

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TEACHERS' CHARACTERISTICS, STUDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BENIN METROPOLIS

CHRISTOPHER ITUA^{1*}, HELLEN AKHIGBE²

^{1,2}DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY,
BENIN CITY, EDO STATE, NIGERIA

*Corresponding author: chrisitua@yahoo.com

To cite this article (APA): Itua, C., & Akhigbe, H. (2024). The relationships between teachers' characteristics, students' characteristics and academic performance: Evidence from Private Senior Secondary Schools in Benin Metropolis. *AAU Journal of Business Educators*, 4(2), 167-173

Abstract

The study aimed at identifying the extent of relationship between teachers' characteristics, students' characteristics and academic performance: Evidence from Private Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) in Benin Metropolis. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The design employed for the study was a correlational survey research design. The population of the study comprises of 3410 private SSS3 students in Benin Metropolis. The teachers and students will serve as the respondents for the study because they are considered fit to have the useful information needed to carry out the study. A structured questionnaire, titled: "Questionnaire on Teachers' Characteristics, Students' Characteristics and Academic Performance" were used for data collection. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and linear regression. The result revealed that there is significant relationships between teachers' characteristics, students' characteristics and students' academic performance in Private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Keywords: Private Senior Secondary School, Students' Academic Performance, Students' characteristics, Teachers' Characteristics.

Introduction

The importance of education in fostering national development and transformation will continue to be regarded as a foremost consideration. The goals of education have been set out in the education policy document of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in terms of their relevance to the needs of the individual and the society (FRN, 2014). One of the salient aims and objectives of education according to the FRN in the education policy document were to facilitate the development of education in the country through the secondary education (FRN, 2014). Secondary school education is a crucial level in the education system because it is the recipients of the products of the primary school education and the source of candidates for tertiary school education. Secondary schools in Nigeria are managed by the government through its agencies and private individuals, groups, corporate bodies and missionary societies. The purpose of establishing private schools is to render educational service for possible financial returns. This may account for why Nigeria has witness schools been opened by various individuals who are referred to as school owners commonly called school proprietors.

Private schools are educational institutions which retain the right to select their students and are run completely or partly with the fees they charge the students. It is a school other than those established by public authority which conform to the set minimum standards and may be approved by government. In the last three decades, private school has earned an increasing patronage from parents and guardians. This has led to the desire and preference among most parents and guardians to enroll their children and wards in private schools. Most parents and guardians also think that the private schools' performance is

better than public schools', which relatively explains the rationale behind preference of parents and guardians for private schools.

Academic performance is an issue that deeply concerns students, parents, teachers and authorities especially school owners, however, there are complexities accompanying its conceptualization. Students' performance is the result of learning, prompted by the teaching activity by the teacher and which is often evident in the students' grades and scores. There have been reports comparing performance of students in private and public schools, which established that students of private schools perform better than those of public schools. For instance, Akinloye, Adu and Adu, (2017) reported that private school students performed significantly better than their public school counterparts. Lapite and Ogunjimi (2013) found that the academic performance of private school pupils was significantly different from that of public school pupils. Their study specifically found that students who are exposed to private primary school background performed better academically than their counterparts who attended public primary schools in English and Mathematics. However, the authors of this present study is concerned about the possible factors that could be responsible for the better academic performance of students, especially in the private Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) in Benin Metropolis.

The better academic performance of students in examinations is attributed to a number of factors, which include the provision of physical facilities, classroom size, effective school discipline policies, administrative support and effective leadership. The source of concern for this present study is the important role of teachers' characteristics and students' characteristics in fostering better academic performance of students in private SSS in Benin Metropolis. Teachers' characteristics such as training and beliefs can affect the learning environment by influencing interactions, teacher awareness of pupil needs and the ability to adopt suitable teaching practices. Studies have found that teachers' qualification could predict better academic performance of students, yet others were of the view that teachers' qualification does not predict. For instance, Maguswi (2011) found that a low level of qualified teachers in Physics had a significant positive prediction on poor academic performance of students. The author further reported that a low level of qualified teachers led to the consistent poor academic performance of students. Adu and Olatundun (2007) contend that teachers' characteristics such as teaching pattern, punctuality, etcetera are some of the major determinants of better academic performance of students in secondary schools.

