



Accounting Teachers' Demographic Factors and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis

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ABSTRACT

The study adopted Accounting Teachers 'Demographic Factor and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, two objectives, two researcher questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The researcher adopted a correlational research design with a population of 96 accounting teachers from thirty-eight (38) public secondary schools in Port Harcourt metropolis. The researcher adopted a census sampling since the population is of a manageable size and could be used as the sample. The researcher adopted an instrument titled "Accounting Teachers Demographic Factor and Students Academic Performance (ATDFPSAPQ) Questionnaire". The instrument was validated by three experts, two in Business Education and one from measurement and evaluation on, all in faculty of Education. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha and reliability index of 0.78 was obtained. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient formula. The results of the study showed that there is a moderate and positive relationship between age and qualification as a factor in accounting teachers' effectiveness and secondary schools students' academic performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that ministry of education should recruit qualified and experienced accounting teachers in order to improve teachers academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Background to the Study

Education is the greatest investment man can make which has greatest unlimited yields. It is indispensable to man because, it interweaves in every development of man's life, from the cradle to death. Education helps man to solve his various problems which affect the political, social and economic development of a person. The wealth of a nation depends to a large extent on the education of her citizens. Countries like Britain, America, the Scandinavians and a few more others, are said to be economically developed due to their distinctive systems and levels of educational achievement. It is for this single reason that education tops the list of monetary allocations in state and federal budgets in some countries. This is such a costly venture that honesty demands the full support of all and sundry.

Benson (2018) opined that, education is however attained in a two-way interaction between the teacher and the student in an environment which could be considered as the super structure. Benson buttressed that, interaction entails the transmission of knowledge which is believed to be acquired through the performances demonstrated by the student. However, prior to such tests or examinations to assess the knowledge acquired by students, teachers have their sentiments, opinions and perceptions on the expected capacity and ability of students in terms of knowledge/skills acquired and dexterity of such students. All too often, a student's lack of success is blamed on his or her background, and the parent's educational level. Low parent involvement is also used as an excuse for student failure. Many factors can directly or indirectly affect the teaching process with regard to student achievement. Socioeconomic conditions, student behaviors, attendance, and demographics are just a few of those factors related to student academic performance. To some as opined by James (2017) it could be teacher's age, experience, gender and educational qualification etc.

Academic performance is the extent to which a student, teachers or institution has achieved their short or long term educational goals (Wikipedia). According to Hoyle, (2012) as cited in Agozie (2020), academic performance refers to what the student has learned or what skill the

student has learned and is usually measured through assessment like standardized test performance. Agozie added that, academic performance, which is measured by the examination results is one of the major goals of school. He further argued that schools are established with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills. In line with the above assertion, Jude (2018) opined that academic performance can be poor or high. Jude further buttressed that there are factors responsible for poor academic performance which are internal such as learning disability that can be an obstacle to achievement of certain academic level

Academic performance of students is a key feature in education. It is considered to be the centre around which the whole education system revolves. Kingsley (2016) posited that the academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution. Singh, Malik and Singh (2016) contend that academic performances of students have a direct impact on the socio-economic development of a country.

Similarly, Bestman (2017), asserted that students' academic performance serves as bedrock for knowledge acquisition and the development of skills. Additionally, Bestman emphasized that the top priority of all teachers is academic performance of students. Academic performance in other words is the knowledge gained which is assessed by marks by a teacher or educational goals set by students and teachers to be attained over a specific period of time. These goals are measured by using continuous assessment or examination results.

Factors contributing to improvement in students' academic performance have received much attention from educators and researchers. These researchers found several factors leading to improvement in the academic performance of students. Ali (2013) found daily study hours, social economic status of parent/guardians and age as factors that significantly affect academic performance of students. Also, Narad and Abdullah (2016) found that economic status of parents, their academic background and encouragement as factors that influence academic performance. Proper guidance from parents and teachers, communication skill, and learning facilities have also been found as a significant determinant of students' academic performance. The findings from the previous studies are a combination of home, school, students and teacher factors as well as environmental, personal, social, psychological and economic factors (Khan, Iqbal & Tasneem, 2015). These findings however differ among countries, academic levels and the subjects involved.

The current study focuses on Accounting teachers' background as instructional effectiveness factor in academic performance of senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Kenneth (2016) identified Accounting teachers' background, such as gender, age, teaching experience and academic qualifications, instructional effectiveness factor which may enhance academic performance of students in secondary schools. However, Kenneth explained that, teachers have been known to have tremendous influence on students' academic performance and teachers also play an important role in educational achievement because the teachers are ultimately responsible for translating educational policies and principles into action based on practice during interaction with the students. Furthermore, the author added that both teaching and learning depend on teachers: no wonder an effective teacher has been conceptualized as one who produces desired results in the course of his/her duty as a teacher.

Gender which is one of the factors of accounting teacher' background of instructional effectiveness in academic performance of students is referred to as socially constructed difference between male and female teachers (Choice 2014). The author noted that teachers gender has significant relationship with students' academic performance.

Adesina (2015) refers to gender as a wide range of biological, behavioural, physical and mental characteristics regarding to and differentiating the female and male population. Adesina added that gender is an aspect concerning the responsibilities, roles, opportunities, constraints and needs of male and female in all aspects of social context. Therefore, gender, is a critical issue, which has attracted the attention of teachers especially due to fact that gender equality is a focus in all sectors of life. David (2016) posited that a teacher gender influences how students learn. David added that gender matters when it comes to learning. Furthermore, that gender influences attitudes. Study carried out by Dee (2012) showed that in a class taught by female teacher, boys were more likely to be seen as disruptive. Girls were less likely to be considered inattentive or disorderly. And in a class taught by a male teacher, girls were more likely to say the subject was not useful for their future. They were less likely to look forward to the class or to ask questions. On the contrary, Kelvin (2016), asserted that, students success cannot be narrowed to the gender of the teachers only but age, experience academic qualification of the teacher, good textbooks, and modern equipment all influences students academic

performance.

Divine in John (2015), envisaged that, many positive and negative view has been put forward regarding age and teaching. Also, that it is a general thought that as age advanced and designation is promoted, teachers loose the zeal to teach. Another thought was that age and experience go hand in hand. Furthermore, John buttressed that Age is an asset, because as the age advanced, the teacher becomes experienced and know where to tap the potential of the students and how to make the students understand his worth.

In line with the above assertion, Adebajo (2017) posited that some believe that the teacher's enthusiasm deteriorated as the age advanced which may be due to the boredom of teaching same content over several years and added responsibilities on academic, administrative and research aspects.

Studies have shown that teacher's age and teaching experience has significant impact on teacher effectiveness. Zayer and Aslihan (2012) found older teachers of age 41 years old and above more effective in teaching and good in classroom management skills than younger teachers in high school. This view is supported by Aloka and Bajuwoye (2013) who found that younger teachers often end up making more risky decisions, did not analyze the context carefully when dealing with student disciplinary problems due to the immaturity compared to the older teachers. Similarly, Nyagah and Gathumbi (2017) found that older teachers were more likely to increase students learning compared to the middle age and younger teachers.

On the other hand, Sivasakthi (2012) found that younger teacher of age 30 years old and below, middle age teachers of between 30 to 40 years old and older teacher of above 40 years old do not differ significantly in their instructional effectiveness which shows that age, regardless of young mature or older teachers does not make any difference to teacher instructional effective. Meanwhile, Smith (2014) found that middle age teachers were more effective in communication, classroom organization and competence. In addition to the above postulation, Aluphohai (2015) found that middle-aged teachers of between the age of 36 to 48 years old were more effective to produce higher students score than younger and older teachers.

Teachers experience which is also one of the factor of accounting teachers instructional effectiveness in academic performance of students has the higher level of self-efficacies (teachers) to engage students and manage the classrooms (Putman,2015). Putman added that teaching strategies experience can affect teacher effectiveness in engaging students and teaching strategies as they become motivated due to many years in the service. Teaching experience is positively associated with student achievement gains throughout a teacher's career. Gains in teachers effectiveness associated with experience are most steep in teachers' initial years, but continue to be important as teachers reach the second and often third, decades of their careers (Luke, 2016).

