INTRODUCTION

A school is set up for the main purpose of bringing students from different families together under one roof—the classroom. Effective teaching and learning cannot take place without the coming Together of the teacher and the learners—students. In order to check students’ commitment to receiving instruction from the teachers, an administrative record is designed and used on a daily basis, i.e., the attendance register. This record is utilized by the form teachers and supervised on a weekly basis by the school head. The attendance register is also supervised on a term or annual basis by the supervisors from the Ministry of Education and other professionals particularly in education on unscheduled visits. Parents also used the attendance register to supervise the movement of their children occasionally. The attendance register is mostly concerned with school/class attendance. Dedicated teachers, also take attendance before teaching their subjects to ascertain the number of students who received their lesson. Hence, attendance is an important administrative record used by parents and school authority to monitor, control, supervise students’ activities in schools. A student that is not regular in school, face learning problems, resulting from late-coming to school, truancy, inability to read and not consulting with the teacher (Onomuodeke 1995: 8).

School and home factors affect student attendance. The social status and educational level of parent influence school attendance. Geographical location of school, students’ attitude towards school and subjects, inadequate supervision of students’ activities by teachers and parents and poor teaching methods, lack of facilities affects students’ school attendance (Oghuvbu 1999; Alito 2003: 66-69). Students developed negative attitude towards school resulting into poor attendance because of non-employment of school leavers, repetition of class and insecurity (Okwelle 2003: 30-35). Students' age, family commitments, change of jobs, change of working hours and health factors, students with greater motive, without conflict of interest are more regular in school (ChiuMochi 1993).

On the role of gender in child schooling, Okpupara and Chukwuone (2007) identified that female headed households are more likely to have higher attendance in school whereas educated fathers have strong impact in increasing the probability of child school attendance than mothers. The study also revealed that school attendance of girls is significantly influenced by age whole age is not significant for boys. School administrators and teacher in Delta State positively keep and utilizes effectively students records on attendance, because of the important of the attendance register in the control of discipline and promotion of academic achievement of students (Oghuvbu 2006).

On the importance of attendance register,
Nwadiani (1994) stated that school head and teachers should have accurate information of all the activities in the school for effective and easy decision-making, aids educational grant procurement and also to satisfy legal requirement and continuous assessment.

**Statement of the Problem**

The researcher has investigated series of administrative problems affecting students’ academic performance. Some identified factors include poor instructional quality, students’ negative attitude to school, overcrowded classrooms, poor facilities in schools (Oghuvbu 1998, 2000 and 2003). From the experience of the researcher, student attendance is low in rural and highly populated urban schools. Teachers are in school, while most learners, students are at home. During examination period, there is 100% attendance in school. Examination-oriented attendance student, by nature depends on the knowledge of the regular attendance students or enter examination hall with prepared materials which are types of examination malpractice. In recent times, rural, riverine students perform high in external certificate examinations in which continuous assessment is part of the overall grade. This unscientific performance calls to mind certain questions. Does attendance in school and at lesson has no influence on students’ academic performance? What is the correlation between attendance and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria?

**Purpose of the Study**

The study identified the correlation between attendance and academic performance of students. It also analysed the influence of gender and school location on attendance and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria.

**Research Questions**

The study provided answer to the following questions.

1. What is the average percentage score of students in attendance and academic performance in secondary schools in Delta State?
2. Is there a difference in the percentage average score of students in attendance and academic performance among the three senatorial districts in Delta State?
3. What is the regression equation of attendance on academic performance of students in secondary schools in Delta State?

**Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses formulated were tested in this study:

1. There is no significant relationship between attendance and academic performance of secondary school students.
2. School location does not significant influence the relationship between attendance and academic performance of secondary school students.

**METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

The design of this study was ex-post-facto in nature and followed the descriptive research format. Independent variable is attendance and the dependent variable is student’s academic performance in secondary schools.

**Population and Sample:** The students in the 398 secondary schools in Delta State constitute the population of the study. 2860 students were selected from 58 secondary schools i.e. 50 students from 56 schools and 30 from 2 schools used in this study.

The instrument for data collection was a checklist designed to collect students’ attendance score for two years and academic performance also for two years. Post-graduate students resident in the selected school help in the data collection. Descriptive statistics mean percentages and regression equation were used to answer the three research questions and Pearson r was used in the analysis of the two hypotheses at 0.05.

**Collection of Data:** Each student’s attendance and average scores for the two years was covered to 100% filling the checklist. In converting attendance the formula used:

\[
\text{Total No. of time students was present for the period} / \text{Total No. of time school opened for the period} \times 100/1
\]

**RESULTS**

The results of the data analysis are presented according to research questions and hypotheses.

**Research Question 1:** What is average
percentage score of students in attendance and academic performance in secondary schools in Delta State?

Research Question 2: Is there a difference in the percentage average score of students in attendance and academic performance among the three senatorial districts in Delta State?

From results in table 1, student in Delta North Senatorial District score the highest in attendance 74.91%, followed by Delta South 69.56% and the lowest 62.80% Delta Central. It showed a slight difference among the three senatorial districts. Students in Delta North and South are more regular in school than Delta Central. On academic performance, student in Delta South scored the highest with 68.4% followed by Delta North 65.97% and the lowest Delta Central 63.94%. From this result, attendance influences academic performance to some extent.

Research Question 3: What is the regression equation of academic performance on attendance?

