Perceived Influence of Teacher Related Variables on Students' Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the Perceived Influence of Teacher Related Variables on Students' Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Two specific purposes and two research questions guided the study. Related literature was reviewed which served as a guide to the research on what has already been studied by other researchers in the related areas of the study. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised two hundred and six teachers in the selected senior secondary schools in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State . The sample size for this study comprised two hundred and six senior secondary school teachers in Abakaliki LGA of Ebonyi State. No sampling technique was used due to the manageable size of the population. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire tagged "Perceived Influence of Teachers Related Variables on Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire" (PITRVSPQ). The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Foundations and one expert from Measurement and Evaluation unit of Science Education, all of Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The overall reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.85. The internal consistency of each subscale of the instrument was computed separately. The data collected for the study were analyzed using mean(x) and standard deviation (SD) to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the high hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that: teachers' qualifications and teachers' teaching experience influences secondary school students' academic performance in Abakaliki LGA Ebonyi State. Based on the findings the study recommended that: Secondary Education Board (SEB) should always recruit teachers based on subject qualifications for improvement in the area of subjects specialization and that Secondary Education Board (SEB) should always organize in-service training for teachers in order to enhance their teaching methods with the new trend in their field of study.

Keyword: Teacher, Variables, Students, Experience, Academic Performance, Secondary Schools

Introduction

The issue of teacher as a factor that affects students' academic performance has received a lot of attention in literature and findings have been mixed and inconclusive. A strand of the literature revealed that a number of teacher variables which include years of teaching experience, level of educational attainment or academic qualifications, teacher development programmes,

availability of qualified teachers, teacher-student ratio, teacher attitude, degree of job satisfaction, motivation and salary affect students'' learning outcomes (Ewetan, 2010; Odiri, 2011; Akpo, 2012 and Daso, 2013;). Secondary education is one of the levels in the Nigerian system of education. Commenting on the above, Okpalanze in Ndubuisi (2019) maintained that the position of secondary education in the Nigerian education system is very critical considering the fact that it is the bedrock on which higher education is built in any society. Since it is the bedrock, its quality is expected to be high. According to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), secondary education is the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage. In the same vein, Ogbonnaya (2003) maintained that secondary education refers to full-time education provided in secondary schools usually for students between the ages of 11 or 12 and 18 plus. In addition, secondary education should be viewed as the foundation at which professional development of human person is based upon. From the above definitions secondary education can be said to be a type of education received in a formal setting after completing primary education.

The importance of secondary education to the nation can be seen in the broad goal of secondary education articulated by the FRN (2013: 18) as 'preparing the individual for useful living within the society and higher education'. Nkwoh (2011) also opined that secondary education occupies a strategic position in the national education system, that it bridges the gap between the primary and tertiary levels of education in Nigeria. He further stated that it absorbs the secondary level and prepares them for the tertiary which is the manpower based of the nation. From the above view, the secondary school is an agent of socialization, an institution or a human industry established for refining human beings in terms of skills, behavior and all round excellence. To achieve the objective of secondary schools, an efficient and effective administrator must head such an institution. Most secondary schools are either owned by public or private individuals, whose managers are generally regarded as the teachers and in Nigeria he teachers students in the institutions.

The impact of the teachers in the performance of the students is germane. The teachers are the facilitators who are to impact into the students the concepts expected to be learnt. However, Olarewaju and Nwagbo in Ahiakwo (2013) were of the opinion that ignorance of the teachers or neglect of activity-oriented methods by the teachers grossly contribute to students' low performance in schools. The teacher is the major manpower saddled with the responsibility of impacting the concepts considered fundamental through the teaching of their basic concepts from the secondary school. This was why Adeniyi in Ahiakwo (2013) noted that a country's manpower development depends on the quality of her teachers. As stipulated in the Nigeria National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) teaching at the secondary school is meant to develop essential skills in the learning so as to prepare them for the application in national and global issues in order to stimulate and enhance creativity in them. This laudable objective would not be realized when the students are taught by incompetent teachers. Such teachers would not be able to properly and adequately explain the concepts to the students. The competence of the teachers in this regards would be of immeasurable value. One thing is to be well grounded in the

conceptual understanding of a subject; another thing is to be well acquainted with the best method to pass the concepts across to the learners for proper comprehension. A professional teacher would be desirable in this regard.