Teachers constitute the second most important input in any educational system after the learners. The term "teacher characteristics" may be described as those qualities which can be measured with tests or derived from their academic or professional records. This review deals with those characteristics of teachers that might be identified and used in the initial hiring of teachers into the teaching profession. In some climes, these characteristics include teachers' qualities such as mental ability, age, gender, certification status, educational background, previous teaching experience and the like. Without efficient and effective teachers in the education industry, qualitative learning outcomes cannot be achieved. The problem of teacher supply is not only that of numbers. It is first and foremost a problem of quality (Adegboyeje, 2000). It is crucial to get a large enough quantity in a large enough quality. The minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession shall be the Nigerian Certificate in Education. However, no education can rise above the quality of its teachers (FRN, 2014). Therefore, teachers must be provided with the intellectual and professional background adequate for them to carry out their assignment as well as make them adaptable to changing situations. Students of today are very alert and inquisitive; therefore, a teacher should be sufficiently qualified to give them competent guidance (Sidhu, 2007). To the authors of this paper, therefore, any academic weakness on teachers' part will lower their prestige in the eyes of their students.

Students' characteristics are description of the elements that captures and dictates the learning process or experience of the students. Learners' characteristics is a concept that revolves round how students learning experience is influenced by personal, social, cognitive and academic elements. These components presumably play a salient and pivotal role in what and how a student learns. Student characteristics exist in very wide dimensions, as they can range from personal elements to academics. The personal characteristics may include traits such as age, language, cultural background, and gender.

Other aspects of students' characteristics include self-esteem, intelligence, personality traits, practical applications, insight, skills and acumen among others. Other characteristics which may impact students' learning process include sociological, environmental and physiological characteristics. These include inner motivation, persistence, learning alone, learning in small group, mobile while studying, energy level, etcetera. An understanding of students' characteristics allows students to be more effective and efficient in acquiring learning experiences. Research efforts have revealed what and how students' characteristics impact them the most; as they helped instructional designers to develop tailored instructions for special groups. In essence, these combined characteristics significantly contribute to students' learning experience and process.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is twofold:

1. To examine the relationship between teachers' characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.
2. To examine the relationship between students' characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between teachers' characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis?

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between students' characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formed and tested at a 0.5 level of significance.

Research Hypothesis 1: Teachers' characteristics does not significantly associate with better academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Research Hypothesis 2: Students' characteristics does not significantly associate with better academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Methods

Research Design

The research design employed for this study is a correlational survey research design. It involves the establishment of rapport with the respondents; questionnaire administration; and gathering of data. This design, therefore, formed the basis for the development of a structured questionnaire for this study.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The target population of this study comprises of 3410 in various Private SSS in Benin City, Edo state. The teachers and students in Private SSS3, which serves as the respondents for the study, because they are considered fit to provide the necessary information needed to complete this study. Three private secondary schools were selected for the study to represents the entire population. The three selected schools have a total of 159 SSS students in Benin City, Edo State and the entire SSS3 students and teachers of the three schools were taken as the sample size selected from the three secondary schools. The sample was determined using a multi-stage sampling method. In the first stage, purposive sampling method was used to select the geographical spread covering Benin Metropolis; Benin Metropolis is a fair representation of Benin City geographical spread. Then, in the second stage, the three sampled schools were selected using a random sampling method of the three schools from the coverage area of study. The random sampling method was used to provide equal opportunity for any school to be selected, noting that all schools in the population is assumed to have the same variable of study.

Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire, titled: “Questionnaire on Teachers’ Characteristics, Students’ Characteristics and Academic Performance” were used for data collection. The questionnaire contains items on teachers’ characteristics, students’ characteristics and academic performance. The questionnaire was made up of eight items, with subsection on teachers’ characteristics and students’ characteristics. Each subsection contains four items. An example of the items for teachers’ characteristics is “Your teachers usually demonstrate adequate knowledge concerning the subject being taught”. An example of the items for students’ characteristics is “Students’ in your school highly exert self-control whenever they are with their teachers”. The teacher gave the overall average performance of each student that completed questionnaire based on his/her knowledge of individual student and their academic performance. Students’ academic scores were used as their academic performance. The academic scores of students were supplied by the teachers who also assisted in administering the questionnaire with strict adherence to the ethics of academic performance record.

Validation and Reliability of Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument was given to experts in field of test and measurement by the authors to ensure the content and face validation of the data collection instrument. The authors later retrieved the instrument from the experts and incorporated their comments and suggestions into the instrument. In establishing the reliability, 30 copies of the instrument were administered on the respondents who were not part of the study. Data collected were analyzed using the Cronbach’s alpha, which yielded a reliability co-efficient value of .825. This indicates that the items of the instrument are reliable to measure what they are intended to measure.

