

Influence of Teacher Quality on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study was designed to investigate the influence of teacher quality on students' academic performance in secondary schools of Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State. Two objectives and two hypotheses were raised for the study. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. Teacher Quality Questionnaire was self-developed and validated by expert Academics and was used for data collection. Also students' academic performance grade for third term in 2018/2019 session in English and Mathematics were used to measure the influence of teacher quality on students' academic performance. Data was collected and analyzed using chi square statistics and the results showed that teacher quality has positive influence on students' academic performance and teacher qualification also has positive influence on students' academic performance. The study concludes that teacher quality has positive influence on students' academic performance. The study recommends that teachers with teaching and professional certificates should be employed in schools.

Keywords: Teacher, Quality, Academic, Performance, Qualification, Influence

Introduction

Education is globally accepted as the most viable tool for sustainable human development. It is equally an indispensable tool for enhancing economic growth and national development. In recognition of this inestimable value of education, the Nigerian Government has adopted education as an instrument per excellence for

effecting national development (Okunadeadelayo, 2018). Sani and Garba (2018) affirm that education is viewed as an instrument for building a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self-reliant nation, a nation with dynamic and great economy.

Education imparted through quality instruction is not only for good grade but also for the acquisition of the right values, skills and competences to make an individual a useful member of the society (Okunadeadelayo, 2018). The new standard encyclopedia (1984) defined education as the process by which people's abilities and talents are developed. Therefore, education in this broad sense is also everything that is learned and acquired in a life time, including habits, knowledge, skills, interest, attitudes and personality. People become educated not merely by attending schools, but by the total experiences of life. Farrant (as cited in Sani & Garba, 2018) explains education as the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties trained and skills developed.

On the other hand, teacher quality indicates the efficiencies, and how knowledgeable a teacher is in handling all teaching activities in order to make learning worthwhile. The teacher is the pivot of the education process; he is the key in the entire education programme. Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2008) opines that education cannot rise above the quality of its teachers. Therefore competent and qualified teachers are essential foundation for a good educational system.

Teachers have been recognized as indispensable human resource and indeed, the most important element in the school system; more important than quality equipment and materials as well as the level of funding (United States Department of Education, 1999). Teacher quality matters, because it is the major force that improves positive learning outcome in educational goal (Iliya, 2019). The researcher affirms that teacher quality exert great influence on the quality of educational output. Obanya (as cited in Iliya, 2019) asserted that the quality of an educational system depends on the quality, quantity and devotion of its workforce. Meanwhile, Oni (2014) revealed that quality of teachers has significant positive correlation with students' academic achievement in Basic Technology. Teacher quality comprises of the teacher attributes, which include teacher qualification, exposure on job training, practices and effectiveness in the job. United States Department of Education (1999) states that quality of the teacher is the key to improve students' performance regardless of the composition of the schools. The agency further affirms that quality teachers are those who use a wide variety of instructional methods, experiences and materials to ensure that students are achieving a variety of cognitive objectives. Oni (2014) emphasizes that quality teacher must have the mastery of the subject matter very well and techniques of motivating children. Academic performance is the extent to which a student, teachers or institution has attained their short or long term educational goals (Sani, 2017). Academic performance indicates the level of students' progress in school, which is done in each term, semester or annually as promotion examinations. It is the level of schooling the students have successfully completed and the ability to attain success or failure at the end of the term or session.

Therefore, this study investigates the influence of teacher quality on academic performance of students in secondary schools of Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

It is an established fact that the current government of Nigeria under President Muhammadu Buhari has initiated a programme titled Npower programme for jobless youth across the Thirty Six (36) States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory. Also the Taraba State Government led by Arc. Darius Dickson Ishaku initiated the same programme at the state level, titled Rescue Teaching Programme. The two separate programmes initiated by both the Federal and Taraba State Government have created a vacuum for the abuse of professional ethics of teaching profession, thereby paving way for unqualified teachers who have no teaching skills to teach in secondary schools of the state. Many of the personnel recruited through the Npower and Rescue Teaching programmes have no teaching qualification, methodology to impart the knowledge to the learners, no skilled for evaluation, which have affected the quality of teaching as well as the quality of the product to be raised in future which constitutes the problem of the study.

Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

1. To find out the influence of teacher quality on academic performance of students in secondary schools of Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria.
2. To determine whether teacher qualification influences Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant influence of teacher quality on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students.

Ho2: There is no significant influence of teacher qualification on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design, because the researchers tried to investigate what is currently occurring in an environment with the aim to understand both psychological and sociological contents of the environment. Also the study used representative sample of the population and the findings were generalized to the entire population. The study used teaching staff in all public secondary schools in Jalingo Local Government Area, which was Seven Hundred and Twenty One teachers (721) in all the Public Secondary Schools in the area (Taraba State Annual School Census Report, 2019). The above figure stood as the total population of the study.

Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used for the study. Simple random sampling was used to select the number of schools to be covered for the study. Hat and draw approach of simple random was used to draw the actual number needed. Pieces of paper were used with an indication of Yes and No, based on the number of schools available in the council. The pieces of paper were 37 as the total number of school in the area was 37. Ten out of 37 schools had been selected as contained in the paper with mark Yes. Those pieces of paper with No which carried the remaining number of schools with No indication were rejected. Also purposive sampling technique was used to select the number of sample teachers for the study. Based on the meaning of the technique, every teacher who had first Degree and above with education had the tendency of being selected irrespective of teacher's category including Rescue, part-time, permanent or N-power teachers. Based on the total population of the study, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample size was used to select the appropriate sample used for the study. According to the table, One Hundred and Fifty Nine (159) teachers were selected as sample for the study.