Variable is anything that can effect or change the result of study (Ndubuisi, 2017). Every study has variables as these are needed in order to understand differences. For example, students exposed to the work force take a more active role in their education than those who have no exposure. Looking at this, one might see that several obvious variables are at play, including pre-knowledge age. Teacher variables are those factors which encompassed teachers status in the school which we know can affect the outcome of learning experiences. The major variables to be considered in this study include teaching qualifications, teaching experience, teachers gender and teachers workload.

Obanya (2013) asserted that the quality of an educational system depends on the qualifications of the teachers. Quality teachers are life-long learners in their subject areas, teach with commitment, and are reflective upon their teaching practice and teaching experience. Ajayi's (2009) point of view, the professional qualities of a teacher has to do with the following; mastery of the subject-matter, sense of organization, ability to clarify ideas, ability to motivate students, good imagination, ability to involve the students in meaningful activities throughout the period of teaching, management of the details of learning and frequent monitoring of students progress through tests, formal and informal evaluation, and written and oral quizzes. The availability of professional teachers in our schools is low (Ngada, 2008). Teaching experience is another teacher variable that influences students academic performance, Sufiyanu and Elizabeth (2018) asserted that in a situation where experienced teachers are not promoted out of the classroom into management positions, level of experience has a significant influence on teaching effectiveness of the teachers and their students' performance. Nkwoh (2011), in his study found that teaching experience of teachers is significantly related to their teaching effectiveness and students' performance. On the bases of promoting effective teaching, teacher workloads account mostly on students academic performance.

An aspect of human resources management which control students performance in the school is the workload of the teachers. This is the amount of work assigned to a teaching position. Teaching staff workload includes teaching subjects, administrative duties, supervision of students and other activities. Naylor and Malcomson (2001) revealed that teachers saw their workload increased because they spent fifty-three hours a week preparing their lesson notes for teaching and marking scripts. The teachers reported that their activities needed to be reduced to enable them cope with the stress of the workload because when stress sets in it was difficult for them to accomplish all their objectives due to lack of time.

The issue of gender differences is paramount to educational researchers nowadays. There had been divergent view and reports as to the comparative ability of male and female in human endeavours, especially in education. A survey conducted by Ogbonnaya and Okunamiri (2008) on administrative effectiveness of male and female principals in Imo-State, Nigeria revealed that female principals are more effective than their male counterparts in the management of instructional programmes, staff personnel

administration, students personnel administration, management of finance and management of physical resources while the male principals are better in school-community relationships. Adedayo in Akinsolu (2010) observed that regardless of school gender type, male students did better than female students in all science subjects.

It is certain from the above development which was limited to Abakaliki Local Government Area, that all the reformations, policies, programmes and innovations in the country have not actually had direct bearing on the students performance. It implies therefore, that there is a missing link between what goes on in the classroom and at the policy making level. These among others call for research on the Influence of teacher related variable on students' performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. In what ways do teachers' qualifications influence secondary school students academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State?
2. In what ways do teachers' teaching experiences influence secondary school students academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State?

Research hypotheses

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

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of female and male teachers on the influence of teachers' qualification on secondary school students' academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of female and male teachers on the influence of teaching experience on secondary school students' academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Abonyi, Okereke, Omebe, and Anugwo (2006) perceived descriptive survey as those studies in which data are collected from a small sample of a large population to enable the researcher describe in a systematic manner and interpret the characteristic features and facts about things that exist. This design was used in this study because it intends to investigate the conditions that are already in existence without manipulation. The study was carried out in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. This Education Zone also has common boundary with Abia state at the South, at the North, it has a common boundary with Cross River State, whereas at the East, it has a common boundary with Ezza South Local Government Area in Ebonyi State. The Area is made up of both rural and urban dwellers with many schools; nursery, primary, secondary and higher institutions. The inhabitants of the Zone are traders, farmers, businessmen and women as well as career civil servants. The Population of the study is 206 teachers teaching in all the Senior secondary schools in the secondary schools in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State (Secondary Education Board Ebonyi State, 2022). There was no sampling because 206 teachers were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire entitled Influence of

