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THE INHIBITING FACTORS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING OF ECONOMICS AND PERFORMANCE STUDENT IN IMO STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the inhibiting factors that affect the effective learning of economics and the academic performance of students in secondary schools across Imo State, Nigeria. Economics, as a subject, plays a vital role in equipping learners with analytical and decision-making skills, yet its teaching and learning processes are often constrained by multiple challenges. Findings from recent literature reveal that poor teacher competence, lack of instructional resources, overcrowded classrooms, and inadequate infrastructural facilities significantly impede effective delivery of the subject. Additionally, socio-economic challenges, weak study habits, low motivation, and negative perceptions of economics among students further contribute to poor performance. By identifying these key barriers, this study underscores the urgent need for holistic interventions involving improved teacher training, provision of adequate teaching aids, supportive learning environments, and initiatives to foster student interest, in order to enhance economics education outcomes in Imo State. It was concluded that these inhibiting factors not only limit the comprehension of key economic concepts but also reduce students' capacity to apply analytical skills in real-life situations. One of the recommendations is that parents and communities should be sensitized to support students' educatio by encouraging effective study habits, reducing socio-economic pressures, and fostering a positive attitude toward learning.

KEYWORD: Effective learning, economics, performance student, Imo State.

INTRODUCTION

The study of inhibiting factors to effective learning of economics and student performance in Imo State has drawn considerable attention in recent educational research. Economics is widely regarded as a subject that equips learners with critical analytical and problem-solving skills necessary for understanding societal development, yet challenges in pedagogy, learning environment, and student readiness often hinder its effectiveness (Okorie & Nwachukwu, 2019; Ejiogu & Obasi, 2021). In Nigeria, particularly in Imo State, the teaching and learning of economics has been influenced by diverse socio-economic and institutional factors that require

scholarly attention. Understanding these impediments is crucial for devising strategies that improve student outcomes and align with national educational goals. One major inhibiting factor identified in the literature is the shortage of qualified economics teachers and inadequate pedagogical skills (Okere, 2020). In many secondary schools, teachers lack continuous professional development, leading to reliance on outdated teaching methods that discourage student engagement. Additionally, studies have reported the absence of well-equipped instructional materials and modern teaching aids, which are essential for simplifying abstract economic concepts (Ejiogu & Obasi, 2021). Such deficiencies result in rote learning rather than fostering deep conceptual understanding.

Furthermore, the learning environment plays a pivotal role in shaping student performance. Research highlights that overcrowded classrooms, poor infrastructural facilities, and lack of access to libraries or ICT resources create unfavorable conditions for effective learning of economics (Igbo & Chukwu, 2019; Okereke, 2021). In Imo State, socio-economic challenges faced by families also affect student performance, as learners are often burdened with financial difficulties and limited parental support (Okorie & Nwachukwu, 2019). These external pressures reduce motivation and concentration, thereby impeding academic achievement. Finally, student-related factors, such as poor study habits, low interest in economics, and negative attitudes toward the subject, further compound the challenges (Nwogu & Eke, 2020). Peer influence, coupled with the perception that economics is a difficult subject, discourages consistent study. This psychological barrier, in combination with inadequate teaching and learning facilities, significantly affects students' academic performance in Imo State. A systematic examination of these inhibiting factors is therefore necessary to guide policymakers, teachers, and stakeholders in implementing sustainable interventions for improving economics education outcomes in the region.

CONCEPT OF ECONOMICS

The social science of economics examines how people, organizations, and governments divide up limited resources to meet limitless demands. The field as a whole is based on this idea of scarcity, which highlights the importance of opportunity cost and choice. Scarcity means resources such as land, labor, and capital are limited, forcing economic agents to priorities their needs and make trade-offs (Mankiw, 2021).

An essential component of economic theory is the idea of opportunity cost. When a decision is made, it refers to the value of the next best option that is given up. For instance, a government may have to cut back on spending on healthcare or education if it chooses to increase defense spending. This cost-benefit analysis guides both individual and collective economic decisions (Sloman, 2018).