Teachers Quality Questionnaire (TQQ) was used to elicit responses from the respondents. The questionnaire was a self-developed instrument that made up of three sections. Section A comprises of Bio-data of the respondents which had two items; section B comprises of Teacher quality with exposure, effectiveness and experience, which had eight items; while section C comprises of teacher qualification and professional attachment which had seven items. The instrument was a 17 item questionnaire with four points scale of strongly agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). Also Students' Academic Performance Grades in English Language and Mathematics for third term 2018/2019 academic session were used to measure the influence of teacher quality and Academic Performance of students. The grades consisted of A, B, C and F. A grade had 70 and above score, B grade had 60 to 69 score, C grade had 50 to 59 score and F grade had 0 to 49 score. Four point scale of measurement was applied for computation and comparison with teachers responses on the questionnaire. The instrument was validated by two senior lecturers in Faculty of Education, Taraba State University to ascertain its face and content validity. Also, test re-test reliability was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. Two schools were selected outside the sampled schools but within the population of the study. The interval of two weeks was given before administering the second test. The filled questionnaires were retrieved and subjected to analyses, using Pearson Product Moment Correlations Coefficient and the Reliability Coefficient Value of 0.75 was found. Kolo (2003) affirms that a reliability value of 0.5 and above is reliable for research purpose in education. Therefore, the instrument is regarded as reliable for the purpose it was designed.

Data collection procedure started from presentation of I.D Cards of the researchers to the sampled schools, thereby allowing the researchers to have access to valuable records that are relevant to the study. Wait and take approach of data collection was used for each of the sample schools and covered within two days. All the One Hundred and Fifty Nine (159) copies of the questionnaire were distributed and

retrieved from the respondents for data analysis. The data was analyzed using chi-square.

Presentation of results

Ho1: There is no significant influence of Teacher Quality on Academic Performance of Students.

Table 1: Chi square statistics on the influence of Teacher Quality on Academic Performance of Students

N	χ^2cal	df	P-value	Decision
159	42.482	1	0.000	Rejected

The chi square statistics was calculated to find out the influence of teacher quality on academic performance of students. The table of analysis showed a significant influence of teacher quality on students' Academic Performance. The calculated chi-square value was 42.482 with P = 0.000. As the P – value is less than the alpha level, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that teacher quality has significant influence on students' Academic Performance.

Ho2: There is no Significant Influence of Teacher Qualification on Academic Performance of Students.

Table 2: Chi-square statistics on the influence of teacher qualification on academic performance of students

N	χ^2cal	df	P-value	Decision
159	40.363	1	0.000	Rejected

The chi-square statistics was calculated to find out the influence of teacher qualification on students' academic performance. The table of analysis showed a significant influence of teacher qualification on students' academic performance. The calculated chi-square value is 40.363 with p=0.000. As the p-value is less than alpha level; therefore the null hypothesis is also rejected. Teacher qualification has significant influence on students' academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of the study revealed that teacher quality has positive influence on academic performance of students. The finding revealed that teachers with teaching qualification, exposure, professional affiliation and other positive characteristics

made up the teacher quality. Teachers with those attributes enhance their students' understanding of the learning contents, which could enhance students' academic performance and achievement in school. The present finding corroborates the declaration of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2008) that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. This shows that teacher's quality determines vibrant educational system in every country. The finding also corroborates that of Oni (2014), which revealed that quality of teachers had significant positive correlation with students' academic achievement in Basic Technology. The finding also corroborates the study of Salvin (2003), which revealed that quality teacher has the mastery of the subject matter as well as techniques of motivation which improves students' academic performance. The finding is in accord with that of Darling-Hammond (2000) which revealed that quality of teachers is related to the improvement of students' performance. The finding is in agreement with that of Sirait (2016) which revealed that teacher quality is statistically significant to students' performance in students' high school level.

Another finding of the study revealed that teacher qualification has positive influence on students' academic performance. Respondents sampled for the study indicated that teachers with high academic and professional qualification record greater achievement of excellence in schools. The achievement of excellence relates to students' improvement in their academic performance. The finding of the study corroborates that of Darling-Hammond (2000), which revealed that teacher qualification has positive correlation with students' academic performance. The finding is also in accord with the finding of Thomas and Olugbenga (2012), which revealed that students taught by teachers with high qualifications performed better than those taught by teachers with low qualifications.

The study's finding also corroborates that of Kola and Shola (2015), which revealed that teachers' qualifications have positive correlation with students' academic performance in technical college. The finding has contradicted that of Musau and Joash (2015), which revealed that significant difference, was not found between teacher qualification and academic performance in science, math and technology subjects. The researchers further revealed that majority of the teachers of science, Math and technology subjects were trained graduates, most of them had attended in-service or refresher courses which resulted in slight improvement in the students' performance in those subjects.

Conclusion

The study concludes that teacher quality has positive influence on students' academic performance. Teacher qualification has positive influence on students' academic performance. The study indicates that the higher the quality of teachers, the higher the understanding of learning contents and academic performance of students.

Recommendations

The study recommends that:

1. Teachers with teaching and professional certificates should be employed to teach in all schools, in order to improve the quality of students.
2. Governments and school proprietors should employ teachers with teaching experience, exposure, commitment to work and high educational qualifications for quality assurance and improvement of standard in our schools. Motivation and other forms of inducement are the instruments to attract this category of teachers.

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