Teacher Related Variables on Students Academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State . The questionnaire designed by the researcher was made up of 18 items divided into two parts (1 and 2). Part one (1) of the questionnaire sought information relating to the respondents' personal data while Part two (2), which addressed the major questions of the study, consists of 18 structured items on the influence of teacher related variables on students academic performance in Subject in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. The instrument is a four (4) point rating scale questionnaire. The scale is weighted Strongly Agree (SA) with four (4) points, Agree (A) has three (3) points, Disagree (D), has two (2) points while Strongly Disagree (SD) has one point. The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Foundations and one expert from Measurement and Evaluation option of Science Education Department, all in Ebonyi State University,

Abakaliki. This procedure ensured that the items strictly addressed the research questions and hypotheses for this study. In addition, these experts ascertained whether the items in the instrument adequately catered for all the variables in the study. The corrections were incorporated in the final draft of the instrument. The overall reliability coefficient of the instrument was 0.85 this was obtained through Cronbach Alpha method.

Research questions 1-2 was answered on using mean (x)and standard deviation (SD). A mean (x) of 2.50 was the cut off point for the study. The mean cut off point was derived by the addition of nominal values and dividing the sum by the number of scale options. Thus 4+3+2+1 =10/4 =2.50. The decision rule was that any item value from 2.50 and above was used to described the item as agreed, while any mean value less than 2.50 was used to described the item as disagreed while the hypotheses was tested using t-test at 0.05 alpha level of significant.

RESULTS
Research Questions 1
In what ways do teachers qualification influence secondary school students academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State?

Table 1: Mean rating and standard deviation of the respondents on ways teachers qualification influence secondary school students academic performance

S/N	ITEMS STATEMENT	N	$\overline{\text{X}}$	SD	Decision
1.	Recruitment of trained teachers in the teaching of subject enhances students' academic performance	187	2.96	0.93	Accept
2.	Lack of qualified teaching personnel in the teaching of subject retards students' academic performance	187	3.05	0.81	Accept
3.	Unqualified degree holders incomplete pedagogical content knowledge, which affects students academic performance	187	2.96	0.88	Accept
4.	Recruitment of non specialists in the teaching of subject retards students academic performance	187	3.01	0.87	Accept

5.	Teachers frequent involvement in workshop and seminar improve students' academics performance	187	3.08	0.82	Accept
6.	Untrained teachers in teaching profession retard students academic performance	187	3.02	0.72	Accept
7	High academic qualification of teachers enhances students' academic performance	187	2.93	0.67	Accept
8	Lack of propensity for teaching personnel upgrade retards students' academic performance	187	3.14	0.58	Accept
9	Recruitment of unqualified teachers, result to the poor academic performance of students	187	3.11	0.67	Accept
10	Trained teachers in subject enhance students' academic performance	187	3.14	0.70	Accept
	Grand mean		**3.04**	**0.76**	**Accept**

The result presented in Table 1 above showed the mean ratings of teachers on ways teachers qualification influences secondary school students academic performance. Items 1,2, 3, 4, 5, 6,7,8,9 and 10 with mean scores of 2.96, 3.05, 2.96, 3.01, 3.08, 3.02, 2.93, 3.14, 3.11, 3.14 and standard deviation of 0.93, 0.81, 0.88, 0.87, 0.82, 0.72, 0.67, 0.58, 0.67 and 0.70 respectively showed that teachers qualification influences secondary school students academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State . This is because from the table all the items obtained a mean value that is above 2.50 which is the cut – off point. This implies that recruitment of trained teachers in the teaching of subject enhances students' academic performance, lack of qualified teaching personnel in the teaching of subject retards students' academic performance, unqualified degree holders have incomplete pedagogical content knowledge, which affect students academic performance, recruitment of non specialists in the teaching of subject retards students academic performance, teachers frequent involvement in workshop and seminar improve students' academics performance, high academic qualification of teachers enhance students' academic performance, lack of propensity for teaching personnel upgrade retards students' academic performance, recruitment of unqualified teachers, result to the poor academic performance of students and trained teachers in subject enhance students' academic performance. Therefore, based on items scores and average mean of the items it was upheld that teachers qualification influences secondary school students academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State .