Data Collection Procedure

The authors visited the schools selected for the study, approached the school’s proprietors’ and discuss with them to establish a hitch-free administration of the instrument. The authors explained the purpose of the study to the respondents who were briefed on how to respond to the questionnaire before they were administered on them by the help of research assistants, with strict supervision and were retrieved the next day.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) and linear regression. The PPMCC were used to answer the research questions, while the linear regression was used to test the research hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significant. The decision rule the research questions is that any correlation coefficient (r) value between 0.0 to 0.49 was regarded as low correlation, between 0.5 to 0.59 was regarded as moderate correlation, and 0.6 and above was regarded as high correlation. Note that when a correlation value is negative, the decision is considered a negative correlation, and when a correlation value is positive, the decision is considered a positive correlation. The probability or p-value was used in taking decisions on the null hypotheses. If the p-value was lesser than or equal to 0.05 level of significant, the null hypotheses was rejected, and if the p-value was greater than 0.05 level of significant, the null hypotheses was retained.

Results

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between teachers’ characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis?

Table 1: Pearson’s Correlation on the Relationship between Teachers’ Characteristics and Academic Performance in Private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r	r ²	Remark
Teachers’ Characteristics	159	13.88	2.01	0.64	0.20	HC
Academic Performance	159	54.28	12.95			

r²= coefficient of determination, SD = Standard Deviation, HC = High Correlation.

Table 1 revealed that the mean score of teachers’ characteristics was 13.88 with a corresponding value standard deviation of 2.01. The mean score of students’ academic performance was 54.28, with a corresponding standard deviation of 12.95. The coefficient of determination (r²) associated with the correlation coefficient of 0.64 was 0.20. Table 1 further showed that there was a high correlation (0.64) between teachers’ characteristics and students’ academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between students’ characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis?

Table 2: Pearson’s Correlation on the Relationship between Students’ Characteristics and Academic Performance in Private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

	N	Mean	SD	R	r ²	Remark
Students’ Characteristics	159	13.03	2.81	-0.28	-0.73	NC
Students’ Academic Performance	159	54.28	12.95			

r²= coefficient of determination, SD = Standard Deviation, NC = Negative Correlation

Table 2 revealed that the mean score of students’ characteristics was 13.03 with a corresponding standard deviation of 2.81. The mean score of students’ academic performance was 54.28 with a corresponding standard deviation of 12.95. The coefficient of determination (r²) associated with the correlation coefficient of -0.28 was- 0.73. Table 2 further showed that there was a negative correlation (-0.28) between students’ characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Testing Research Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis 1: Teachers’ characteristics does not significantly associate with better academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Table 3: Linear Regression on Teachers’ Characteristics Significantly Associate with Better Academic Performance in Private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Teacher’s Characteristics	Academic Performance				
	B	SEB	Beta(β)	t	p
Constant	13.3	.693		19.317	.000
Teacher’s Characteristics	0.09	.012	.058	.731	.466

Note. R² = .058, adjusted R² = .03, F = 0.534, P > .001

Table 3 showed that teacher’s characteristics has a significant relationship with students’ academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis (F = 0.534, t = 0.731, β = 0.58, P > .001, p-value = 0.466). Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the value is significant, since the p-value is lesser than 0.05

level of significance. By and large, the null hypothesis is not supported, which implied that teacher's characteristics significantly associate with better academic performance. Hence, hypothesis 1 is not retained in this study.

Research Hypothesis 2: Students' characteristics does not significantly associate with better academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Table 4: Linear Regression on Students' Characteristics Significantly Associate with Better Academic Performance in Private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Student's Characteristics	Academic Performance				
	B	SEB	Beta(β)	t	p
Constant	13.5	.967		13.99	.000
Students' Characteristics	-0.09	.017	- .0.43	-0.533	.595

Note $R^2 = .043$, adjusted $R^2 = .02$, $F = 0.284$, $P > .001$

Table 4 revealed that student's characteristics has a significant relationship with students' academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis ($F = 0.284$, $t = -0.533$, $\beta = -0.43$, $P > .001$, p-value 0.60). Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is not significant, since the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance. All in all, the null hypothesis is not supported, which implied that teacher's characteristics did not significantly associate with better academic performance. Hence, hypothesis 2 is rejected in the study.

