior secondary schools in Oyo-State. Data available as at the time of data collection for this study indicated that there were 3,200 SSS3 students and 2,640 teachers in all the 400 public senior secondary schools (Oyo State Ministry of Education, 2012).

*Sample and sampling techniques*

Stratified and simple random sampling method was used to select the local government areas, the schools, teachers and students. Oyo State has 33 local government area. One out of three was picked, that is, Ibadan central Senatorial District. The local government was stratified and 11 local government areas were selected representing 33.3%. The Local Government has 5 urban local governments and 6 rural dichotomies.

Students Sample: SS3 students in the year 2011/2012 session were used for this study. Ten students were randomly selected from SS3 students from each of the 40 sampled schools, totaling 400 students out of 3,200 students representing 13% for the study. The calculations of academic performance for each school in English Language and Mathematics were done for 2010/2011 session using WAEC result.

*Instrumentation*

Students pro forma was used to collect students' results in SSCE English language and Mathematics. Details of the description of the instruments including their validity and reliability are presented as follows:

*Method of Data Collection*

The researcher employed research assistants. The researcher trained the research assistants on the subject of the study. The research assistants were the students on teaching practice in secondary schools in Oyo State. In addition, letters of authority to collect the required data from the subjects were given to the research assistants. The researcher was in contact with the research assistants regularly by the means of telecommunication system. The research assistants were given an orientation on the research and how to carry out the administration of the questionnaire. This allowed the researcher to actually give explanation where necessary and to collect the questionnaire immediately where possible from both teachers and students.

The researcher and his assistants were involved in the administration of the instruments. However, the researcher personally visited the principals of each of the schools sampled to collect the Senior Secondary Council Examination results in English Language and Mathematics for 2010/2011 session.

*Data Analysis Procedure*

The data collected in this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive tools of mean and standard deviation, percentage and pie chart were used to describe the students' performance scores in senior school certificate examinations in English Language and Mathematics.

VI. RESULTS

The result of the analyzed data are presented below.

*General Description of Data*

Table 1 shows the general performance of students in English language and Mathematics.

Table 1: Performance of students in both English Language and Mathematics in SSCE 2010/2011 session in Oyo State.

Subject	Candidate	A1	B2	B3	C4	C5	C6	D7	E8	Total with credit	Total with Pass	Total with fail
English Language	6996	-	-	10	46	136	-	583	1368	192	1951	4853
Mathematics	6996	-	-	19	44	123	336	451	1114	522	1565	4909

From table 1, 6996 students sat for the examination in 2010, only 192 candidates representing 2.66% had between A1 and C6 in English Language and 522 candidates representing 7.46% had between A1 and C6 in Mathematics. These were the only candidates who could use the result to advance to higher institutions for their proposed courses of study. On the other hand, 1951 (27.97%) candidates had between D7 and E8 in English Language and 1565 (22.37%)

candidates had between D7 and E8 in Mathematics. Thus, 6,804 (representing 97.26%) candidates failed English Language and 6,474 (representing (92.54%) candidates failed Mathematics. The table shows that the percentage of failure rate for English Language and Mathematics surpasses that of the credit level. The information in the table above can be further illustrated with the aid of the pie-chart that follows on the two subjects respectively.