Microeconomics and macroeconomics are the two main subfields of economics. Microeconomics examines how markets set prices and how resources are distributed effectively, with a focus on the behavior of individual customers and businesses. Macroeconomics, on the other hand, studies the economy as a whole, including issues like inflation, unemployment, and economic growth (Blanchard & Johnson, 2017). These divisions help economists understand both small-scale and large-scale economic phenomena.

One of the pillars of economic theory is the supply and demand premise. It describes how a competitive market sets pricing. Prices typically rise when demand for a good increases and supply stays the same. On the other hand, prices often decrease when supply rises and demand

remains constant. This dynamic interaction between supply and demand creates market equilibrium, where quantity supplied equals quantity demanded (Case, Fair, & Oster, 2020).

Efficiency, or the ideal distribution of resources to optimize production and welfare, is another important idea in economics. When no more product can be produced without raising input costs or making someone less fortunate, economic efficiency has been achieved. However, in reality, market failures such as externalities and public goods often prevent efficient outcomes, necessitating government intervention (Stiglitz & Rosengard, 2015).

Moreover, both positive and normative analyses are used in economics. The objective, testable claims that are the focus of positive economics include "an increase in interest rates will reduce investment". Normative economics, by contrast, involves value judgements like "the government should reduce income inequality" (Mankiw, 2021).

FACTORS THAT INHIBIT LEARNING OF ECONOMICS

Because it gives students the analytical abilities needed to comprehend resource allocation, decision-making, and country development, economics is frequently seen as a crucial subject. Despite its importance, a lot of students struggle to understand and learn economics, which results in subpar performance and waning interest. Numerous interrelated cognitive, pedagogical, institutional, economical, and psychological aspects affect the learning process and can either help or hinder performance. This essay looks at the main barriers to economics education and backs up its claims with academic research.

Weak Mathematical Foundation: Because of its strong mathematical component, economics calls for knowledge of algebra, statistics, and graphical analysis. Many students don't have the mathematics knowledge needed to manage these elements. Research indicates that students' struggles to understand economic concepts like elasticity, marginal analysis, and national income measurement are greatly exacerbated by a lack of numeracy. (Idika, 2020). Without these skills, learners experience “math anxiety,” which further discourages engagement (WriteUpCafe, 2024).

Negative Attitude and Low Motivation: The way a student feels about a subject has a big impact on how well they learn. Students become disinterested in studying economics when they believe it to be esoteric, challenging, or irrelevant. Idika (2020) found that negative attitudes toward Economics were a key barrier among secondary school learners in Nigeria. Similarly, Ojo (2016) revealed that apathy and lack of motivation led to low classroom participation, thereby limiting understanding.

Cognitive Overload and Abstract Concepts: Abstract concepts like opportunity cost, equilibrium, and utility maximization abound in economics. Pupils frequently find it difficult to picture these ideas, especially when they are unrelated to real-world situations (Moosavian, 2016). The extensive use of models and assumptions like ceteris paribus further confuses learners, who find it difficult to connect theory with real-world application.

Shortage of Qualified Teachers: One major issue, particularly in developing nations, is the lack of skilled and experienced economics teachers. The teacher-to-student ratio in Ogbomosho, Nigeria, was found to be 1:225, which limits effective engagement and one-on-one support (Ojo, 2016). Non-specialist teachers are sometimes assigned to teach Economics, leading to ineffective delivery (Abdullah, 2017).

Teaching Methods: Conventional, lecturebased methods are commonly used to teach economics. Although this method covers material, it frequently overlooks interactive and problem-solving techniques that promote critical thinking (Economics Network, 2003). When teachers fail to adopt learner-centered strategies such as discussions, simulations, and case studies, students disengage, and concepts remain abstract.