Research Questions 2
In what ways could teachers teaching experience influence secondary school students in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State?

Table 2: Mean rating and standard deviation of the respondents on ways teachers teaching experience influence secondary school students performance

S/N	ITEMS STATEMENT	N	$\overline{\mathrm{X}}$	SD	Decision
11	Teachers level of experience significantly improves students academic performance	187	3.14	0.75	Accept
12	Year of teachers services positively enhance students academic performance	187	3.11	0.65	Accept
13	Teachers teaching context has positive influence in enhancing students academic performance	187	3.13	0.63	Accept
14	New teachers have incomplete pedagogical content knowledge demoralizes students academic performance	187	3.07	0.65	Accept
15	Novice teachers rely on unmodified subject matter knowledge has negative influence on students academic performance	187	2.93	0.81	Accept
16	Experiences teachers make broad pedagogical decisions which enhance academic performance of students	187	2.93	0.81	Accept
17	Pre service teachers have difficulty in articulating subject matter concept, this retard students academic performance	187	3.06	0.79	Accept
18	Experienced teachers have a better overarching which enhances academic performance of students	187	3.26	0.62	Accept
	Grand mean		**3.07**	**0.71**	**Accept**

The result presented in Table 2 above showed the mean ratings of respondents on ways could teachers teaching experience could influence secondary school students academic performance. Items 11,12,13,14,15,16,17 and 18 with mean scores of 3.14, 3.11, 3.13, 3.07, 2.93, 2.93, 3.06, 3.26 and standard deviation of 0.75, 0.65, 0.63, 0.65, 0.81, 0.81, 0.79 and 0.62 respectively showed ways teachers teaching experience could influence secondary school students academic performance. This is because from the table all the items obtained a mean value of 3.07 that is above 2.50 which is the cut – off point. This implies that teachers level of experience significantly improve students academic performance , years of teachers services positively enhance students academic performance, new teachers incomplete pedagogical content knowledge demoralizes students academic performance, novice teachers reliance on unmodified subject matter knowledge has negative influence on students academic performance, experienced teachers make broad pedagogical decisions which enhances academic performance of students, pre service teachers have difficulty in articulating subject matter concept, this retards students academic performance and experienced teachers have a better overarching which enhance academic performance of students. Therefore, it was upheld that teachers teaching experience influences secondary school students academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State.

Research Hypotheses

H0$_1$: There is no significant difference in mean rating of female and male teachers on the influence of teachers' qualification on secondary school students academic performance in

Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Summary of results were shown on Table 3.

Table 3: t-test of difference in the mean responses of male and female on the influence of teachers' qualification on secondary school students' academic

Items	Category of respondents	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Alpha	t-cv	Decision
1	Male	102	3.01	0.89	0.83	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	2.90	0.98				
2	Male	102	3.10	0.80	0.90	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.00	0.81				
3	Male	102	2.98	0.83	0.30	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	2.94	0.94				
4	Male	102	3.11	0.84	1.83	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	2.88	0.90				
5	Male	102	3.22	0.78	2.67	0.05	1.96	Significant
	Female	85	2.90	0.85				
6	Male	102	3.19	0.61	3.73	0.05	1.96	Significant
	Female	85	2.81	0.79				
7	Male	102	3.04	0.55	2.68	0.05	1.96	Significant
	Female	85	2.78	0.77				
8	Male	102	3.16	0.58	0.43	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.12	0.59				
9	Male	102	3.03	0.65	1.74	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.21	0.69				
10	Male	102	3.12	0.74	0.69	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.21	0.69				
	Average				**1.58**		**1.96**	**Not Sign.**

Summary of result presented in Table 3 indicates that there is no significant difference in mean rating of female and male teachers on the influence of teachers' qualification on secondary school students' academic performance. This is because the t-calculated value is lower than the t-critical value, that is 0.41 as against 1.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is upheld. However, item 5,6 and 7 indicated significant difference in the mean perception of male and female teachers as on the table above.