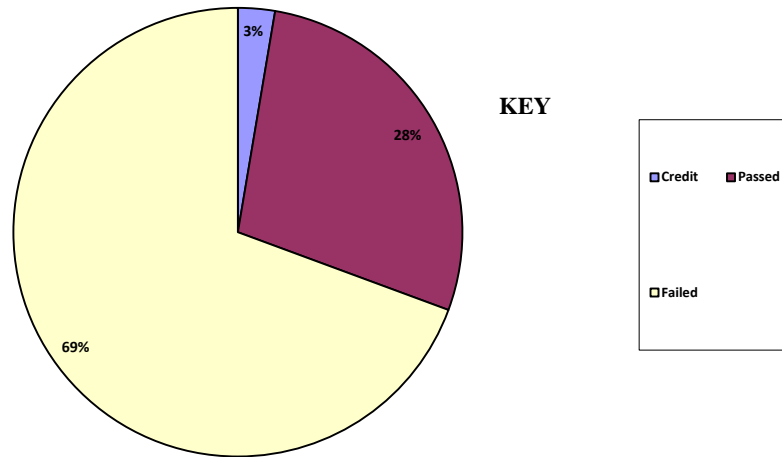


Figure 2: A pie chart showing the performance of students in English Language

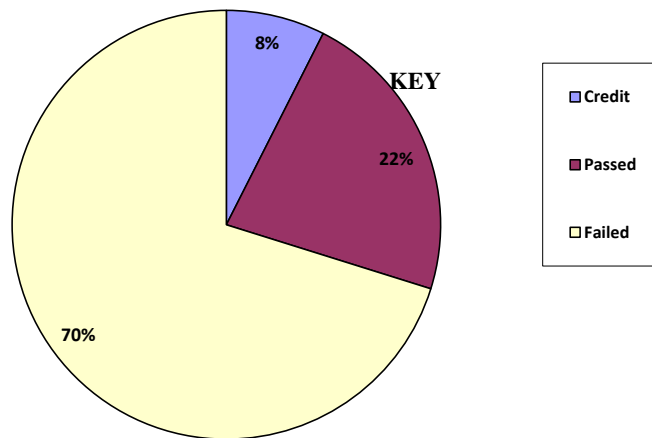


Figure 3: A pie chart showing the performance of students in Mathematics

Table 2: Performance of students in both English Language and Mathematics in SSCE IN 2010/2011 session in Oyo State urban public sampled schools.

Subject	Candidate	A1	B2	B3	C4	C5	C6	D7	E8	Total with credit	Total with Passed	Total with failed
English Language	2913	-	-	5	7	32	121	180	361	165	541	2207
Mathematics	2913	-	-	2	2	15	65	122	242	84	364	2465

Source: Field work

From table 2, 2913 students sat for the examination in 2010 in urban public senior schools, only 165 candidates representing 5.66% scored between A1 and C6 in English Language and 84 candidates representing 2.88% scored

between A1 and C6 in Mathematics. 541 (18.37%) candidates scored between D7 and E8 in English Language and 364 candidates representing (125.09%) in Mathematics. We can submit that the total failure will be the addition of candidate

with D7, E8 and F9 including students absent. The total was 2748 representing (94.34%). The information in table 2 can be

further illustrated with the aid of the pie-chart that follows on the two subjects respectively.

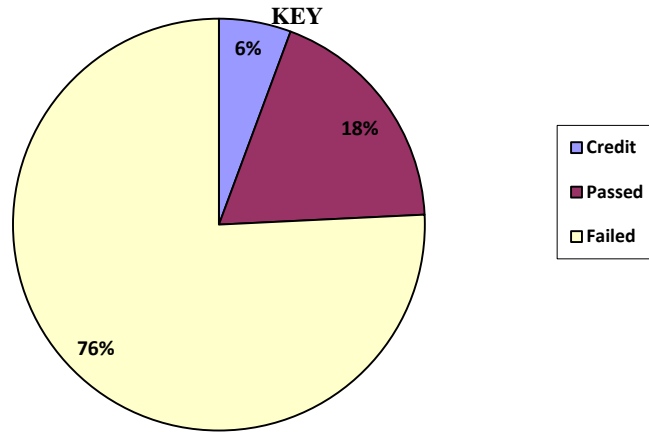


Figure 4: A pie chart showing the performance of students in English Language in urban schools

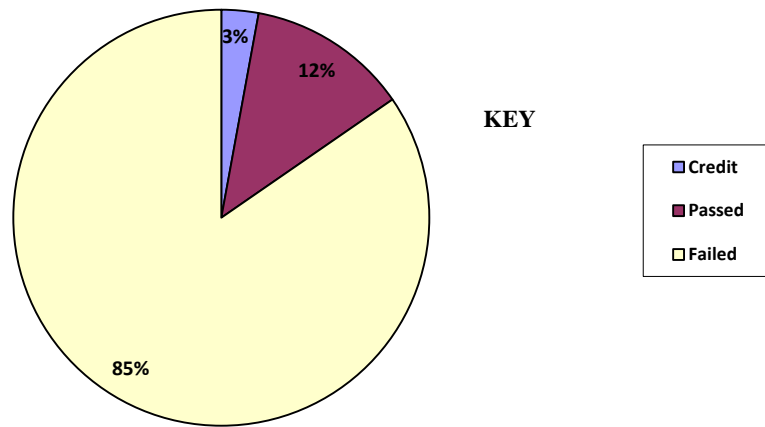


Figure 5: A pie chart showing the performance of students in Mathematics in urban schools

Table 3: Students' Academic Performance in SSCE English Language and Mathematics 2010/2011 session in Oyo state rural public Schools.

Subject	Candidate	A1	B2	B3	C4	C5	C6	D7	E8	Total with credit	Total with Passed	Total with failed
English Language	4083	-	-	2	39	104	383	403	1007	528	1410	1889
Mathematics	4083	-	-	17	42	108	271	329	872	438	1201	2444

Source: Field work

In table 3, 4083 students sat for the examination, 528 candidates representing 12.93% scored between A1 and C6 in English

Language and 438 candidates representing 10.73% scored between A1 and C6 in Mathematics.