Academic performance = 53.50 + 0.192 attendance i.e. y = 53.50 + 0.192x

For example, if a student scored 60% in attendance i.e. x = 60, then academic performance y = 53.50 + 0.192 x 60 = 53.50 + 11.52 = 65. If a student score 65% in academic performance i.e. (y = 65) then attendance score (x) = 65 = 53.50 + 0.192x. 0.192x = 11.52   = x = 11.52/0.192 = 60%.

From this equation, increase in attendance score could also increase in academic performance.

The scattered diagram of attendance on academic performance according to school percentage mean score showed the fairly positive correlation between attendance and academic performance.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between attendance and academic performance of secondary school students.

Since calculated r = 0.47, it shows a positive fair correlation. Also calculated r is less than critical r value 0.47 < 0.08114. This revealed that attendance affect academic performance. The coefficient of determination (r²) is 22%. An indication that only 22% of students’ academic performance was influenced by attendance in secondary schools in Delta State.

Hypothesis 2: School location does not significantly influence the relationship between attendance and academic performance of secondary school student in Delta State.

The results in table 2, revealed fair positive correction between attendance and academic performance in the three Senatorial District of Delta State. However, Delta South has a higher correction of 0.59 with coefficient of determination (r²) of 0.35 (35%). An indication that 35% of student’s academic performance is influenced by attendance. Delta South followed by Delta Central with r² = 0.36 (31%) and Delta North with the lowest r of 0.44 with r² = 0.1936 (19%). School location has little influence on the relationship between attendance and academic performance of secondary school students in Delta State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Percentage score in attendance and academic performance according to Senatorial District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senatorial District</th>
<th>Total score attendance</th>
<th>Total score in exams</th>
<th>Total no. of students</th>
<th>Percentage average attendance</th>
<th>Percentage average academic score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delta North</td>
<td>58430</td>
<td>51453</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>74.97</td>
<td>65.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>78509</td>
<td>79925</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>62.80</td>
<td>63.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta South</td>
<td>57736</td>
<td>56760</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>69.56</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>194675</td>
<td>188138</td>
<td>2860</td>
<td>207.27</td>
<td>198.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall mean</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed from fieldwork 2007.

Table 2: Summary of Pearson r on the relationship between attendance and academic performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Summation</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>AP</th>
<th>DFr</th>
<th>Cal. r</th>
<th>Crit. r</th>
<th>r²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>2860</td>
<td>=A197626 =A19890490</td>
<td>=A13900557</td>
<td>14401008</td>
<td>2858</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.8114</td>
<td>0.221222%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed from fieldwork 2007
On rural, semi-urban and urban schools, results derived from data use in tables 1 and 2 showed that in urban schools, Pearson $r$ is 0.523 ($r^2 = 0.27$ i.e. 27%), semi-urban $r = 0.50$ ($r^2 = 0.25$ i.e. 25%), rural $r = 0.60$ ($r^2 = 0.36$ i.e. 36%). There is positive fair correction in urban, semi-urban and rural schools. However, there is higher correlation in rural school with $r = 0.60$ with coefficient of determination $r^2 = 0.36$, which showed that 36% of students academic performance was influenced by attendance (Table 3, Fig. 1).

**DISCUSSION**

The study revealed fairly positive relationship between attendance and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Delta State. It shows that 22% academic performance was influence by attendance. In rural areas influence of attendance on academic performance is higher than urban and semi-urban schools. During the course of this study the researcher interviewed some students in urban schools who said that their parents employed the service of private specialist teacher for home study. Others said they attend private evening class –lesson to enhance their academic performance. This may be the reason for higher performance in Delta North and South where most of the schools used were located in cities with college of educations. The study also showed that other factors influences students’ academic performance since the relationship between attendance and academic performance is not significant but positively

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**Table 3: Summary of Pearson r on the relationship between attendance and Academic performance based on school location.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Summation</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>“AP”</th>
<th>DFr</th>
<th>Cal. r</th>
<th>Crit. r</th>
<th>$r^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>North</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>A =58430</td>
<td>$A^2=6695228$</td>
<td>49148028</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.8114</td>
<td>0.1936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P =51453</td>
<td>$P^2=5904587$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>A =78509</td>
<td>$A^2=6230278$</td>
<td>5879867</td>
<td>1248</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.8114</td>
<td>0.3136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P =79925</td>
<td>$P^2=3291830$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>A =57736</td>
<td>$A^2=3249420$</td>
<td>4188912</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.350</td>
<td>(35%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P =56760</td>
<td>$P^2=4478250$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Computed from fieldwork 2007*
correlated. Since the percentage mean scores is not significantly larger than that of academic performance, an increase i.e. positive improvement in attendance could increase student’s academic performance. These findings are consistent with those of Oghuvbu (2006) Nwadiani (1994). The computed regression equation, \( y = 53.50 + 0.192x \) academic performance on attendance also revealed positive correlation between attendance and academic performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relationship between attendance and academic performance of students in secondary schools is fairly and positively correlated that is attendance influences academic performances. Twenty-two percentage academic performances is influence by attendance. There is a difference in the relationship between attendance and academic performance among urban, semi-urban and rural schools. An increase in attendance score will also increase academic performance as shown from the results of this study. School administrators should supervise adequately the keeping and utilization of attendance registers for effective control of student for higher academic performance. This is possible because, attendance records will help parent, ministry of education officials and researchers identify other factors affecting students’ academic performance and discipline in schools.

REFERENCES