Lack of Motivation and Professional Development: Due to low pay and few possibilities for professional development, teachers themselves may not be motivated. This frequently leads to a lack of dedication and a dependence on antiquated techniques and resources (Uncommon Learning Standard, 2022).

Inadequate Learning Materials: In order to learn, textbooks and instructional materials are essential. However, many schools lack current economics texts, charts, or ICT resources, particularly in under resourced areas. Ojo (2016) reported that the absence of quality instructional materials hindered students from accessing accurate and engaging information. In addition, many available textbooks are either oversimplified or poorly structured (Uncommon Learning Standard, 2022).

Poor Infrastructure: ICT labs, libraries, and classrooms are all necessary for effective learning. While overcrowded classrooms limit teacher-student interaction, inadequate amenities impede solo study. Idika (2020) found that poor school infrastructure was a major obstacle to effective Economics education in Enugu State, Nigeria.

Examination-Oriented Systems: The educational system in many nations places more emphasis on passing tests than on fostering understanding. This promotes rote memory over critical thinking, which results in a superficial understanding of economics (The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies, 2018).

Poverty and Financial Constraints: Low-income students frequently do not have access to extra resources like textbooks, online resources, or private tutoring. This discrepancy leads to unequal learning opportunities (AzResearchConsult, 2022). Financial hardship may also force learners to take on responsibilities outside school, reducing the time available for study.

Parental and Community Support: Parents may not offer sufficient academic support if they lack education or economics knowledge. Students' confidence and interest in the subject are diminished when parents are not involved (AzResearchConsult, 2022).

Inequality of Access: In developed contexts, Economics is often studied disproportionately by students from wealthier backgrounds and private schools. Lombard Elli (2025), Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, noted that Economics suffers from an "image problem," with women and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds underrepresented. Such disparities in access limit diversity and equitable learning opportunities.

Linguistic and Communication Barriers: "Capital," "inflation," and "investment" are examples of technical terminology used in economics that are not commonly used. Confusion may result from students misinterpreting such ideas (WriteUpCafe, 2024). Where the language of instruction is not the learner's first language, comprehension becomes even more difficult (Ojo, 2016).

Math Anxiety: "Capital," "inflation," and "investment" are examples of technical terminology used in economics that are not commonly used. Confusion may result from students misinterpreting such ideas (Differ Blog, 2025).

Perceived Irrelevance: When students believe that the material is relevant to their everyday lives, they become more motivated. However, students may decide that economics is useless if it is presented as abstract theory with little bearing on real-world problems like inflation or unemployment. (Reddit, 2024).

Stereotypes and Self-Efficacy: Some pupils think that only "brilliant" or "mathematically gifted" students should study economics. This misconception erodes self-efficacy and deters typical students from exerting themselves (Studyingeconomics.ac.uk, 2019).

In conclusion, a number of reasons, including cognitive, pedagogical, institutional, socioeconomic, linguistic, and psychological ones, make it difficult to learn economics. Although these difficulties differ in different settings, they all have the same effects, which include low motivation, poor comprehension, and deteriorating student performance. Teachers, governments, legislators, and communities must work together to address these problems. if sufficient reforms are put in place, like better teacher preparation, resource availability, and learner-centered pedagogy. Economics can be made interesting and approachable, giving students the tools they need to advance both individually and as a nation.

FACTORS THAT INHIBIT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENT IN ECONOMICS

- **Poor Teaching Methods and Pedagogical Practices:** The persistent use of subpar teaching strategies is one of the main things preventing students from performing well academically in economics. Many economics teachers continue to use teacher-centered methods that restrict student participation and stifle the growth of critical thinking abilities. Instruction frequently centers on dictation and memorization of economic terminology and ideas rather than utilizing interactive techniques like group discussions, case studies, and problem-based learning. Idikwoji (2025) argues that these methods fail to cater to diverse learning styles, thereby impeding comprehension and application of knowledge. Furthermore, poor assessment techniques—such as relying on outdated tests and ignoring continuous assessment—also contribute to underperformance, as students are not adequately evaluated or guided during the learning process.

- **Lack of Qualified and Competent Economics Teachers:** The persistent use of subpar teaching strategies is one of the main things preventing students from performing well academically in economics. Many economics teachers continue to use teacher-centered methods that restrict student participation and stifle the growth of critical thinking abilities. Instruction frequently centers on dictation and memorization of economic terminology and ideas rather than utilizing interactive techniques like group discussions, case studies, and problem-based learning. Idikwoji (2025) argues that these methods fail to cater to diverse learning styles, thereby impeding comprehension and application of knowledge. Furthermore, poor assessment techniques—such as relying on outdated tests and ignoring continuous assessment—also contribute to underperformance, as students are not adequately evaluated or guided during the learning process.

Theoretical and Rigid Economics Curriculum: Effective learning is also hampered by the design and substance of the economics curriculum. The curriculum in the majority of secondary schools and even some universities is overly academic and places little focus on real-world problem-solving or practical applications. Students are frequently made to memories abstract ideas without understanding how they relate to common economic problems like budgeting, unemployment, or inflation. Okafor (2019) stresses that without linking classroom instruction to current economic events or encouraging analytical reasoning, students lose interest in the subject and perform poorly. An outdated curriculum that ignores technological integration or neglects areas like entrepreneurship and financial literacy fails to engage students effectively.

- **Socio-Economic Background of Students:** The socio-economic status of students plays a profound role in their academic success. Students from low-income families frequently face numerous barriers that affect their academic commitment and performance. These include lack of access to textbooks, study materials, internet services, and conducive home environments for studying. Ukoha. (2022) found that economic insecurity—especially food scarcity, housing issues, and financial instability—was directly correlated with lower academic achievement among university students. Financial stress forces many students to take up part-time jobs, reduce their study time, or miss classes altogether, ultimately affecting their academic outcomes in economics.

- **Mental Health and Academic Stress:** Mental health has become an increasingly important factor in determining academic performance. Economics, as a subject, requires a high level of analytical thinking and sustained attention, which can be negatively affected by stress, anxiety, and burnout. Maheshwari and Shaukat (2019) documented that students under academic pressure and experiencing poor sleep quality tend to show reduced cognitive function and lower grades. Liu and Cao (2022) further noted that emotional resilience and mental well-being play protective roles, helping student's better cope with the academic demands of economics. However, in schools without proper counselling services or support systems, students are often left to handle these stressors alone, which affects their ability to learn effectively.

- **Limited Access to Technology and E-Learning Tools:** With the increasing integration of technology in education, lack of access to digital learning tools has become a modern barrier to academic performance. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed a digital divide where many students could not access online classes, video lectures, or virtual discussions due to poor internet connectivity or lack of devices. Rivera-Vargas et al. (2022) highlight that students in under-resourced areas fell behind significantly during the pandemic and still struggle to catch up. In economics education, where online simulations, data tools, and current events play a critical role, this technological gap results in missed learning opportunities and poor academic performance.

- **Overcrowded Classrooms and Poor Learning Infrastructure:** Another persistent problem is overcrowded classrooms and insufficient school facilities. In many Nigerian schools, for example, economics classes are held in overcrowded environments where teacher-student ratios are too high to allow for individual attention or group activities. Aliyu and Idris (2024) found that in Gombe State, inadequate econometrics laboratories, poor ventilation, and a lack of audio-visual teaching aids contributed to low performance in economics-related courses.

Poor infrastructure makes it difficult to create an engaging and conducive learning atmosphere, and students often leave class without fully understanding key concepts.

- **Lack of Academic Support and Motivation:** In addition to classroom instruction, students need academic and emotional support systems to succeed. Unfortunately, many schools lack mentorship programmes, remedial classes, or counselling units that help struggling students. Osorio-Saez. (2022) found that during the COVID-19 lockdowns, students who received academic guidance and emotional support from teachers and parents performed better and showed greater resilience. In the absence of such support, students may develop negative attitudes toward economics, viewing it as too difficult or irrelevant, which leads to disengagement and declining performance.

- **Academic Instability and Disruptions in the School Calendar:** Finally, recurring academic disruptions—such as lecturers' strikes, delayed examinations, and inconsistent academic calendars—significantly reduce students' academic momentum. These interruptions often cause anxiety, loss of study rhythm, and gaps in knowledge retention. Eze and Ogbonna (2025) noted that repeated strikes in Imo State universities not only delayed student graduation but also reduced students' focus and motivation, especially in cumulative subjects like economics, where continuous learning is essential. These forms of academic instability compromise both teaching quality and learning outcomes.

THE MITIGATING STRATEGIES TO INHIBITING FACTORS TO LEARNING OF ECONOMICS

Economics is an essential subject that provides learners with tools to understand how societies allocate scarce resources, how individuals make choices, and how policies affect national and global outcomes. Despite its relevance, many students across secondary schools and universities perceive economics as difficult and disengaging. This perception arises from a number of inhibiting factors, such as a weak quantitative background, limited access to technological resources, poor teaching methods, low motivation, and exam-centered learning systems. Overcoming these barriers is critical for developing competent learners who can apply economic reasoning in real life. Between 2015 and 2025, scholars and education practitioners have identified strategies that directly mitigate these inhibiting factors. The following sections provide detailed explanations of these strategies.

- **Strengthening Quantitative Foundations:** One of the strongest barriers to learning economics is the inadequate preparation in mathematics and statistics. Many students enter economics classes without sufficient background in algebra, calculus, or probability, which are necessary for understanding supply-demand curves, elasticity, regression analysis, and other core concepts. This gap creates anxiety and discourages learners from fully engaging with the subject. Mitigating Strategy: Schools and universities should establish bridging programs or preparatory modules that focus specifically on "math for economics." These courses introduce fundamental quantitative skills in a gradual and student-friendly manner. For example, scaffolding techniques, where content is introduced step by step, allow learners to build confidence in solving mathematical problems before advancing to more complex models. Low-stakes quizzes and worked examples can also be used to reinforce understanding without adding the pressure of grading. According to Sumeracki and Weinstein (2018), retrieval practice and scaffolding significantly improve knowledge retention, reduce math anxiety, and increase self-efficacy among learners.

 Promoting Active Learning Methods: Traditional teaching of economics is lecture-heavy, with students passively taking notes. This style limits participation and often results in rote memorization rather than deep understanding. Students, particularly in large classes, may feel disengaged and disconnected from the subject. Active learning approaches are effective in addressing this problem. These methods transform students from passive listeners to active participants in the learning process. Techniques such as role-playing, economic simulations, debates on policy issues, problem-based learning, and in-class experiments enable students to see the application of abstract theories. For instance, a simulation on market equilibrium where students act as buyers and sellers can vividly demonstrate how prices adjust to balance supply and demand. Kaiser and Menkhoff (2022) found that such participatory strategies improved comprehension of financial education concepts and increased critical thinking skills. Instructors can start small by introducing short interactive activities within lectures before expanding to full project-based learning models.

 Enhancing Curriculum Relevance with Real-World Problems: Another major barrier is the perception that economics is too abstract and disconnected from real life. Students often wonder how demand curves or fiscal policies relate to their day-to-day lives. This lack of perceived relevance reduces motivation and engagement.

Mitigating Strategy: The curriculum should be structured around real-world problems. Instead of starting with abstract models, educators can begin lessons with pressing social and economic issues such as unemployment, inflation, poverty, inequality, and climate change. Once the problem is introduced, theories and models can be used to analyze possible solutions. For example, a lesson on inflation can be introduced by discussing rising food prices in Nigeria, followed by an explanation of demand-pull and cost-push inflation. CORE Econ (2023) has pioneered this approach by designing open-access textbooks that emphasize empirical data, institutions, and global challenges. By seeing how economic principles explain issues in their communities, students develop a stronger appreciation for the subject.

 Providing Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environments: Some inhibiting factors are social and psychological rather than purely academic. Gender stereotypes, cultural bias, and classroom climates that discourage participation often create invisible barriers to learning economics. For instance, women and first-generation students sometimes feel excluded or underrepresented in economics courses.

Mitigating Strategy: Building inclusive and supportive classrooms is essential. Teachers should diversify examples to reflect different groups and regions, use transparent grading rubrics to eliminate bias, and encourage participation from all students. Structured group discussions, random calling with the option to pass, and peer mentoring programs can give underrepresented students a stronger voice. The American Economic Association's (2019) climate survey highlighted that inclusiveness in economics education leads to better student engagement and persistence in the field. Additionally, mentorship programs can link students with role models who guide them academically and professionally. This not only reduces dropout rates but also promotes diversity in economics.

 Leveraging Technology for Wider Access: The COVID-19 pandemic revealed how lack of access to digital resources can seriously inhibit learning. Many students in rural or underserved regions were unable to continue their education due to lack of devices, internet, or

digital literacy. Even before the pandemic, limited access to technology hindered students from exploring economic data and simulations.

Mitigating Strategy: Technology should be harnessed to widen access and improve the quality of learning. Online learning platforms, mobile-friendly content, and recorded lectures make learning flexible and inclusive. Institutions should also invest in providing affordable devices, internet stipends, or community digital labs. During the pandemic, the World Bank (2020; 2024) documented that students who had access to interactive and well-designed digital learning tools experienced less disruption compared to those relying solely on printed handouts. In economics, integrating technology through online quizzes, data visualization tools, and virtual discussion forums can make concepts more engaging and accessible.

 Using Formative and Feedback-Rich Assessments: Another inhibiting factor is the heavy reliance on high-stakes exams that encourage cramming and short-term memorization. Students often focus on passing tests rather than developing lasting understanding. This creates anxiety and reduces intrinsic motivation.

Mitigating Strategy: A shift to formative, low-stakes, and feedback-rich assessment is essential. Regular quizzes, reflective journals, and group problem-solving exercises allow students to practice continuously and learn from mistakes. When feedback is immediate and constructive, students can identify weak areas early and adjust their study strategies. Scoular. (2024) demonstrated that frequent formative assessments significantly improve learning outcomes, provided the feedback is timely and actionable. In economics, two-stage quizzes—where students answer questions individually and then in groups—help learners deepen understanding through peer discussion.

 Motivating Learners through Career Connections: Low motivation is a recurring issue in economics learning, especially when students see the subject as disconnected from their career goals. Many learners fail to understand how economics relates to opportunities in banking, business, government, or development.

Mitigating Strategy: Educators should highlight career pathways and practical applications of economics. Assignments can be designed as policy briefs, business case studies, or data analysis reports that mimic real-world tasks. Inviting guest lecturers from the banking sector, research institutions, or government agencies can expose students to diverse career options. According to Allgood, Walstad, and Siegfried (2015), linking economics education to career opportunities not only enhances motivation but also increases persistence in the subject. By seeing a clear connection between classroom learning and their future aspirations, students become more invested in their studies.

Institutional Support Systems

Finally, institutional factors such as lack of academic support, poor counselling services, and absence of mentorship also inhibit learning. Students who struggle early often withdraw from economics courses if no support is provided.

Mitigating Strategy: Universities and secondary schools should provide structured academic support. Tutoring services, peer-led study groups, and early warning systems for at-risk students can help identify and address problems before they escalate. Bauer. (2019) found that peer-led study groups and voluntary re-quizzing increased student performance and reduced dropout

rates. Furthermore, mentorship programs where senior students guide juniors create a culture of academic collaboration and support. These institutional strategies ensure that struggling learners are not left behind.

THE MITIGATING STRATEGIES TO THE INHIBITING FACTORS TO STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ECONOMICS

1. High-Quality Teacher Professional Development: Professional development programs that strengthen subject mastery and pedagogy can significantly enhance student learning outcomes. Effective PD includes modular workshops, classroom coaching, peer collaboration, and continuous monitoring (Learning Policy Institute, 2016). Teachers trained in active-learning strategies—such as simulations and problem-based learning—are better able to make Economics engaging and relevant.

2. Curriculum Renewal and Assessment Reform: Curriculum reform should emphasize higher-order thinking skills such as application, evaluation, and synthesis. Aligning assessments with these skills through project-based tasks, research assignments, and formative evaluations encourages deeper learning (Mohammed & Pitan, 2022).

3. Adoption of Active Learning Techniques: Research highlights the effectiveness of active learning in Economics. Strategies such as classroom experiments (e.g., market simulations), think-pair-share, group discussions, and data analysis exercises allow students to apply concepts in practical contexts (OECD, 2023). Such methods enhance understanding, motivation, and retention.

4. Targeted Remedial Tutoring: Small-group tutoring, particularly when aligned with diagnostic assessments, has been proven to significantly improve learning outcomes (Evans & Yuan, 2017). Remedial tutoring is particularly effective for struggling students who need individualized attention to bridge gaps in understanding.

5. Addressing Structural Barriers: Reducing class sizes and increasing instructional time provide teachers with the flexibility to implement interactive methods and offer personalized feedback. Furthermore, ensuring the availability of textbooks, past papers, and learning aids creates an enabling environment for effective instruction (Kremer et al., 2015).

6. Integration of Educational Technology: Educational technology can be a powerful tool when integrated effectively. For instance, spreadsheet software can be used to teach elasticity, demand-supply curves, and macroeconomic indicators. Digital lessons and simulations also enhance learning by providing interactive platforms (Evans & Yuan, 2017).

7. Socioeconomic Support Programs: Poverty-related barriers can be mitigated through targeted interventions such as school feeding programs, conditional cash transfers, and subsidies for educational materials (NASSP, 2020). International development support, such as the World Bank's $1.08 billion education financing for Nigeria in 2025, also reflects growing recognition of the need for systemic socioeconomic support (World Bank, 2025).

8. Strengthening School Leadership and Parental Engagement: Effective school leadership enhances teacher accountability and ensures better use of instructional time. Similarly, parental involvement in homework supervision, attendance monitoring, and provision of study space at home boosts student performance (Factors Influencing School Effectiveness, 2024).

9. Metacognitive and Study Skill Training: Teaching students how to learn—through planning, monitoring, and evaluating their study approaches—promotes deep learning. Training in effective study techniques, such as retrieval practice and time management, has been shown to improve performance in Economics (Frontiers in Education, 2022).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the effective learning of economics and the academic performance of students in Imo State are hindered by a complex interplay of factors, including inadequate teacher competence, poor instructional resources, unfavorable learning environments, and student-related challenges such as low motivation and negative attitudes toward the subject. These inhibiting factors not only limit the comprehension of key economic concepts but also reduce students' capacity to apply analytical skills in real-life situations. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach involving government investment in educational infrastructure, continuous teacher professional development, provision of adequate learning resources, and the cultivation of positive student attitudes toward economics. Only through such comprehensive interventions can the barriers to effective economics education be minimized, thereby improving student achievement and contributing to the broader educational and economic development goals of Imo State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Parents and communities should be sensitized to support students' education by encouraging effective study habits, reducing socio-economic pressures, and fostering a positive attitude toward learning.

2. Schools should establish counseling units and mentorship programs that help students develop effective study habits, build self-confidence, and sustain interest in economics.

3. The government should increase budgetary allocations to the education sector, ensuring that resources are adequately provided to strengthen the teaching and learning of economics across secondary schools in Imo State

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