In English language, 1410 (34.53%) candidates scored between D7 and E8 and 1201 (29.4%) candidates had between D7 and E8 in Mathematics. For admission, we can submit that the total students that failed will be the addition of candidates with D7, E8 and F9 including students that were

absent. Thus, 3299 (representing 80.79%) candidates failed English Language and 3645 candidates representing (97.12%) failed Mathematics. The table shows that the percentage of students who failed English Language and Mathematics surpassed that of candidates who had credit pass. The data above can be illustrated with the aid of the pie-chart that follows on the two subjects respectively

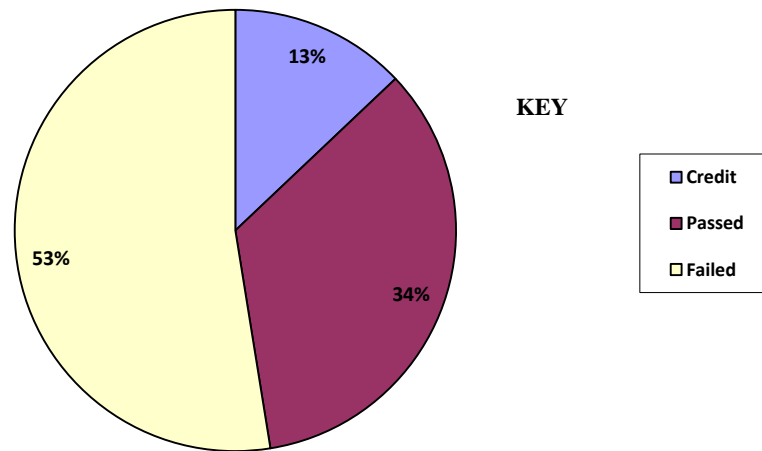


Figure 6: A pie chart showing the performance of students in English Language in public rural schools

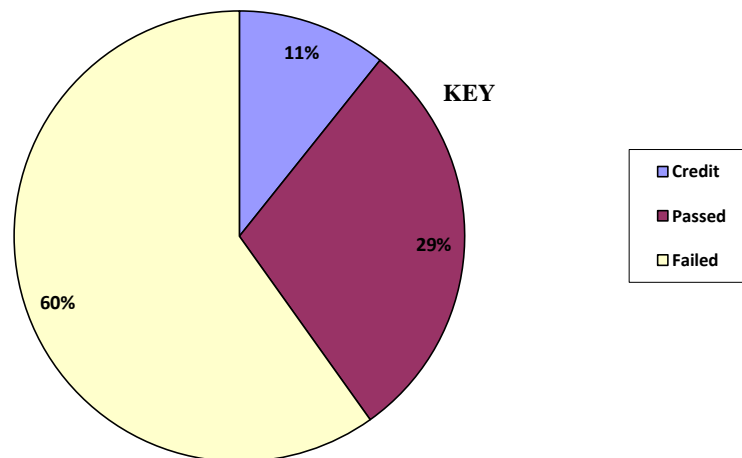


Figure 7: A pie chart showing the performance of students in Mathematics in public rural schools

### VII. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study showed that the level of students' academic performance in Oyo State secondary school was low based on 2010/2011 academic session in School Certificate Examinations English Language and Mathematics.

Table 1 shows the performance of students in both English Language and Mathematics in all the sampled public

senior secondary schools. The total number of students that sat for the examination was 6996. Thus, 6,804 candidates failed English Language and 6,474 candidates failed Mathematics. The table shows that the percentage of failure rate for English Language and Mathematics surpasses that of the credit level. 2010/11 results as shown in table 1 as well as the statistic of WAEC results buttress this point. One can submit that the performance of students in Oyo state was low.

This is in line with the revelation of Onwuakpa 1998 cited in Owoeye and Yara (2011) that Mathematics and English Language had the lowest performance in School Certificate Examination results.

Table 2 shows the performance of students in School Certificate Examinations English Language and Mathematics in urban public schools. Out of 2913 candidates who sat for the examination, 2207 candidates failed English Language and 2465 candidates failed Mathematics. The table revealed that the percentage of failure rate for English Language and Mathematics surpasses that of credit level when comparing the results of urban with rural schools, From the researcher's point of view, it may be as a result of the fact that students in urban areas concentrate more on watching home video, going to the night party instead of concentrating on their studies. The study did not conform to the finding of Ayodele (1988) who found that students in urban schools perform better than students from rural school in their School Certificate Examination English Language and Mathematics to be precised.

