DETERMINANTS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF IN-SCHOOL YOUTH INVOLVED IN CATTLE REARING IN KEBBI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The cattle industry in Nigeria is still managed by rearers who do not have formal education despite nomadic education in Nigeria. For the industry's radical transformation in supplying sufficient and affordable animal-source food, there is a need to boost the intellectual capabilities of the youth involved. The study described the respondents' socioeconomic characteristics and evaluated their academic performance. A sample size of 203 was selected to analyse the data collected. Descriptive statistics like frequency counts, mean, and standard deviation were used. Inferential statistics were used to make inferential deductions. The results showed that the mean age of the respondents was 16.95±1.65 years, and the majority (87.2%) were males. Most respondents failed English language, Mathematics, Chemistry, and Physics. The regression results showed the following significant determinants of poor academic performance: the number of siblings (β=-0.252) and cattle herding hours (β =-0.230). ANOVA results showed significant differences (F=4.316) in the academic performance of the sampled respondents. In conclusion, the academic performance of respondents was poor. It is recommended that the number of hours spent herding cattle should be reduced to give them enough time for their academic pursuits.

Keywords: *Determinants; Academic, Performance, In-school Youth, Cattle rearing*

INTRODUCTION
Education is the backbone of human development, teaching us how to think, make a living, and lead a successful life. Any society that wants to develop must, therefore, address the educational needs of its people irrespective of their socioeconomic, cultural, religious, and location attributes. Human development in the cognitive, emotional, psychomotor, and psycho-productive domains is facilitated through education. Education can be viewed as developing a sound body and mind (Adesope, 2021). Each society attains its educational status through the socialisation of its young ones. Through this, society teaches its members how to become valuable members of their communities. They achieve means of sustenance through education, which is the socialisation that can

only be achieved through either informal or formal forms of socialisation. Informal socialisation teaches the individual basic survival skills within the environment where they find themselves. The family and the neighbourhood handle the informal socialisation of members.

The significance of education in any country's socioeconomic, cultural, and political development has been widely recognised as something that cannot be overstated, as it is a vital tool in a nation's development. Across the world, there is a consensus that education should make the recipients more knowledgeable, skilled, and better citizens. Education is a tool through which a nation can achieve greatness and improve living standards as a prerequisite

for national development. It allows individuals to discover their potential and push them to contribute meaningfully to the development process.

The value of education as a tool for a country's socioeconomic, cultural, and political growth has usually been acknowledged as something that cannot be overemphasised. There is widespread agreement that education should improve students' knowledge, skills, and ability to behave responsibly as citizens Ibrahim (2023) and Adesope (2021). As a precondition for national development, education acts as a tool through which a nation can excel and raise the level of living. It helps someone realise their potential and contribute to the development process.

The people of Kebbi State believe in hard work; this is why they emphasise the socialisation of their young ones. Many are farmers and pastoralists who depend on crops and livestock for their livelihood. Farming and livestock rearing have been the primary occupations of the people (Ibrahim, 2023). The people go to their farms early in the morning alongside their families. And return late in the evening. Both farmers and pastoralists depend so much on family labour for their farming and rearing activities. This dependency puts more pressure on their young ones of school age. Generally speaking, contemporary education is not valued among the vast majority of the people of the State, most especially among rural dwellers (Sani, 2023). Most parents in the State see Western education as a long-term investment with few prospects and cannot afford education expenses, unlike farming or cattle rearing, which has a quick return on investment. This poor attitude towards western education has made most parents and guardians not to support their children or wards attending conventional

schools. This lack of moral support is believed to impinge on the academic performance of the in-school youth.

Another critical point that led to the rejection of Western education is extreme poverty among the people of the State. About 72% of the people in the State are estimated to be extremely poor (Kebbi State Government, 2022). Poverty is one of the leading causes of low school enrolment and dropout in the State. Poor parents do not have the means to send their children to school; instead, they send them to do the menial job to support the family. Even among students, parents' poor socioeconomic status does not allow them to assist their children in doing school assignments or even encourage them to read their books at home or engage in school-related activities. All those mentioned above contribute to poor academic performance.