Discussions

The first findings revealed that there is a high correlation and a significant relationship between teachers' characteristics and better academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis. Teachers constitute the second most important input in any educational system after the learners, without efficient and effective teachers in the education industry, qualitative learning outcomes cannot be achieved. The problem of teacher supply is not only that of numbers. It is first and foremost a problem of quality (Adegboyeje, 2000). This means that it is crucial to get a large quantity in a large quality. Sidhu (2007) observes that students of today are very alert and inquisitive; therefore, a teacher should be sufficiently qualified to give them competent guidance. Researchers such as Ekundayo and Arogundade (2007) found that teachers' qualification has a significant relationship with students' academic performance. Aigboje's (2005) study revealed that teachers in public schools had better qualifications and more experience. Private schools, on the other hand, often recruit poor quality teachers in order to maximize profit. In spite of low financial remuneration, teachers in private schools are compelled to work hard to achieve a better students' academic performance. Casian, Mugo and Claire (2021) argued that the qualification of teachers in secondary school plays a significant role in improvement of academic performance of students. They added that qualification of teacher leads to the effectiveness of teacher's content mastery as all in all helps in the promotion of students' grades.

The second findings revealed that there was a negative correlation and a significant negative relationship between student's characteristics and better academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis. Student characteristics exist in very wide dimensions, as they can range from personal elements to academics. The personal characteristics which include traits such as age, language, cultural background, and gender. Other aspects of students' characteristics include self-esteem, intelligence, personality traits, practical applications, insight, skills and acumen among others. Other characteristics which may impact students' learning process include sociological, environmental and physiological characteristics. These include inner motivation, persistence, learning alone, learning in small group, mobile while studying, and energy level among others, as a negative or positive impact on the students' academic performance.

Conclusions

This study sought to examine the relationship between teachers' characteristics, students' characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis. Students' academic performance is an issue that deeply concerns students, parents, teachers and relevant authorities, especially school owners. According to the authors of the study, students' academic performance emerged as a result of learning, prompted by the teaching activities influenced by teacher's and student's characteristic, which is often evident in the students' examination grades and test scores. This means that students' academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis is significantly affected by human factors, which is safe to conclude that these factors has implications on academic performance. From the findings, the following conclusions are drawn that there is significant relationship between teacher's characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis and there is no significant relationship between student's characteristics and academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers must be provided with the intellectual and professional background adequate for them to carry out their assignment and enable his or her students to achieve better students' academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.
2. An understanding of students' characteristics will allow students to be more effective and efficient in acquiring learning experiences to achieve better students' academic performance in private SSS in Benin Metropolis.

References

- Adeboyeje, R. A. (2000). Teacher training and utilization for quality education in Nigeria. In J. O. Fadipe & P. K. Ojedele (Eds.), *Management of Nigerian education: Personnel administration and quality in education* (pp. 89 – 98). Ibadan: National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA).
- Adu, E. O & Olatundun, S. O. (2007). Teachers' perception of teaching as correlates of students' academic performance in Oyo State Nigeria. *Essays in Education*, 20, 57-63.
- Aigboje, C. D. (2005). A comparative study of availability of resources in public and private secondary schools in Etsako West Local Government Area of Edo State. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Administration and Planning*, 5 (2), 157-163.
- Akinloye, G. M., Adu, K. O., & Adu, E.O (2017). A comparative Analysis of students' performance in Economics in Private and public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 44 (2-3), 144-151.
- Casian, M., Mugo, L., & Claire, M., M. (2021). Impact of teacher' qualification on students' academic performance in Public Secondary Schools in Rwanda. *Journal of Education*, 4(2), 75-88.
- Ekundayo, H. T., & Arogundade B. B. (2007). Academic performance of private and public secondary schools. *Lagos Journal of Educational administration and Planning*, 3 (1) 1 – 7.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014), *National Policy for Education (4 Ed.)*: NERDC Press.
- Lapite, A. O., & Ogunjimi, M (2013). Assessment of the academic performance of public and private primary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. *The international Journal of Assessment and Evaluation*. 19(3): 45-50.
- Maguswi, B. V. (2011). *Factors contributing to under achievement of Zambian female students in O'level physics examinations: A case of selected high schools in Central province*. Unpublished M. Ed Thesis, University of Zambia.
- Sidhu, K. S. (2007). *School organization and administration (3rd & revised Ed.)*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited.