

TEACHER QUALITY AS DETERMINANT OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO SOUTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study investigated teachers' quality as determinant of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria. In pursuance of this course, four (4) research questions were raised and two of them were answered that were not hypothesized while two (2) hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. A correlational research based on survey research design was adopted. The population for this study consisted of 418 Mathematics and English Language teachers in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria. Eighty-four (84) Mathematics and English Language teachers in secondary schools were sampled. The checklists titled: "Students' Academic Performance Checklist (SAPC)" and Teacher Quality Checklist (TQC) were used for data collection. The analysis of the result was carried out using frequencies, percentages and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results revealed that level of teacher quality in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria was high, there was average level of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria, Teacher quality and academic qualification had no significant influence on students' academic performance. It was recommended among others that principals should ensure that the potentials of the teachers are well harnessed and utilized to reflect the true picture of their quality in the academic performance of students.*

KEYWORDS: Teacher Quality, Determinant, Students' Academic Performance

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, education is seen as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development. As such, education is expected to be of high quality in order to produce sound and quality products that can contribute to the growth of the national economy. The quality of education of a nation could be determined by the quality of her teachers. The most important factor in improving students' academic achievement in school is by employing seasoned qualified teachers in all schools (Abe & Adu, 2013). Academically qualified teachers refer to those who have academic training as a result of enrolment into educational institution and obtained qualifications in various areas of endeavour such as HND, B.Sc, B.A, and Master of Art (M.A.) and so on; while professionally qualified teachers are those who got professional training that gave them professional knowledge, skills, techniques, aptitudes as different from the general education. They hold degrees like, B.Ed, B.Sc. Ed, B.A. Ed, and M.Ed degrees and so on. Onyekuru and Ibegunam (2013) found that teaching effectiveness of teachers from secondary schools was below average. However, Akinsolu (2010) had a contrary result when he found out that teachers' qualifications, experience and teacher-student ratio were significantly related to students' academic performance.

The issue of quality in the educational system has been receiving a great deal of attention in the society in recent times. Stakeholders of education especially parents as well as the entire society are now clamouring for quality in the education system which may be as a result of the perceived poor quality products turned out from the institutions on yearly basis. The demand for quality in education is not out of place considering the huge sum of money that goes into the system. Madumere-Obike (2003) was of the view that education consumes a lot of public revenue. Therefore, it is important to note that those who manage schools should be accountable to the stakeholders. The quality of the products of education is part of that accountability (Oladokun, Adebajo & Charles-Owaba, 2008).

Education imparted through quality instruction is not only for good grades alone but also for the acquisition of the right values, skills and competences to make an individual a useful member of the society. For education to achieve this objective, it must be of high quality which should not only consist of passing examinations (which is usually the first priority) but also include the acquisition of skills (in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains) through improved schools' ability to facilitate and support the work of teachers and students. The school can only achieve this lofty objective through the use of the services of qualified teachers who have all it takes to give quality instruction through interaction with students in the teaching-learning situation. Muhammad, Rashida, Riffat and Fayyaz (2011) who found out that there was no much difference in the quality of teachers of schools with higher academic achievement and that of the schools with lower academic achievement. However, Daso (2013) in a study had found out that there was a significant relationship between teachers' method of teaching, teachers' attitude and students' achievement in mathematics. Furthermore, Adedoyin (2011) in another related study found that teachers' training had significant relationship on students' academic performance in Mathematics. In another related study, Jacob and Lefgren (2004) found out that marginal increases in in-service training have no statistically or academically significant effect on either Reading or Mathematics achievement, suggesting that modest investments in staff development may not be sufficient to increase the achievement of school children in high poverty schools.

Secondary education is a very critical level of any educational system. This is because it is the bedrock on which higher education is built, as the foundation of whatever a child wants to become in life academically is laid here. It is sad to note that the academic performance of students at this level is very poor all over the country in Nigeria (Adebule, 2004). The quality of secondary school leavers has continued to deteriorate each year and a practical example is the 2014 Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) where only 31.28% of the candidates that sat for the examination had 5 credits in five subjects and above including English Language and Mathematics (WAEC, 2014). It is not uncommon that students allegedly look for crooked means of passing their examinations. What we often hear of this day is "miracle centres" where parents even encourage their children to be enrolled because they want them to pass. This is as a result of the fact that success in examination serves as a good motivator to students, teachers, administrators and employers of labour. On the other hand, failure to perform successfully in examination demoralizes all and sundry, especially students. It is the craving to succeed and avoid the frustration and embarrassment associated with failure that makes students engage in examination malpractices which have threatened the very foundation of our educational system. This may not be unconnected with the quality of teachers we have in the educational system. This has an adverse effect on the quality of

instruction because no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2004).

The quality of education of any nation determines the development status of that particular nation. The most important person in a school setting is the teacher and he is the pivot of the education process. The teacher is the most important person in the entire education programme and he can make or mar the best educational programme in the world. Education therefore is what teachers make of it. Thus, competent, devoted and professionally qualified teachers are part of essential foundation for a good education system. In other words, the attainment of national objectives for the adequate preparation of students for their examinations and achievement of educational objectives depend largely on quality teachers. Uche (2012) in a study indicated that the students rated the quality of the academic staff high, especially in terms of professional competence, but rated their supervision low.

In view of the above, and in order to improve teacher quality, it is necessary that efforts are made to provide adequate and functional educational services for teachers. These services should include the provision of e-library services, distance learning programmes, in-service training, teachers' resource centres services and the promotion of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These services tend to facilitate the implementation of the educational policy, the attainment of policy goals and the promotion of effectiveness of the educational system.

Taking a critical look at the secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District, the non-availability of these services has adversely affected the quality of teachers in the schools. The researchers observed that majority of the teachers were not computer-literate and they were not even in the habit of accessing the internet for new ideas about the subject they teach but rather they continue to use and repeat the same learning materials for their students, year in, year out. The researchers had observed that many are unable to develop themselves academically but continue to quote outdated principles of teaching and use archaic or obsolete methodologies for their poor and frustrated students. The staffing position in many secondary schools has been of great concern to many researchers and other educational stakeholders. The teaching personnel in Nigeria's secondary schools are not only inadequate but also professionally-unqualified as observed by the researchers. This may be very similar to what is obtainable in secondary schools in other parts of Edo State. However, this work was limit to teacher quality.

Many graduates and school leavers in Nigeria are without jobs and there is the assertion among the public and employers of labour that many Nigerian graduates are unemployable and those employed are inefficient. These are pointers to problems in quality and this raises the question of whether quality instruction is given to students. Also, one wonders if the stakeholders in education are doing what is expected of them. Jacob and Lefgren (2008) examined how differences in teacher quality affected students' achievement in a midsized school district. It was found that teacher quality is a sine qua none to students' academic performance in schools.

It has been rumoured among a large number of people that teachers in public secondary schools are more academically qualified than teachers in the private schools. Meanwhile, parents continue to take their children or wards to the private schools for those who can afford the tuition. The reason often adduced is that the quality of teaching in the private schools are better than those in public schools and also that the academic performance of

students in private schools is better than that of their counterparts in public secondary schools. One would reason therefore that if teachers in public secondary schools are perceived to be of higher quality, why it is not being reflected in the academic performance of their students? This is a major gap this study was to cover. It was also imperative therefore to find out the level of teacher quality in public and private secondary schools. It was equally important to determine the level of quality of teachers in urban and rural secondary schools.

However, it is the belief among many people that teachers in private secondary schools irrespective of their qualifications tend to be more dedicated to duties in terms of lesson delivery and commitment to goal actualization. Parents have preference for private secondary schools for their children because of some factors such as teacher commitment and dedication to duty, availability of staff, facilities, class size, curriculum practices, stability of academic calendar, disciplinary concerns and overall output. It was in the light of the above that the need to examine the various ways by which secondary school teachers can be kept abreast of time and thus improve their quality and students' academic performance become imperative.

Statement of the Problem

Research studies have shown that many secondary school products in Nigeria are poor in reading, writing, computational and vocational skills (Uzoka cited in Oviawe, 2016). Many of them also perform woefully in various examinations. The parameter commonly used in determining school effectiveness is students' results in standardized tests especially in external examinations (Ijaiya, 2008). In the result released by WAEC for the 2014 May/June Senior Secondary School Examination, only 31.28% (529,425) candidates out of 1,692,435 candidates who sat for the examination had credits in five subjects and above including Mathematics and English Language as against 38.81% and 36.57% in 2012 and 2013 May/June examinations respectively. Though the result of May/June 2017 had recorded increase in the pass rate with 923,486 candidates representing 59.22% of a total of 1,471,151 candidates who sat for the examination scoring a minimum of five credits including Mathematics and English Language as against 52.97% in 2016, there is a lot more to be done therefore to encourage pass rate in schools.

Since one of the purposes of education is the acquisition of knowledge and skills, students' performance after graduation can be seen as a reflection of their performance in school. This also borders on the quality of human and material resources which are available during their schooling. For many years, educators and researchers have debated on which of the school variables that influence students' achievement (Asikhia, 2010; Ayodele & Ige, 2012). As policy-makers become more involved in school reform, greater attention is given to the role teachers' quality plays on students' achievement.

There has also been an outcry from stakeholders in the educational sector such as union bodies (Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Senior Staff Association (SSANU), National Association of Academic Technologist (NAAT) etc), parents and concerned individuals about the poor provision of facilities for providing essential services for teaching and learning as well as their effective utilization. The genuineness of this outcry is depicted by the deteriorating poor performance of students in examination as earlier mentioned.

Although several attempts have been made at improving teacher quality and teaching facilities, these efforts have not been proportionately reflected in students' overall performance. Therefore, there is the need for teachers to acquire enough skills to make them

relevant technologically. Although many variables account for students' academic performance such as adequacy of educational resources (both human and material) and their effective utilization, conducive learning environment, this study was concerned mainly to investigating the extent to which teachers' quality determines students' academic performance in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide this study.

1. What is the level of teachers' quality in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria?
2. What is the level of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District, Nigeria?
3. Is there any influence of teachers' quality on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District?
4. Does academic qualification of teachers influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Teachers' quality does not significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District.
2. Academic qualification of teachers does not significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District.

METHOD AND PROCEDURES

This is a correlational study based on survey design using the ex-post-facto design. This is because it examined teacher quality as determinant of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District, Nigeria. The study was centred on teacher quality as correlate of students' academic performance without the researchers manipulating the independent variable. It was a survey research design in the sense that it also helped to study the entire population covered in the study by collecting and analyzing data from only a sample that was considered to be true representative of the entire group.

Population of the Study: The population for this study consisted of 418 Mathematics and English Language teachers in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria. This comprised 216 English Language teachers and 202 Mathematics teachers respectively.

Sample and Sampling Technique: The sample for this study was made up of 84 Mathematics and English Language teachers in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria. The sample was drawn using the simple random sampling technique after the population had been stratified according to Local Government Areas. The sample of

Mathematics and English Language teachers was 20% of the entire population of the schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria.

Instrument of the Study: The instruments used for collection of data were checklists titled: “Students’ Academic Performance Checklist (SAPC)” and Teacher Quality Checklist (TQC). The instrument (Students’ Academic Performance Checklist) consisted of two sections, “A” and “B” while Teacher Quality Checklist was made up of only one section. The checklist was used because the researcher only gathered data on respondents in their natural form.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument: Validity was carried out only on the instrument (checklists). The instrument was subjected to faced validity by experts especially the researcher’s supervisor and two other lecturers in the Department of Educational Foundations and Management for a review of the designed items. This ensured that the contents were relevant, clear and unambiguous. The corrections made by them were incorporated into the final draft. Reliability test was not carried out on the checklist. This was because the data collected were standardized.

Administration of the Instrument and Data Analysis: The secondary schools were visited and the relevant data collected using the checklist instrument. The research questions were analysed descriptively using frequencies and percentages while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypotheses. Academic qualifications were scored as follows:

B.Sc and Above = High, NCE = Medium, Below NCE = Low

Meanwhile, academic performance was graded as follows:

A1 to B3 = High, C4 to C6 = Average, D7 to F9 or P7 to F9 = Low

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the level of teacher quality in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Nigeria?

Table 1: Level of Teachers’ Quality in Secondary Schools

Teacher quality	Frequency	Percentage	Remarks
BSC and above	69	82.1%	High
NCE	14	16.7%	Medium
Below NCE	1	1.2%	Low
Total	84	100%	

Table 1 shows the percentage analysis of the level of teacher quality in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. Out of the 84 teachers sampled, 69 (82.1%) had BSc and above, 14 (16.7%) had NCE while 1 (1.2%) had below NCE. From the benchmark set for this study, it can be concluded that the level of teacher quality in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District was high.

Research Question 2: What is the level of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District, Nigeria?

Table 2: Level of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District

Academic Qualification	WAEC	NECO	Remarks
A1 to B3	220 (12%)	182 (9%)	High
C4 to C6	1104 (62%)	1201 (57%)	Average
D7 to F9	-	717 (34%)	Low
P7 to F9	476 (26%)	-	Low
Total	1800	2100	

Table 2 shows the level of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. The results for WAEC and NECO collected for 1800 students and 2100 students respectively showed that 220 students representing 12% of students had A1 to B3 in WAEC and 182 students representing 9% of students had A1 to B3 in NECO. Similarly, 1104 students representing 62% and 1201 students representing 57% had C4 to C6 in WAEC and NECO while 476 students representing 26% had P7 to F9 in WAEC and 717 students representing 34% had D7 to F9 in NECO respectively. It meant that the level of academic performance of students in Edo South Senatorial District was on the average. It was however found that the performance of students in WAEC was a little better than that of NECO with an average score of 62% against 57%.

Hypothesis 1: Teacher quality does not significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District.

Table 3: Correlation between teacher quality and students' academic performance

		Academic Qualification	Professional Qualification	Years of teaching experience	Overall academic performance
Academic qualification of teachers	Pearson Correlation	1	-.055	.325	.091
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.619	.003	.409
	N	84	84	84	84
Professional Qualification	Pearson Correlation	-.055	1	-.142	.065
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.619		.199	.559
	N	84	84	84	84
Years of teaching experience	Pearson Correlation	.325	-.142	1	.149
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.003	.199		.176
	N	84	84	84	84
Overall academic qualification	Pearson Correlation	.091	.065	.149	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.409	.559	.176	
	N	84	84	84	84

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 shows the relationship between teacher quality and students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. The result indicated that there was no significant relationship between teacher quality and students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District, $r = 0.091$, $p. > .05$ at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. This means that teacher qualification had no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Hypothesis 2: Academic qualification of teachers does not significantly influence students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District.

Table 4: Academic qualification of teachers and students' academic performance in secondary schools

		Academic qualification of teachers	Overall academic performance
Academic qualification of Teachers	Pearson Correlation	1	.091
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.409
	N	84	84
Overall academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.091	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.409	
	N	84	84

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 shows the relationship between academic qualification of teachers and students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. The result indicates that there was no significant relationship between academic qualification of teachers and students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District, $r(84) = 0.091$, $p. > .05$ at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was retained. This meant that academic qualification of teachers has no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District.

DISCUSSION

The result of this study showed that the level of teacher quality in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District was high. From the results, 82.1% of the sampled teachers had B.Sc degree and above indicating a very high level of quality manpower in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. The reason for this could be as a result of the minimum qualification benchmark by the Federal Government of Nigeria that NCE should be the minimum requirement for teaching even at the primary school level. Hence, every teacher would strive to upgrade himself or herself in order to remain on the job.

The result of this study has relationship with that of Onyekuru and Ibegbunam (2013) who found that teaching effectiveness of teachers from secondary schools was below average. Though teacher qualification influences academic performance of students, it was not significant enough. However, Akinsolu (2010) had a contrary result when he found out that teachers' qualifications, experience and teacher-student ratio were significantly related to students' academic performance. The reason for this could be as a result of the difference in the location and number of subjects covered in the investigation.

The result of this study showed that the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District was on the average. This means that students' performance in both WAEC and NECO was on the medium level. The reason for this could be as a result of other student factors such as intelligent quotient and the teachers' commitment and quality that led to the performance level. However, based on the high level of qualification of teachers, students' performance was expected to be higher than this. This may be as a result of other intervening variables.

The result of this study is in consonance with the result of Oladokun, Adebajo and Charles-Owaba (2008) who found out that poor quality of graduates of some Nigerian Universities in recent times has been partly traced to inadequacies of the National University Admission Examination System. This is fallout of the graduates from the secondary schools. For any nation to thrive on excellence, the medium level manpower must be well groomed and at secondary level of the education system, it is expected performance of students should be high. When this is assured, there would be hope for the nation.

The result of this study found out that the teachers' qualification had no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools. Teacher qualification was found not to have significant influence on academic performance of students. Though teacher quality is an essential ingredient for the quality development of secondary schools, this result found out that it did not significantly influence the academic performance of students. The reason could be the level of commitment of the teachers to their teaching task in schools. It could also be that students do not depend solely on the teaching in the school but engage in extra classes to enhance their academic quality and performance.

The result supports that of Muhammad, Rashida, Riffat and Fayyaz (2011) who found out that there was no much difference in the quality of teachers of schools with higher academic achievement and that of the schools with lower academic achievement. However, Daso (2013) in a study had found out that there was a significant relationship between teachers' method of teaching, teachers' attitude and students' achievement in mathematics. Furthermore, Adedoyin (2011) in another related study found that teachers' training had significant relationship on students' academic performance in Mathematics. In another related study, Jacob and Lefgren (2004) found out that marginal increases in in-service training have no statistically or academically significant effect on either Reading or Mathematics achievement, suggesting that modest investments in staff development may not be sufficient to increase the achievement of school children in high poverty schools.

The result of this study showed that academic qualification of teachers had no significant influence on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District. This shows that the paper qualification of teachers does not translate into productivity but their performance in the classroom in the business of teaching and learning. However, the higher the qualification of teachers the more productive he may become if there is high level of commitment to teaching and learning in schools. For instance, a Ph.D holder who does not go into the classroom to teach cannot make any impact on the lives of the students no matter the level of intelligence of ability to deliver in term of teaching in classroom. The result of this study corroborates that of Uche (2012) who indicated that the students rated the quality of the academic staff high, especially in terms of professional competence, but rated their supervision low. The students felt that the lecturers do not have enough time for students and did not prepare their lectures well. This shows that although the

quality of teachers may be high, it would not impact on the students if there is no time devotion to the academic well being of the students.

Contributions to Knowledge

This study has contributed significantly to knowledge in the following ways:

- I. This study had revealed that qualification of teachers does not significantly influence on the performance of students but, teacher commitment and dedications to their duties are essential to improving students' academic performance.
- II. The study revealed that the level of teacher quality is not reflected in the academic performance of students.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were made based on the findings of the study.

- a. Teacher quality in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District was high. This comprised teachers' academic qualification, professional qualification and years of teaching experience.
- b. The quality of teachers did not significantly influence the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District.
- c. The level of academic performance of students in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District was on the average.
- d. Students had average performance in Mathematics and English Language in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District.

IMPLICATIONS

The result of this study showed that teachers' quality in secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District was high but the quality is not reflected in the academic performance of students. This has implication for educational management because principals of schools as administrators have to ensure proper supervision of teachers and harness their potentials for improved quality of students in schools. The school administrator must therefore ensure that teachers are up and doing in their tasks of teaching for improved productivity.

The result of this study revealed that the academic performance of students was on the average. To attain excellence in schools, the product of the institutions must be of high grade because the performance of teachers is based on the academic performance of students. The principal has the responsibility therefore of ensuring improved standard in school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Principals should ensure that the potentials of the teachers are well harnessed and utilized to reflect the true picture of their quality in the academic performance of students.
2. Teachers have to wake up to their responsibilities and be dedicated to their duty in the classroom because poor performance of students will always be attributed to their failure in their assigned task.
3. Students must ensure they continue to be hard working to improve on their performance in the school in order to secure a bright future for themselves.
4. Government through the inspectorate division must routinely visit schools to ensure that teachers are doing their primary assignment.

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