Kebbi State is one of the educationally disadvantaged states in Nigeria. Contemporary education is given less importance to the vast majority of the people of the State (Ibrahim, 2023). Young people and children of school age are instead engaged in farming or livestock-rearing activities as these are the most dominant occupations of the people of the State than going to school (Ibrahim, 2023). Even those attending school, their academic performance is nothing to write home about. It has culminated from the fact that the in-school youth do not submit their school assignments promptly, is not punctual at school and have irregular class attendance, do not read at night, and participate in extracurricular activities. All the foregone, if adequately addressed, will enhance the academic performance of the in-school youth in the State.

Cattle rearing in Kebbi State is a traditional and cultural way of life of the pastoralists in which every child is socialised. It may affect the in-school youth's attention to their study or educational pursuits. Besides, the effect of these activities on academic performance has not been adequately documented in the literature, hence the need for this study. The study is designed to achieve to following objectives, and objectives are to:

i. describe the socioeconomic characteristics of respondents in the study area;
ii. evaluate the academic performance of the respondents in the study area; and
iii. determine the academic performance of the respondents in the study area.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in Kebbi State, Nigeria. The target population comprises youth concurrently involved in schooling and cattle rearing. A multistage sampling procedure was used to select the respondents for the study. Three pastoral blocks were purposively selected in the first stage, representing 60%. This selection was based on the availability of senior secondary schools. These pastoral blocks were Birnin Kebbi, Bagudo, and Zuru, respectively. In the second stage, in each of the pastoral blocks, three Local Government Areas (LGAs) were selected from Birnin Kebbi, two from Bagudo and one from Zuru to give a total of six LGAs, and in the third stage, 10% of the schools were randomly selected to make a total of nineteen (19) and the justification for this was informed based on the availability of conventional senior secondary in these pastoral blocks. In the fourth stage, senior secondary school classes were purposively selected to select classes with the preponderance of the youth involved in cattle rearing. In the fifth stage, registers of the selected classes were collected with the permission of respective teachers and principals. Self-identified cattle rearers were enumerated from the class registers. At the sixth stage, Slovin's formula ($n=N/(1+Ne^2)$) (n= number of samples, N=total population, and e=error tolerance) with a margin error of 0.05 was used to calculate the sample size of 203. In contrast, simple random sampling was used to select respondents proportionately across the classes. Descriptive such as frequency counts, tables, mean scores, and charts and inferential (such as multiple regression and one-way ANOVA) statistics to summarise and make inferences from the data. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was also used to elicit quantitative data.

Measurement of variables

Dependent variable = The dependent variable for this study is conceptualised as "academic performance." It is the standardised transformation of the "Senior School Certificate Examination" (SSCE) and the equivalent of the "total point score" for each student, and this is derived from grades in academic SSCE and equivalent level of vocational qualification in around 9 subjects of which SSCE in English, Mathematics, and science are compulsory. In-school youth with five credits and above, including English language and mathematics, were regarded as successful, while those without English language and mathematics were grouped as unsuccessful. This categorisation was used because students applying to higher education institutions must have credit passes in these core subjects (English language and mathematics).

Mean scores for all the subjects for every in-school youth were determined. Also, class averages were used to categorise in-school youth academic performance into poor, moderate, and high academic performance. Inventory was used to select students'

results through the assistance of school continuous assessment masters (CA) and principals.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

Results in Table 1 showed the socioeconomic characteristics of respondents. More than half (65.5%) of the in-school youths were aged 17 years, while some (32.0%) were 18 and 20, with a mean of 16.96±1.65 years. It means the in-school youths are very young and in their active years of learning.