Table 3 shows that 4083 candidates sat for the examination in the year 2010/2011 session. 3299 candidates failed English Language and 1639 candidates failed Mathematics. When compared with their urban counterparts, the result was better. The reports as shown in table 1 as well as the WAEC statistics buttress this point. One can submit that the performance of students in rural schools was better than that of their counterpart, in urban locations. The reason might be connected with variation in sample used and the period covered by both studies. The low level of students' academic performance might be attributed to some factors outside the scope of the study. These may include low parental involvement in school administration, poor motivation of teachers, laziness of students, poor supervision of teachers, among others.

The finding contradicts that of Adebayo (2001) which revealed that the level of students' academic performance was moderately high. Table 1 shows that there was a significant difference between academic performance of students in rural and urban secondary schools as measured by senior school certificate examinations. This is to say that the geographical location of schools has influence on the academic performance of students. Rural/urban dichotomy in terms of academic performance of students as highlighted in the reviewed literature has been attributed to various causes vis-à-vis, poor school location, accessibility, catchment area, students journey to and fro the school, lack of good road, problem of qualified teachers refusing appointment or not willing to perform well in isolated villages, nonchalant attitude of some communities to schooling, among others. In table 4 for students in urban schools, the mean score of 3.18 and standard deviation of 0.64 were obtained and a mean score and standard deviation scores of 3.24 and 0.99 respectively were obtained by the students who attended rural schools.

This outcome revealed that students from rural schools obtained better mean scores when compared with their counterparts from urban schools. This may be as a result of the students involved in examination malpractice or hiring of experts to solve the questions. Since majority of the students in urban area prefer to sit for their examination in rural areas due to the fact that majority of invigilators do not want to go to rural areas for supervision. The above result therefore supports the earlier finding of Owoeye (2011) who reported that the socio-economic well-being of students' parents has a strong relationship with students' academic performance emphasizing that the urban/rural location of schools appear to outweigh this factor in fixing the academic performance of the learner, whereas learning in unconducive atmosphere cannot produce positive academic performance. The above result also supports the earlier findings of Obe (1984), Kemjika (1989) among others, that academic performance of students in rural communities differed from those in urban locations.

In his own contribution on rural/urban differences, Boylan (1998) reported that rural schools were inferior and lacked in the range of facilities; the researcher found that a lot of coaching was done to prepare students for public examination during holiday. Thus, promoting the spirit of competition and rivalry may be lacking in the rural pupils who probably have limitations in exposure and experience. But this research is different from others due to the fact that rural students performed more brilliantly than urban students.

#### VIII. IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNERS

Educational planers are confronted by the fundamental challenge of trying to guide decision-makers in the best use of available resources to solve concrete educational problems of the country where they are working. If the planer's aim is to optimize the use of resources in an attempt to solve concrete problems, then what is needed is a knowledge not only of the problem but also of some alternatives for solution. When the work of the educational planner is hooked at comprehensively, a threefold process emerges. Planning and design (in which the planner examines problems and alternative solutions, then chooses one and details this design); implementation of the design ( where the planner looks at administrative , political and other obstacles to implementation and suggests some solution); and evaluation (where the planner looks carefully at consequences in the hope of improving the system's effectiveness).

One of the major issues raised by this study is that the performance of students' in external examinations in Oyo State was low. As a planner, we need to analyze the results so as to justify the huge amount of money spent on education to determine whether there is wastages or not. Planners must guide against wastages at all levels.

Planners need to study the issue of students' academic performance so as to enable him/her plan for the successive

years ahead, prepare for the number of teachers in each subject, by sex and prepare for the number of students to be admitted into classes so as to follow the UNESCO Standard on student-teacher ratio and class-student ratio.

This study has established the fact that students in rural schools perform better than their counterparts in urban schools. The implication is that educational planners need to know what to be done in order to maintain status quo and improved on the student performance in urban schools. Planners need to consider these in the course of their planning in order to improve students' performance.

The findings of this study have a lot of implication for planners in planning. Planners must plan for guidance counselors in providing counseling services to students in schools. Planners need to plan for the promotion rate, repetition rate and wastages.

### IX. CONCLUSION

The study focused on whether there is any difference in academic performance of students in rural/ urban schools in Oyo State. The study established that students in rural located schools performed better than their counterparts in urban schools.

All stakeholders in the educational sector should be alive to their responsibilities.

### X. RECOMMENDATIONS

Continuous assessment should be given more consideration in the schools. In fact, it should not only be made compulsory but it should be used as part of yardstick for promotion. Parents especially those in the urban areas with low educational level should enroll in adult education so as to guide their students.

Providing training for teachers and educators in home-school community involvement.

Students must be trained on basic verbal skills so as to improve their English Language.

Enabling environment should be provided for teachers while attempting to increase students' performance Government should employ qualified teachers who are specialist in English Language and Mathematics.

Educational planners, curriculum planners and teachers could use the parent Teacher Association fora for the reorientation of parents on relevance of buying textbooks for their wards.

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