

The Influence of School Sex, Location and Type on Students' Academic Performance

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KEYWORDS Mixed Sexed. Single Sexed. Urban. Rural. Public. Unity. Performance

ABSTRACT The paper examined the influence of school type, sex and location on students' academic performance in Ekiti state secondary schools. The sample of the study consisted of forty (40) secondary schools. Four (4) Government colleges (State Unity colleges) were purposively selected for the study while thirty- six (36) public secondary schools were randomly selected for the study. The school sampled had presented candidates for both West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) respectively. An instrument, school type, sex, location and students' academic performance inventory was used to collect data for the study. Data collected were analyzed using percentage scores and t- test statistics. Three null hypotheses were generated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the study showed that the level of students' academic performance was low. It was also revealed that school type, sex and location had no significant influence on students' academic performance. Based on the finding it was recommended that educational planners, administrators and evaluators should appreciate the fact that the Parent Teacher Association; Guidance and Counselors, philanthropists, students and society at large have crucial role to play in improving students' academic performance and solicit their supports in this regard.

INTRODUCTION

The performance of students in any academic task has always been of special interest to educators' parents and society at large. The primary concern of any educator who is entrusted with the responsibility of selecting students for any advance training programme in a given field is the ability to estimate as accurately and as early as possible the probability that such candidates will succeed or fail. The major obstacle to the development of education in Ekiti State is persistently poor academic performance of students' in Senior School Certificate Examination, National Examinations Council and Joint Matriculation Examination.

The problem of poor academic performance is so great that it has become a necessary for many students to pass the number of required subjects for admission into tertiary institutions at once (Ajayi 1999). Government, parents and guardians are complaining about this situation. Mass failure of students in external examinations has been attributed to a number of factors which include teachers' factors (low qualification, lack of experience, poor salaries and allowances, poor supervision, organizational climate (open and close), students' factors (poor ability of students,

under age, unwillingness to learn, bad peer groups influence, among others).

It is observed that students' academic performance is becoming worse in public secondary schools. Many parents prefer to enroll their children in Government Colleges where better academic performance is guaranteed for their children. It also appears that some parents believe that their children cannot perform very well academically in co-educational school (mixed schools). To this end, many of them would prefer to register their children in single sexed schools for Senior School Certificate Examination to enhance better academic performance.

Many parents believe that the academic performance in urban schools is poor compared with academic performance of students in rural schools and therefore enroll their wards in the rural schools for Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE). It appears most of the public secondary schools cannot complete favorably with Government Colleges (State Unity colleges) in terms of students academic performance as a result of their inefficiency. It is against this background that the study investigates the influence of school type, sex and location on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Ekiti State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As school population continues to increase the influence of school type, sex and location on academic performance is generating much research interest. Keeves (1978) for instance, has demonstrated that school type (Government, Catholic or other independent schools) did not make a contribution to the academic achievement of a sample of Australian adolescents independently of the influence of their home backgrounds. William et al. (1980) in another study of Australian Seventeen years also has revealed that other things being equal, students attending Catholic or other independent school had higher levels of achievement than students from Government Schools.

However, Keeves (1978) acceded that type of school did not make a contribution to academic performance while Ajayi (1999) in his own study revealed that school type make a difference in students' academic performance. According to Carpenter and Hayden (1985), the question of whether the type of school attended affect, the academic performance of young people is one of continuing debate, both overseas and developing countries.

However, some studies have examined locational planning and their attendance consequence on examined performance of students in various states of the Federation. According to Mbaekwe (1986), the studies were intended to assist education authorities of various states to decide where a particular type of school should be located; the size of a school in each location; whether a new school should be built or other wise among others. Boylan and Mcswan (1978) reported that rural school were inferior and lacking in the range of facilities with high staff turnover and suffered from lack of continuity in their curriculum.

Obe (1984) observed a significant difference in rural-urban academic performance of 480 primary six school finalist on the aptitude subtests of the National Common Entrance Examination into Secondary Schools. He concluded that children from urban schools were superior to their rural counterparts. Owoeye (2002) holds similar view as Obe that there was a significant difference between academic performance of students in rural and urban area in public examinations.

Ajayi and Ogunyemi (1990) and Gana (1997)

in their different studies on the relationship between academic performance and school location revealed that, there was no significant difference between academic performance of students in urban and rural schools. Also, in his study Ajayi (1999) found out that there was no significant difference between students' academic achievement of rural and urban secondary school students.

On the basis of the controversial findings on the influence of school type, sex, location on students' academic performance in the Literature, the present study will ascertain whether school type, sex, and location will significantly influence secondary school students' academic performance in Ekiti State.

In order to accomplish the purpose of this paper, the following research question and hypotheses are raised to pilot the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of school sex, type and location and students' academic performance in Ekiti State Nigeria. The study would also ascertain the level of students' academic performance in secondary schools in Ekiti State Nigeria.

Research Question

What is the level of students' academic performance in Ekiti State Secondary School?

Research Hypotheses

- (1) School type will not significantly influence students' academic performance.
- (2) School sex will not significantly influence students' academic performance.
- (3) School location will not significantly influence students' academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research of the survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all secondary schools financed by Ekiti State Government. Forty (40) secondary schools were sampled for the study. Four (4) government colleges were purposively sampled for the study while thirty-six (36) public schools were randomly selected for the study. The forty

(40) schools selected had presented candidates for SSCE/WAEC.