Most (87.2%) of the in-school youth were males. This indicates that there is gender inequality in school enrolment in the study area, especially among the pastoralist community. This might be linked to most parents' fear of sending their female children to school and the issues of child marriage that take the girls out of school. Some parents feel that school would have a bad influence (sex-related behaviour) on their daughters and fear it would change their moral customs (Krätli, 2001). Apart from this, cattle rearing involves the male folk; the longs could result from the drudgery associated with the traditional cattle industry, which is characterised by the long-distance movement in search of greener pastures and water for the cattle. These findings corroborate the findings of Torimiro *et al.* (2003), which posited that the gender divide noticed could be because most of the animal-rearing activities among pastoralists are culturally male affairs because females are regarded as the weaker sex and are culturally restricted to marketing milk products and keeping the home clean. It is further supported by an expanded FGD session one *"In my family, female children are not allowed to go graze cattle. We have males engaged through paid labour that caters for the cattle while we are in school".*

Furthermore, the results agree with Agboola, Adekunle, and Ogunjimi's (2015) findings, which indicated that more males were involved than females in vegetable production because the production involves more time and demands high energy. Cattle rearing also shares the same characteristics as vegetable production (Ibrahim, 2018). The results also gave credence to that of Mohammed and Abdulquadri (2012), that gender inequality is expected in the agricultural sector and constitutes a bottleneck to the sector's transformation. Almost all (99.0%) of the parents of the in-school youth were males.

Moreover, half (51.7%) of the in-school youth had between zero to five siblings, (46.3%) had six to fifteen siblings and only very few (2.0%) had above twenty-one siblings with an average of six siblings per in-school youth. The reason for this moderate number of siblings could be a result of the importance attached to a large number of children by the parents of in-school youth. The larger the number of siblings, the larger the family labour available for cattle herding. Another implication of many siblings is that it determined who could be sent to school and who could follow the cattle for grazing. Experience has it that the number of siblings of the in-school is an essential determinant of academic performance.

Many (76.4%) of the in-school youth had between 7 and 10 years of cattle-rearing experience. About 13.8 per cent had above 14 years of cattle rearing, and only 9.9 per cent had between 2 and 6 years of cattle rearing experience, with a mean of 9.2 years. It implies that the in-school youth have moderate experience in cattle rearing, which consequently influenced their need for

Western education. The finding corroborates Ani (2002) that farmers with many years of farming experience tend to have more excellent managerial know-how and decision-making.

A larger percentage (94.6%) of the in-school indicated that their parents had between 2 and 150 heads of cattle, only a few (4.9%) had between 151-400 heads, and only very few (0.5%) had above 500 heads of cattle per parent with an average of 64.62±62.28 heads. The high value of standard deviation showed great inequality among the parents. Odeyinka (2014) states that inequality relates to the ownership of large ruminants in Nigeria. It indicates that the parents of the in-school youth are still subsistence cattle rearers. It implies that the cattle rearers are subsistence cattle farmers. This large herd size suggests that there would be too much demand for labour within the family. It could eventually put more pressure on the in-school youth, intruding on their time for school-related activities such as reading and doing class assignments. In-school youth who look after fewer cattle tend to have less work and concentrate more on their school activities. Hence this would enhance their academic performance.

Table 1: Results of in-school youth's socio-economic characteristics

Variables	Frequency	%	Mean	Std. deviation
Age (Years)			16.9557	1.65697
15 to 17	133	65.5		
18 to 20	65	32.0		
21 above	5	2.5		
Sex				
Female	26	12.8		
Male	177	87.2		
Educational level				
SSS One	74	36.5		
SSS Two	77	37.9		
SSS Three	52	25.6		
Number of siblings			6.1478	4.20723
00 to 5	105	51.7		
6 to 15	94	46.3		
21 and above	4	2.0		
Years of experience in cattle rearing			9.1626	2.14064
2 to 6 years	20	9.9		
7 to 10 years	155	76.4		
14 years and above	28	13.7		
Parents' cattle herd size			64.6207	62.28431
2 to 150 heads	192	94.6		
151 to 500 heads	10	4.9		
500 and above	1	0.5		

