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INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' EXPERIENCE AND STUDENTS' GENDER ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN BUSINESS STUDIES

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Abstract

Academic performance of students is of major interest not only to parents but also to other stakeholders in education, whenever students have below average in their performance which constitutes serious problems. This study was conducted to examine the influence of teachers' experience and learners' gender on secondary school students' academic performance in Business studies in Ogbomoso, Oyo State. To accomplish this, two specific objective -influence of teachers' years of teaching on secondary school students' academic performance and the influence of students' gender on secondary school students' academic performance in business studies, with two research questions were answered while two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study population consists of 387 respondents comprising 20 teachers and 367 business studies students selected from 10 Junior Secondary schools in five Local Government Areas in Ogbomosho. The questionnaire titled (ITLVAPQ) was used for data collection with used of Cronbach Alpha and reliability coefficient was 0.98. The collected data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and the hypotheses were tested using independent samples t-test at a 0.05 level of significance. This study found that there was a significant difference between the mean perception scores of teachers and learner regarding the influence of teacher tender and teacher qualification on secondary school students' academic performance in

business studies ($t_{(385)}$ = 0.026, $p < 0.05$) and ($t(385) = 1.80$, $p < 0.05$). Two recommendations were made among which since teachers' years of teaching experience and students gender significantly influences students' academic performance in business studies, schools management should facilitate regular dialogue and collaboration between teachers and students to align perceptions and create more effective strategies for improving academic performance and ensure that teaching strategies and school policies do not reinforce gender stereotypes that could affect students' performance and learning experience.

Keywords: Teachers' experience, students' gender, academic performance, business studies

Introduction

Incorporating business studies into the Secondary School curriculum highlighted the need to equip students with essential and marketable skills for entrepreneurial advancement. Advancing entrepreneurial skill development for Nigerian youth requires incorporating business studies into the Nigerian school curriculum to train managers, accountants, secretaries, and professionals. Business studies is a vocational subject provided in Nigerian Junior Secondary Schools. The program aims to provide adolescents preparing for Senior Secondary School (SSS) with vital pre-vocational skills, facilitating their constructive contributions to themselves and their communities.

Despite the career opportunities for students who studied Business Studies in junior secondary schools, the performance of public school students in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) might have been improved, as shown by their poor scores. Ahmed (2015) stated that educational stakeholders, such as parents, the government, and students, have responsibility for children's poor performance. They ascribed the need for essential teaching and learning resources to the government at all levels; the insufficient recruitment of business studies teachers negatively influenced the morale of employed educators due to poor motivation for their roles. They emphasized that the subpar performance of pupils in business studies tests is due to the need for more emphasis on business courses in most public secondary schools, as opposed to science-related disciplines. Teaching as a profession must not demonstrate gender bias in using technology instructional tools to improve pedagogical experiences. This signifies that irrespective of the teachers' gender, they may effectively educate students by using appropriate teaching methodologies and instructional resources to guarantee optimum comprehension of the course along with the designated behavioural objectives.

Gender disparity has been a considerable issue that has influenced students' knowledge acquisition. *Gender* is a trait that distinguishes organisms according to their reproductive roles as male or female (Ratzer et al., 2017). Particularly in vocational studies, gender has a significant role in determining how well pupils do in school. The socio-cultural variations between men and women are the primary reason why it is important to analyse gender performance. According to Adeyemi and Akpotu (2014), The term "gender" refers to the cluster of traits defining what it is to be a man or a woman, including biological, psychological, and behavioural (Adigun et al., 2015). The authors could not find any statistically significant difference in student performance between male and female professors. In schools, students learn from both highly skilled and less qualified teachers.

Those who have completed training obtained a teaching certificate and state license, and possess a bachelor's degree from a four-year college are considered qualified teachers, according to Usman (2012). Subject matter expertise, knowledge of human development, instructional design and methodologies, assessment techniques, learning environments, communication and

advocacy, collaboration and partnerships, professional development, code of conduct, and technology proficiency were all listed as qualifications for a qualified teacher by the revisit. Much research has been conducted on teachers' credentials as criteria related to teaching professionalism. Abe and Adu (2013) affirm that proficient educators in all educational institutions are essential for improving student achievement in all disciplines, including Business Studies. Kalu (2012) defined professionally competent teachers as those who have completed professional training and possess the requisite knowledge, abilities, methods, and aptitudes, shown by degrees such as B.Ed., B.Sc. (Ed), B.A. Ed, M.Ed., among others. Abe (2014) characterized academically educated teachers as those with academic training obtained by attendance at educational institutions, culminating in degrees such as HND, B.Sc, B.A., and M.A. The author stated that qualified teachers possess degrees such as a B.Ed. or B.Sc. Ed, B.A. Ed, and M.Ed. This signifies that teachers' credentials are crucial for the professionalization of education, requiring certification from a recognized institution like the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria. However, professionally qualified teachers have completed specialized training that endows them with unique professional knowledge, skills, methodologies, and competencies, distinguishing them from general educators.

Abe (2014) affirmed that untrained educators are increasingly undermining the norms of the teaching profession owing to their insufficient professional training. The researchers characterized them as "birds of passage" that create an unwarranted void as they seek more advantageous prospects in their initially chosen vocation. This exemplified the perspectives held by educators toward the teaching profession and the education of their pupils. The literature examined by Daso (2013) and Akpo (2012) revealed that numerous teacher variables, such as years of teaching experience, academic qualifications, involvement in teacher development programs, accessibility of qualified teachers, job satisfaction levels, teacher-student ratio, teacher attitude, and motivation, substantially influence student performance.

Teaching experience includes the skills, exposure, and training acquired throughout time, improving one's capacity to perform a present function or preparing one for a teaching position. Teaching experience may be acquired via several avenues, some of which are unconventional. Experienced teachers have several years of experience providing service and various classroom skills and strategies. These teachers often prioritize responsibilities and concentrate on certain essential instructional matters.

They can often manoeuvre through the dynamic attributes of a classroom setting and adeptly tackle the most significant aspect—unpredictability—. Unlike beginner educators, experienced teachers often demonstrate more confidence and flexibility (Kerrins & Cushing, 2020). Additionally, inexperienced teachers often have diminished abilities in speed, flexibility, and fluidity, and they lack cognitive structures that enable the effective recall and organization of extensive knowledge. Research suggests that an individual needs four to seven years of experience to attain proficiency as a teacher.

Asikhia (2010) posited that educational background and socioeconomic position are interrelated, influencing parental employment decisions, and should not be seen in isolation. The author contended that indicators of profession, income, and education may more objectively delineate socio-class or position. Society is assumed to be hierarchically organized based on the possession of social and economic resources. Parents' job status may influence children's academic achievement and improve performance. Research (Asikhia, 2010) explicitly endorses the choice of parental occupation as an indicator of academic achievement. Research indicates a distinct association between parental professional choices and children's academic success. The

author noted that the correlation coefficient ranged from 0.10 to 0.70, indicating a positive relationship, wherein an increase in one variable corresponds to an increase in the other. This indicates that extensive teaching experience strongly correlates with the methods used to impart knowledge to students. Asikhia, (2010) examined literature indicated that research on teacher and learner characteristics, such as teachers' gender, credentials, and years of experience, on improving student performance demonstrates an equivocal effect on students' outcomes. Therefore, analyzing the learner's characteristics is essential to promoting exceptional student achievement.

This research examines the influence of teachers' and learners' factors on secondary school students' academic performance in business studies. Nevertheless, other pertinent aspects about instructional materials' availability, use, and sufficiency for enhancing student performance must be included. A global natural gender role differentiation seems to have exacerbated the disparity in opportunities between men and women. Gender disparity has been a considerable issue that has influenced students' knowledge acquisition. Gender is a trait that distinguishes organisms according to their reproductive roles as male or female (Ratzer et al., 2017). Gender substantially affects students' academic performance, especially in vocational disciplines. The importance of examining performance about gender is mainly based on the socio-cultural differences between females and males. Adeyemi and Akpotu (2014) defined the gender gap as the substantial difference and the void between men and females in diverse endeavours.

The examined literature reveals that research on teacher and learner characteristics, including teachers' gender, and qualification suggests an ambiguous effect on student performance. This research seeks to analyze the influence of educator and student factors on the academic performance of secondary school students in business courses.

Statement of the Problem

Students' academic achievement is significant to parents and other educational stakeholders. It is a crucial method for assessing the quality and efficacy of educators inside the system. In Nigeria, the subpar academic performance of pupils has emerged as a concerning issue among educational stakeholders (Abiri, 2013; Onajite et al., 2019). The subpar performance of students in Business Studies has persistently elicited criticism over teachers' insufficient professional qualifications and pedagogical approaches (Popoola, 2019). According to the records from Oyo State BECE for 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021, a significant number of students in the Ogbomoso Educational Zone achieved Credits (Cs) in Business Studies. However, Distinctions (As) and Passes (Ps) were scarce. This indicates that most students achieved credit (C) passes in Business Studies, with aggregate scores ranging from 50 to 59 points. This indicates that students' performance in business studies was unsatisfactory, necessitating an improvement in their performance to get distinctions (As) as a mark of excellence. The study indicates that little investigation has been conducted on the interplay of teacher gender and experience in student success in business studies. This research aims to investigate the influence of teacher and learner factors on the academic performance of secondary school students in business studies in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent do the teachers' years of teaching experience influence secondary students' academic performance in Business Studies?

2. To what extent does the students' gender influence secondary students' academic performance in Business Studies?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses are formulated for the study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

$H_0$1: There is no significant difference between mean perception scores of teachers and learner regarding the influence of teachers' years of teaching experience on secondary school students' academic performance in Business Studies.

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference between mean perception of male and female respondents regarding the influence of students' gender on secondary school students' academic performance Business studies.

Method

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The study population consists of 387 respondents comprising 20 teachers and 367 business studies students selected from 10 Junior Secondary schools in five Local Government Areas in Ogbomosho. The study used census sampling techniques where the total population participated in the study. A questionnaire titled: Influence of Teacher and Learner Variables on Academic Performance Questionnaire (ITLVAPQ) was used for data collection. The questionnaire was duly validated by three experts. A Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.98 was obtained for the questionnaire. The items were placed on a four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) = 2, and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1. The 387 copies of the questionnaire administered were all retrieved resulting in 100% return rate. The data collected to answer the research questions were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested using independent samples t-test statistics at a 0.05 level of significance. The following boundary limits were used for item options of research the questionnaire: Very High Extent (3.25-4.00), High Extent (2.50-3.24), Low Extent (1.75 - 2.49), and Not Needed (1.00-1.74). The hypothesis was rejected when the observed p-value was less than the fixed p-value of 0.05. The hypothesis was not rejected when the observed p-value was equal to or greater than the fixed p-value of 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent do the teachers' years of teaching experience influence secondary students' academic performance in Business Studies?

Table 1: Mean responses of the respondents on the extent to which teachers' years of teaching experience influence secondary students' academic performance

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Teachers with 0-5 years of teaching experience are enthusiastic, which motivates students and encourages them to perform well.	3.34	0.78	Very High Extent
2	Teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience employ more effective methods of imparting knowledge, which helps Business Studies students perform better.	3.25	0.72	High Extent
3	Students taught by teachers with 11 or more years of	3.07	0.85	High Extent

	teaching experience tend to perform better academically.			
4	Teachers with 11 or more years of teaching experience use various teaching methods, significantly enhancing students' academic performance.	3.09	0.77	High Extent
5	Teachers' years of teaching experience are related to the improvement of students' academic performance in Business Studies.	2.83	0.94	High Extent
6	Teachers with 11 or more years of teaching experience are sometimes seen as less motivated, which can negatively affect students' academic performance.	2.85	1.04	High Extent
	Grand Weighted Mean	**3.07**		**High Extent**

Source: Field survey, 2024

The analysis presented in Table 1 outlines the average responses and variability regarding the influence of teachers' years of teaching experience on secondary students' academic performance in Business Studies. The results show a significant perception of the impact of teaching experience on student outcomes. Specifically, the enthusiasm of teachers with 0-5 years of teaching experience was found to influence student performance, with a mean of 3.34 positively. Respondents also rated highly the effectiveness of teachers with 6-10 years of experience, noting that their more refined methods of knowledge delivery help Business Studies students perform better, with a mean of 3.25.

Furthermore, students taught by teachers with 11 or more years of experience were noted to perform better academically, as these educators use various teaching methods to enhance student performance, with means of 3.07 and 3.09, respectively. Additionally, respondents indicated that the number of years teachers have taught correlates with improved student performance in Business Studies. However, there was a perception that teachers with 11 or more years of experience may exhibit a lack of motivation, negatively affecting students' academic outcomes, with means of 2.83 and 2.85.

The standard deviations for all six items ranged from 0.72 to 1.04, suggesting that the responses were closely clustered around their average scores, indicating limited variation. This construct's overall computed weighted average mean was 3.07, with a standard deviation of 0.85. These results suggest that respondents firmly acknowledged the significant influence of teachers' years of teaching experience on secondary students' academic performance in Business Studies. The findings confirm that educators' years of teaching experience have a meaningful impact on students' academic outcomes, with a mean of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 0.85.

Research Question 2: To what extent does the students' gender influence secondary students' academic performance in Business Studies?

Table 2: Mean responses of students' gender influence on secondary students' academic performance in Business Studies.

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	SD	Remarks
7	Male students attend Business Studies classes more frequently than their female counterparts, which contributes to their better academic performance.	3.06	0.87	High Extent
8	Female students pay more attention during Business Studies lessons than their male counterparts, leading to excellent academic performance.	3.07	0.74	High Extent
9	Female students possess a better sense of humor when doing business studies, contributing to improved performance.	3.03	0.85	High Extent
10	Male students dislike the teaching and learning of Business Studies more than their female counterparts, leading to lower academic performance.	2.66	0.96	High Extent
11	Gender does not determine students' better performance in Business Studies.	2.46	1.17	High Extent
12	Male students master Business Studies better than their female counterparts, which results in their outstanding performance.	3.19	0.96	High Extent
13	Female students demonstrate strong mastery of Business Studies, which enhances their potential for outstanding performance compared to their male counterparts.	2.92	0.88	High Extent
	Grand Weighted Mean	**2.91**	**0.92**	**High Extent**

Source: Field survey, 2024

The analysis presented in Table 2 highlights the average responses and variability regarding the influence of students' gender on their academic performance in Business Studies. The data revealed significant differences across several constructs. For instance, male students in Business Studies classes were found to outperform their female counterparts, with a mean score of 3.06. Conversely, female students were rated more attentive in Business Studies lessons than male students, which contributed to their superior performance, reflected in a mean of 3.07. Additionally, female students were noted to have a better sense of humor when learning business studies, which positively influenced their performance, with an average score of 3.03.

The respondents also indicated significant differences in other areas. Male students were found to have a greater aversion to the teaching and learning of Business Studies than their female counterparts, contributing to their lower academic performance, with a mean of 2.66. Furthermore, respondents felt that gender did not significantly affect students' performance in Business Studies, with a mean of 2.46. Additionally, the responses indicated a belief that male students demonstrated superior mastery of Business Studies compared to female students, leading to their exceptional performance (mean = 3.19). On the other hand, female students were also viewed as having a solid understanding of Business Studies, potentially leading to better performance than their male counterparts (mean = 2.92).

The standard deviations for the seven items ranged from 0.74 to 1.17, suggesting that the responses were closely clustered around their average scores with limited variability. The computed weighted average mean for the construct was 2.91, with a standard deviation of 0.92. These results indicate that the respondents firmly acknowledged the influence of students' gender on their academic performance in Business Studies. Overall, the findings suggest that students' gender significantly impacts their academic performance in Business Studies, with a mean of 2.91 and a standard deviation of 0.92.

Test of Hypotheses

$H_0$1: There is no significant difference between the mean perception scores of teachers and learner regarding the influence of teachers' years of teaching experience on secondary school students' academic performance in Business Studies.

Table 3: Independent Samples t-test of mean perception of teacher and learner on teachers' years of experience and students' academic performance

Group Status	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	DF	P-value	Decision
Teachers	20	3.23	0.38				
				2.23	385	0.026	**$H_0$3**
Students	367	3.06	0.29				**Rejected**

Source: Field Survey 2024 P<0.05

Table 3 shows that 20 respondents, 5.2%, were business studies teachers, while 367 respondents, or 94.8%, were business studies students. The analysis reveals a weighted average mean of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 0.85, indicating that respondents highly rated the influence of teachers' years of teaching experience on secondary students' academic performance in business studies.

The results further demonstrate a significant difference in the mean perception scores of teachers and students regarding the impact of teachers' years of teaching experience on student performance in business studies. The t-test results ($t_{(385)} = 2.23$, $p < 0.05$) support this difference. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, which suggested no significant difference between the mean perceptions of teachers and students. This indicates that teachers and students in business studies have differing views on how teachers' years of experience affect student academic performance, with a mean difference of 17.

$H_0$2: There is no significant difference between the mean perception of male and female respondents regarding the influence of students' gender on secondary school students' academic performance in Business studies.

Table 4: Independent Samples t-test of mean perception of students' gender influence on academic performance

Group Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-cal	DF	P-value	Decision
Male	145	2.87	0.41				**$H_0$4**
				1.80	385	0.073	
Female	242	2.94	0.32				**Not Rejected**

Source: Field Survey 2024 P>0.05

Table 4 indicates that 145 respondents, or 37.5%, were male, while 242 respondents, or 62.5%, were female business studies students. The analysis reveals a computed weighted average mean of 2.91 and a standard deviation of 0.92, suggesting that the respondents significantly acknowledged the influence of students' gender on secondary students' academic achievement in business studies.