School type, sex, location and students' academic performance inventory instrument was designed and used to collect data for the study. In the scoring of the instrument, the summary of the Senior School Certificate examination (SSCE) result for four academic years were used in the scoring. The grades were scored in these orders:

5 credits and above	3 points
4credits	2 points
Less than 4 credits	1 point

The calculation of students' academic performance for each school was computed as follows

Number of students with 5 credits and above x3
 Number of students with 4 credits x2
 Number of students with less than 4 credits x1

Students' academic performance for each school was the total divided by the number of students who sat for the examination. The data collected were analyzed using percentage scores and t-test statistics. The hypotheses raised were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results of the study are presented in line with the research question and hypotheses as follows:

Research Question

What is the level of students' academic performance in Ekiti State Secondary Schools?

Table 1 shows the level of students' academic performance in Ekiti State during the period under study. The result shows that out of an average population of 21,532 students presented for the

Senior School Certificate Examination during the period 2007/2008 Session, 12,930 representing 60.11% of the population had less than 4 Credits. Those who had 4 Credits were 4, 250 representing 19.7% of the population while those who had 5 Credits and above were 4,352 representing 20.2% of the population. This indicates that the level of students' academic performance during the period was low.

Testing of Hypotheses

1. School type will not significantly influence students' academic performance.

Table 2 reveals that t-calculated value of 1.08 is lower than the t-critical value of 1.7. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. That is, school type did not significantly influence students' academic performance.

2. School sex will not significantly influence students' academic performance.

Table 3 reveals that t-Calculated value of 0.37 was lower than the t-Critical value of 1.7. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. That is, school sex did not significantly influence students' academic performance.

3. School location will not significantly influence students' academic performance.

Table 4 shows that t-Calculated value of 0.68 is lower than the t-Critical value of 1.7. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. That is, school

Table 1: Level of students' academic performance.

<i>Students result</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
Students' with 5 credits and above	4,352	20.2
Students' with 4 credits	4,250	19.7
Students' with less than 4 credits	12,930	60.1
Total	21,532	100.0

Table 2: A t-test Analysis of influence of school type (public school and government colleges) on students academic

<i>School type</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t-cal</i>	<i>t-crit</i>
Public sexed schools students' academic performance	36	1.56	0.31	38	1.08	1.7
Government colleges students' academic performance	4	1.75	0.5			

P>0.05

Table 3: A t-test analysis of influence of school sex on students' academic performance

<i>School sex</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t-cal</i>	<i>t-crit</i>
Single sexed schools students' academic performance	4	1.53	0.25	38	0.37	1.7
Mixed sexed schools students' academic performance	36	1.59	0.34			

P > 0.05

Table 4: A t-test analysis of influence of school location on students' academic performance

<i>School location</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t-cal</i>	<i>t-crit</i>
Urban school students' academic performance	25	1.61	0.32	38	0.68	1.7
Rural school students' academic performance	15	1.54	0.34			

$P > 0.05$

location did not significantly influence students' academic performance.

DISCUSSION

The study showed that the level of students' academic performance in Ekiti State Secondary School was low. The finding contradicts that of Adebayo (2001) which revealed that the level of students' academic performance in Ekiti State Secondary School was moderately high. The reason for contradictory findings in respect of level of students' academic performance might be connected with the variation in sample used and the period covered by both studies. The low level of students' academic performance might be attributed to some factors outside the scope of the study. These may include low parental involvement in school administration, poor motivation of teacher, laziness of students, poor supervision of teachers among others. Supporting this, Yvonne and Kola (1998) further elaborated that students performance is very much depends on socio economic background as per statement, High school students level of performance is with statistically significant difference, linked to their gender, grade level, school location, school type, school sex and socio economic background. Zimmerman (2000) revealed that students' academic performance depends on numbers of different factors. He went further to say that weak peers might reduce the grades of middling or strong students.

The findings on influence of school type on students' academic performance are controversial. The present study has shown that school type had no significant influence on students' academic performance. This finding implies that whether a student attends government colleges or public secondary school it does not make a difference in his academic performance. The finding contradicts the assumption of some parents that students in government colleges had better academic performance than those in public schools. This finding of the study supports that of keeves (1978) while it contradicts that of Ajayi (1999). This might be attributed to the fact that

both schools were financed, maintained, supervised and controlled by the government.

On school sex and students' academic performance, it was revealed that school sex had no significant influence on students' academic performance. This finding implies that whether a student attends single school or mixed sexed school does not make a difference in his academic performance. The finding contradicts the assumption of many parents that enroll their wards in single sexed schools on basis of better academic performance. The contradictory findings in respect of influence of school sexed on students' academic performance could be attributed to variation in factors influencing students' academic performance such as teacher job commitment, teacher qualification, availability of school facilities and students' intelligent quotient among various schools. It was also revealed in this study that school location had no significant influence on students' academic performance. This finding implies that whether a student attends rural or urban secondary school it does not make a difference in his academic performance. The finding contradicts the decision of some parents that enroll their wards in rural areas on the basis of better academic performance. The finding of this study contradicts that of Owoeye (2000) while it supports that of Ajayi (1999). The contradictory findings in respects of school location could not be divorced from variation in supervisory techniques of school leaders, motivation of teachers and availability of facilities in various schools.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that secondary school students' academic performance in Ekiti State is poor, hence, all the stake holders in secondary education in the State should jointly work together in creating conducive atmosphere for effective teaching and learning process to ensure better academic performance of the Students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Since school type, sex, and location had no

significant influence on students' academic performance, school administrators should be conscious of other factors outside the scope of the study that can improve the students' academic performance. To this end, educational planners, administrators and evaluators should supervised, monitor and coordinate the activities of the school heads, teachers and students in the school system as well as appreciate the fact that the parent teacher association, guidance and counselors, philanthropists, students and society at large have crucial role to play in improving students' academic performance and hence solicit for their supports in improving the academic performance of the students.

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