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Overall Academic Performance of In-School Youth

The results in Table 2 for each category of the in-school youth based on their last term results average alongside their performance in various subjects offered. First, it presents each subject's mean scores and standard deviations. All the in-school youth sat for a minimum of five subjects and a maximum of nine. The mean score for each subject is presented thus; English language ($\bar{x} = 38.27 \pm 18.09$), for SSS I ($\bar{x} = 31.36 \pm 16.16$), for SSS II and ($\bar{x} = 38.69 \pm 19.25$), for SSS III. Mathematics ($\bar{x} = 35.90 \pm 17.09$), for SSS I ($\bar{x} = 36.95 \pm 15.59$), for SSS II and ($\bar{x} = 37.58 \pm 15.54$), for SSS III. Chemistry ($\bar{x} = 38.50 \pm 20.89$), for SSS I ($\bar{x} = 36.89 \pm 16.38$), for SSS II and ($\bar{x} = 37.90 \pm 21.73$), for SSS III. Physics ($\bar{x} = 34.63 \pm 21.19$), for SSS I ($\bar{x} = 34.95 \pm 25.08$), for SSS II ($\bar{x} = 39.09 \pm 16.85$), for SSS III and Biology ($\bar{x} = 44.84 \pm 18.64$), for SSS I ($\bar{x} = 35.90 \pm 17.59$), for SSS II and ($\bar{x} = 41.23 \pm 14.34$) for SSS III.

It can be deduced from this result that in all the classes, the in-school youth failed significant subjects such as English language, Mathematics, Chemistry, and Physics, with SSS II failing Biology and Economics. SSS I classes had passed the following subjects at credit levels, Agricultural Science, Islamic Studies, Hausa Language, and Animal Husbandry. Meanwhile, SSS II had credits in Islamic Studies, Hausa Language, and Animal Husbandry, while SSS III had credits in Civic Education, Islamic Studies, Hausa Language, and Animal Husbandry. These results imply that if it were to be the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) or National Examination Council (NECO) examinations, the in-school youth would not be given admission into any institution of higher learning. Based on the standard set by these examination bodies, due to their poor academic performance.

This result implies that it portends danger in the future of the cattle industry in the State and, consequently, in the country. The youth are seen as the future game changers, and education is critical in developing their intellectual capacities. Equally important, the desired transformation needs of the livestock sector are driven by technological change. Education is seen as an essential ingredient in developing and accepting any technology.

In-School Youth Academic Performance

Figure 2 reveals that many (47.8%) of the in-school youth fell within poor academic performance. About 40.4 per cent fell within moderate academic performance, and only a few (11.8%) fell within a high academic performance. These results imply that in-school youth have performed poorly in most subjects. This achievement portrays danger in the educational pursuit of the in-school youth. And it would lead to low human capital accumulation of the in-school youth. Since good academic performance improves skills, knowledge, and experience acquisition.

Poor academic performance of the in-school would affect the in-school youth and the State. It would also, determine the in-school future career; good academic performance enhances aspirations for better careers and access to better career opportunities in the future.

In contrast, in-school youth with poor academic performance tend to have low self-esteem and aspirations for better career opportunities. This category of in-school youth tends to be involved in menial jobs and often engage in criminal activities in the future. It has been established that there is a direct correlation between high academic performance and future success. Another consequence of this poor academic performance is that the future of the cattle

industry lies in the hands of the in-school youth. The cattle industry is scientific, technology-driven, and sustainable and it requires young people who are intellectually sound and willing to move the cattle industry forward.

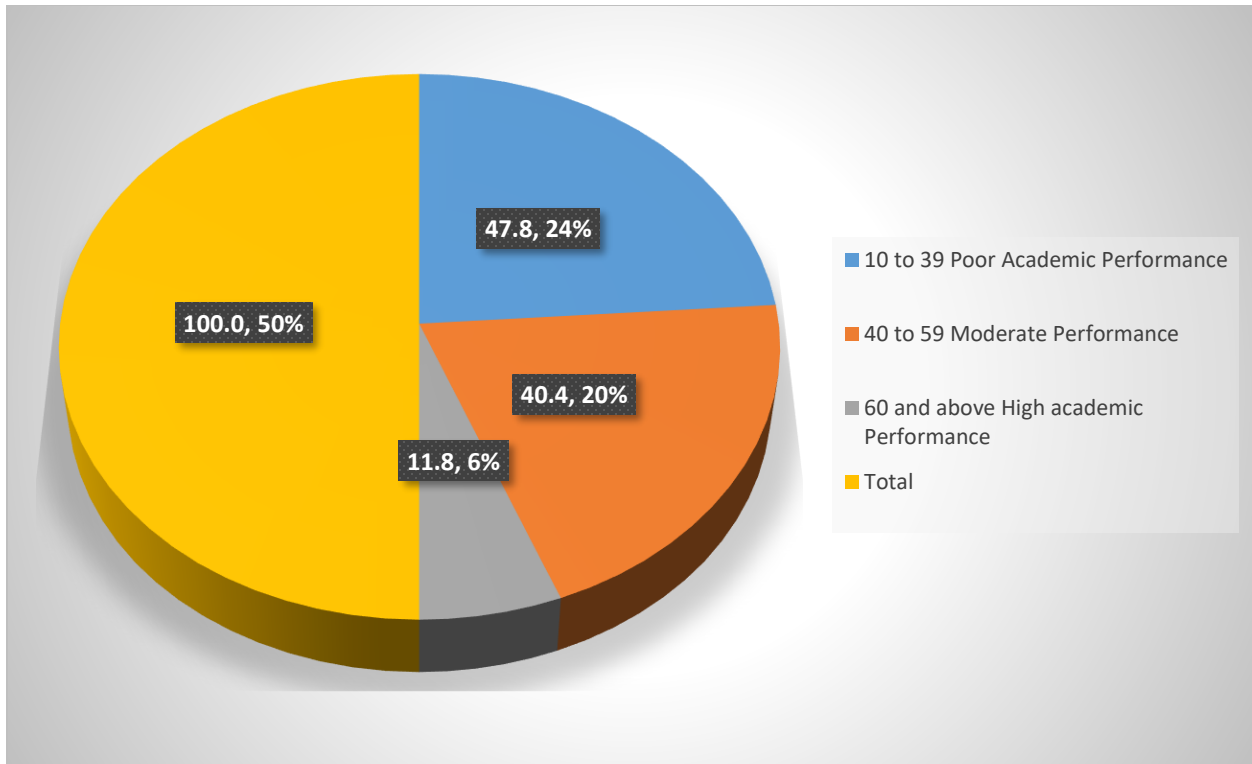**Table 2: Mean scores of respondents' performance per subject according to class**

Subjects	SSS One	SSS Two	SSS Three
	$\bar{x}$	$\bar{x}$	$\bar{x}$
	σ	σ	σ
English language	38.27*	31.36*	38.69*
	18.09	16.16	19.25
Mathematics	35.90*	36.95*	37.58*
	17.48	15.59	15.54
Chemistry	38.50*	36.89*	37.90*
	20.89	16.38	21.73
Physics	34.63*	34.95*	39.09*
	21.19	25.08	16.85
Biology	44.84**	35.90*	41.23**
	18.62	17.59	14.78
Economics	46.79**	38.05*	41.31**
	9.14	11.77	14.34
Agric science	54.21***	43.25**	49.75**
	18.31	15.49	21.83
Geography	47.89**	40.75**	41.87**
	17.12	13.68	12.89
Civic education	48.92**	46.76**	51.30***
	15.94	18.61	16.05
Islamic studies	55.02***	51.97***	50.88***
	18.25	17.77	17.22
Hausa language	61.83***	53.35***	57.47***
	13.99	12.62	14.92
Government	45.00**	32.00*	45.00**
	0.00	21.35	0.00
Animal Husbandry	64.75***	61.30***	56.82***
	15.32	14.04	14.02