The table further shows no significant difference in the mean perception ratings of male and female respondents regarding the influence of students' gender on their academic performance in business studies. The t-test results ($t_{(385)} = 1.80$, $p > 0.05$) indicate that the null hypothesis, which posited no significant difference in the mean perception scores of male and female respondents, was not rejected. This suggests that both male and female respondents share a similar perspective on the impact of student gender on the academic performance of secondary school students in business studies.

Discussion on findings

The analysis of Research Question 1, as delineated in Table 1, presents compelling evidence that the respondents acknowledged the pivotal role of teachers' professional tenure in shaping students' scholastic outcomes. The consensus among the respondents affirms that the duration of a teacher's career in the classroom significantly correlates with how students perform academically, particularly in the context of Business Studies. This insight reverberates with the findings of Bolarinwa and Kolawole (2020), whose empirical investigation into public secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria, revealed a substantive link between educators' teaching experience and their academic qualifications on one hand, and student achievement on the other. Their study underscores the argument that seasoned educators, owing to their accumulated pedagogical strategies, classroom management techniques, and deep subject matter understanding, are better equipped to cater to diverse student needs and learning styles. These attributes, honed over years of teaching, likely contribute to more effective instruction and, consequently, superior student performance.

In further resonance with these findings, Ewetan (2015) delved into the subject-specific dynamics of teaching experience, particularly within the realms of Mathematics and English, core academic subjects that demand not just knowledge, but the ability to translate abstract concepts into accessible learning experiences. Ewetan's conclusions mirror the current study's thematic concentration on Business Studies, implying that the beneficial effects of teaching experience are not confined to traditionally "technical" subjects but extend broadly across disciplines, including the commercially inclined curriculum of Business Studies. This convergence of studies collectively illustrates a broader educational truism: that teacher efficacy, nurtured through years of active engagement with learners, holds a profound influence over students' intellectual growth and academic trajectories. Moreover, this data encourages a critical reflection on educational policy and practice. In particular, it suggests a need for school leadership and policymakers to prioritize teacher retention, professional development, and mentorship programs. By fostering an environment where novice teachers can learn from the wealth of experience held by their senior colleagues, educational institutions can create a sustainable cycle of instructional excellence. Ensuring that experienced educators are recognized, retained, and strategically deployed could be a vital mechanism for elevating academic performance system wide.

Table 2, the analysis uncovers another layer of complexity in student performance outcomes, that of gender. The data, particularly from respondents in Ogbomoso, Oyo State,

demonstrates that gender plays a noticeable role in shaping students' academic success in Business Studies. With a relatively high mean score (mean = 2.91, SD = 0.92), this insight suggests that there are gender-based disparities in how students engage with and excel in this subject. This discovery finds corroboration in the scholarly work of Akweya, Twoli, and Waweru (2015), who identified that female students tend to be underrepresented and underperform in physics compared to their male counterparts. Although the subject differs, the parallel in performance patterns underscores a persistent issue across various disciplines. The reasons behind such gendered discrepancies are multifaceted. Akweya et al. point to student attitudes, intrinsic abilities, and the attributes of their teachers as critical determinants of academic engagement and success, especially among female learners. Transposing these variables into the context of Business Studies, it is plausible that similar influences are at play. Gender stereotypes, societal expectations, and classroom dynamics may unconsciously favor one gender over another, shaping how students perceive their abilities and their eventual academic outcomes. Additionally, the gender of the teacher, their level of encouragement, and the inclusiveness of their teaching practices may also influence how male and female students relate to subjects like Business Studies.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, which underscore the influence of teachers' years of experience and students' gender on academic performance in Business Studies, as perceived by both teachers and students. It was concluded that teachers' years of experience and students' gender have a positive influence on the academic performance of students in Business Studies. This indicates a strong consensus on the relevance of these factors in shaping educational outcomes. This implication points to the need for targeted strategies that enhance teacher development and address subtle, systemic factors linked to gender, all while ensuring that student and teacher perspectives inform evidence-based educational planning and policy.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

1. School administrators should implement structured mentorship programs where less experienced teachers are paired with seasoned educators. This will facilitate the transfer of effective teaching strategies and classroom management skills, ultimately enhancing student performance.
2. Teachers should adopt inclusive teaching strategies that actively engage both male and female students in Business Studies, which ensures equal participation, encouragement, and representation in class activities and learning materials.

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