H0$_2$: There is no significant difference in mean rating of female and male teachers on the influence of teaching experience on secondary school students academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Summary of results were shown in Table 4.

Table 4: t-test of difference in the mean responses of male and female teachers on the influence of teaching experience on secondary school students' academic Performance

Items	Category of respondents	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	Alpha	t-cv	Decision

11	Male	102	3.17	0.79	0.14	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.15	0.71				
12	Male	102	3.13	0.67	0.57	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.08	0.64				
13	Male	102	3.18	0.59	1.12	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.08	0.67				
14	Male	102	3.13	0.58	1.42	0.05	196	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.00	0.74				
15	Male	102	2.89	0.79	0.70	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	2.97	0.84				
16	Male	102	3.06	0.74	0.08	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.05	0.85				
17	Male	102	3.23	0.58	0.77	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.30	0.67				
18	Male	102	3.39	0.49	1.46	0.05	1.96	Not Sign.
	Female	85	3.27	0.64				
	Average				**0.78**		**1.96**	**Not Sign**.

Source: Researcher's Field Work, 2023

Summary of result presented in Table 4 indicates that there is no significant difference in mean rating of female and male teachers on the influence of teaching experience on secondary school students' academic performance in secondary schools in Afikpo Education Zone. This is because the t-calculated value is lower than the t-critical value, that is 1.32 as against 1.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant difference is upheld.

Discussions

The study disclosed the influence of teachers' qualifications on secondary school students academic performance. It was upheld that teachers qualification influences secondary school students academic performance in Subject in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. The findings agreed with Timse (2003), who held that qualified teacher is crucial in any educational system, he further maintained that teachers self-efficacy is correlated positively with both teacher years of experience and pedagogical success. Teacher self-efficacy differs significantly according to their qualifications. Besides, teachers who have proper teaching qualification would also have a higher efficacy as against the teachers who do not have the right qualifications. Therefore, suitable qualifications and high self-efficacy will produce effectiveness in teaching because teacher self-efficacy is central to effective teaching. The findings also agreed with Feryal (2013) who saw professional competence as having the knowledge and understanding of children and their learning, subject knowledge, curriculum, the educational system and the teacher's role.

The analysis of data presented in table 2 revealed that teachers teaching experience influenced secondary school students academic performance. In support of the findings Wenglinsky (2013) held that teachers' years of experience are one of the teachers qualifications, believed to be a significant determinant of students' academic

performance. It is believed that greater teaching experience will produce students with higher performance, and that inexperienced teachers are typically less efficient than the experienced teachers. Efficient teachers positively influence students academic performance. However, there is the need for caution in Nigeria about the concept of experience. Many teachers may be in the teaching profession for over twenty years without properly developing themselves for years. In support of the findings Akinsolu (2010), agreed that professional experience enhances and improves students learning habits. There is need to foster teachers continuous professional development to improve the quality of education. Teachers' continuous professional development is highly relevant both to improving educational performance and effectiveness, and for enhancing teachers commitment, identity and job satisfaction. Wenglinsky (2013), discovered that professional development is related positively to students' performance, professional development helps practicing teachers to upgrade their content knowledge and teaching skills, to adjust to the introduction of new curricula and new research findings in teaching and learning.

Conclusions

The following conclusion was drawn based on the findings which revealed that teachers' qualifications, teachers' teaching experience, teachers' gender and teachers' workload influence secondary school students academic performance in Abakaliki Local Government Area of Ebonyi State .

Recommendations

From the findings of the study and the conclusion drawn, the researcher proffered the following recommendations.

1. Secondary School Education Board should always recruit teachers based on subject qualifications for improvement in the area of subjects.
2. Government should always organize in-service training for teachers in order to enhance their teaching experience with the new trend in their field of study.

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