Source: Field survey, 2022
*Fail
**Pass
***Credit

Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by academic performance

Source: Field survey, 2022

Determinants of Academic Performance of the In-School Youth

The results presented in Table 5 show the regression analysis of the relationship between the highlighted in-school youth's socioeconomic characteristics and academic performance. It revealed that at $p \leq 0.01$ level of significance, in-school youth's number of siblings (β= -.252), cattle herding hours (β= -.230), in-school youth cattle concern (β= -.285), in-school youth concern for cattle and school (β=.262). At $p \leq 0.05$ level of significance, parents' herd size (β= .537), lateness to school (β= -6.671), number of hours spent in apprenticeship training (β=2.661), and primary orientation towards cattle rearing (β=.177) significantly influenced the academic performance of the in-school youth. The regression model was equally flagged as significant at $p \leq 0.01$ significance level with an R^2 value of 0.805. It showed that the isolated independent variables contribute 80.5% to influencing academic performance. The finding agrees with Torimiro *et al.,* (2014), who posited that in-school youth involvement in skills acquisition activities has significantly and negatively affected their academic performance.

Also, the findings lend credence to Holgado *et al.* (2014), who submitted that the number of hours worked and work schedule that overlap with the school would affect children's academic performance and their experiences in the educational process negatively. Furthermore, the results are in consonant with the work of Abdu-Raheem (2015), who found that family size, parents' background, parents' qualifications, and parents' income level significantly affect secondary school student's academic performance in Ekiti state. Also, Baert *et al.* (2017) found a significant negative

association between students' work and academic performance.

However, the results of regression analysis could be further explained. An increase in a unit in the number of siblings would lead to a 25.5% decrease in the academic performance of the in-school youth. Likewise, a unit increase of cattle herding hours by one unit would lead to a 23.0% decrease in the academic performance of the in-school youth. Moreover, a unit increase in cattle concern of the in-school youth by one unit would lead to a 28.5% decrease in academic performance. Also, a unit increase in lateness to the school of the in-school by one unit would lead to a 1.8% in the academic performance of the in-school youth.

These results imply that these variables significantly influence the academic performance of the in-school youth in the study area. The educational implication of the results is that these variables would continue to negatively affect the academic performance of the in-school youth, translating into poor human capital development in the State. Also, the political implication is that there would be an increase in public expenditure. Another implication of these results is the poor academic performance of the in-school youth may lead to school dropout. School dropout would harm the community. It is because poorly academically in-school youth tend to engage in criminal activities, which in the long run could lead to a breach of law and order in society. Similarly, experience has it that most of those who engage in criminal activities are dropouts who drop out of school due to poor academic performance or peer pressure.

Table 3: Regression analysis results showing the determinants of poor academic performance of in-school youth

	b	Beta	t-value	Sig
(Constant)	53.933		5.260	0.000
Number of siblings	-.853	- .252	-3.589	0.000
Cattle herding hours	-1.523	-.230	-2.400	0.017
School distance	1.143	.100	1.428	.155
In-school youth cattle concern	-.004	-.285	-3.474	0.001
In-school youth concerns for cattle and school	.004	.262	3.473	0.001
Parents herd size	3.933	.537	2.053	0.042
Primary orientation towards cattle rearing	.002	.177	2.343	0.020
Lateness to school	-6.751	-0.180	-2.339	0.020
Number of hours of apprenticeship training	2.661	0.349	3.210	0.002

Level of significance 0.01 ($p \leq 0.01$), Level of significance 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$), R=0.897, R^2= 0.805, Adj R^2=0.782
Source: Field survey, 2022

The difference in academic performance of the in-school youth
The results in Table 4 show that SSS one had the highest academic performance mean score of 44.46, followed closely by SSS three (4), and SSS two had the lowest mean score of 37.88. This output stipulated that the academic performance of SSS one and

SSS three had the highest academic performance mean score, and SSS two was noted with the lower mean score. SSS one and SSS three frequently occupied the upper level of academic performance.

Furthermore, Table 5 shows a significant positive difference in academic performance among in-school youth. The F-value was found to be 4.316 and noted as significant at a 0.02 level of significance($p \leq 0.05$). It revealed that academic performance significantly differs among various classes of in-school youth. The reason for the low academic performance mean score observed in SSS two could be that the SSS two in-school think they have enough time to prepare for their senior school certificate examination (SSCE), unlike SSS three, who had to prepare for their SSCE, therefore, would study hard. For SSS one, the reason could be that they just finished their Junior Secondary School Certificate Examinations

(JSSCE). And having entered another class, they may not know the rigours involved; that they have to study hard not to disappoint themselves and their parents/guardians.

Given the above submission, a post-hoc test was conducted to ascertain where the highlighted difference in academic performance occurred among the in-school youth. For this, evidence of the test of homogeneity of variance is in Table 6. Noting the violation of the assumption of homogeneity of variance. The unequalled number of cases (N) per in-school youth group directed the utilisation of the Games-Howell test for the post-hoc analysis. The output in Table 6 revealed that at $p \leq 0.01$, the SSS one mean score did not differ significantly from the SSS three (I-J=2.25). In contrast, the mean differences recorded with SSS two were found to be significant.

Table 5: showing in-school youth's academic performance means scores

In-school youth	Mean	Std. dev	Std. error
SSS One	44.46	14.87	1.72
SSS Two	37.88	13.31	1.51
SSS Three	42.21	13.55	1.87

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 5: A hypothesis test results showing the significant difference in in-school youth academic performance in SSS 1,2 and 3

	Sum of squares	df	Means square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1683.071	2	841.535	4.316	0.02
Within Groups	38994.663	200	194.973		
Total	40677.734	202	841.535		

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 6: Test of homogeneity of variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.775	2	200	0.172

Source: Field survey, 2022

Table 7: Results of Game-Howell Post-hoc test on the significance of the mean difference in in-school youth academic performance

(I) Level of education	(J) level of education	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. error	Sig.	95% confid. Lower Bound.	Upper Bound.
SSS One	SSS Two	6.58432*	2.30060	0.013	1.1367	12.0319
	SSS Three	2.25372	2.55399	0.652	-3.8100	8.3174
SSS Two	SSS One	-6.58432*	2.30060	0.013	-12.0319	-1.1367
	SSS Two	-4.33060	2.41541	0.177	-10.0705	1.4093
SSS Three	SSS One	-2.25372	2.55399	0.652	-8.3174	3.8100
	SSS Two	4.33060	2.41541	0.177	-1.4093	10.0705

*The mean difference (I-J) is significant at a 0.05 level
Source: Field survey, 2022

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is concluded from the findings of the study that the in-school youth were aged 16 years. performed poorly in English Language; Mathematics; Chemistry; Physics; Biology; and Economics. The in-school youth were highly involved in cattle rearing despite schooling. Conflict also existed between cattle rearing and schooling. The major determinants of academic performance were the number of siblings, cattle herding hours; in-school youth concerns for cattle and school; in-school youth concerns for cattle; parents' herd size; lateness to schooling, and several hours of apprenticeship training. Moreso, significant differences in academic performance existed among the in-school youth. Based on the findings of this study, the following were recommended;

i. Parents of in-school youth should be encouraged to enrol all their children or wards in school in respective of the sex or birth order of the child.

ii. Parents of the in-school youth should reduce the hours their children or wards spend in cattle rearing to give them enough time for school-related activities such as reading, assignments, and extracurricular activities.

iii. Cattle herders should key into the federal government's rural area grazing reserve usage policy to settle in one location so that their children or wards would have enough time for their academic pursuits.

iv. Government and non-governmental organisations, both at local and international levels, should mount advocacy programmes on the value of employing labour for herding outside the family instead of relying heavily on their children.

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