The author further opined that as teachers gain experience their students not only learn more, as measured by standardized tests, they are also more likely to do better on other measures of success. supporting the above assertion, Pius(2016) envisaged that teachers effectiveness increases at a greater rate when they teach in a supportive and collegial working atmosphere and when they accumulate experience in the same grade level, subject or district. The author further buttressed that, experienced teachers' support greater students . However, Princess (2017), asserted that, teachers experience is another teacher quality variable that may also influence students learning and is indirectly related to issues of certification. Princess maintained that, a teacher with long years in teaching would draw home his/her point with various examples to comprehend the teacher better. In other words, a teacher could be motivated through his experience to attain a high level of teaching competence (that is the teacher is able to achieve the educational goal by using appropriate teaching method and contexts).

Teachers' academic qualification according to Oxford (2016) is a particular skill or type of experience or knowledge an individual possesses to make him/her suitable to teach. It could therefore, mean all the skills a teacher required to teach effectively. Such skills include formal education, experience, subject matter knowledge, pedagogy studies, and duration of training, certification/licensing and professional development. Paul (2016) noted that teachers' academic qualification is one of the critical factors that drive students' academic performance. In same view, Kofi (2017) observed that one of the most important factors in the teaching process is qualification of the teachers. Kofi maintained that teachers' qualification can go a long way to bring about students higher academic achievement. Micah (2016) opined that, teachers' academic qualifications, therefore, might not only be the certificate a teacher is holding as erroneously conceived by some people. Teachers' academic

qualifications are more than just holding a certificate of any institution. The author added that, teachers' qualifications have a serious implication on students' academic achievement and performance. Mathew (2014) sees teachers' academic qualification as the level of attainment of the needed knowledge and skills by the teacher in order to aid the students acquire necessary skills and knowledge. Mathew furthermore, buttressed that the quality of student's academic performance in a school is conditioned with the qualification of the teacher. Moreover, with increasing demands for accountability in line with performance standards and with growing demand for evidence-base policy making, students achievement/performance are considered an accurate measure of effectiveness and has become a basis of a value added teacher assessment systems (Braun, in Timothy, 2016). However, Kelvin (2015) maintained that, in order to make any school system a better performance place, teachers' background (such as gender, age, experience and academic qualification) and commitment becomes paramount as they are the dynamics of change for the society in which they operate.

Statement of the Problem

The issues of declining academic performance of students in Nigerian secondary schools have generated much interest among stakeholders in the education sector in Rivers State. The quality of education and academic performance of secondary school students depend on the teachers as reflected in the discharge of their duties. Overtime students' academic performance in internal and external examinations has been used to determine the effectiveness of teacher (Ajao, in Agharuwhe, 2013), This was buttressed by Ogunsaju in Agharuwhe(2013) that the academic standard of secondary school students in all Nigerian educational institutions has fallen considerably below societal expectations.

Teachers are known to have important influence on students' academic performance and teachers also play a vital role in educational achievement because the teacher is ultimately responsible for translating educational policies and principles in actions based on practice during interaction with the students. Smith (2015) added that teachers' ability to impart knowledge contributes significantly to students' academic performance in secondary schools. However, the poor academic performance of students in Nigeria has been linked to poor teacher performance in terms of accomplishing the teaching task, negative attitude to work, poor teaching habits, lack of experienced teachers and poor academic qualifications, Aloka and Bajuwoye (2013). It has also been observed that conditions that would make for effective teaching such as resources available to teachers, general conditions of infrastructure as well as instructional material in public secondary schools in Nigeria are poor. Churchill, (2016). Alufohai (2015) opined that teachers' background such as gender, age, teaching experience and teachers' academic qualification have a level of impact on teacher instructional effectiveness and students' academic performance. It is on this premise that the researcher deemed it necessary to investigate Accounting teachers' background as instructional effectiveness factor in academic performance of students in secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to Accounting Teachers' Demographic Factors and Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine how gender as a demographic factor relate to accounting Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis,
2. Determine how age as a demographic factor relate to accounting Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis,

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. How does gender as a demographic factor relate to Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and students' academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis?
2. How does age as a demographic factor relate to Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and students' academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between gender as a demographic factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and students' academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis?
2. There is no significant relationship between age as a demographic factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and students' academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis?

Methodology

The researcher adopted the correctional research design and the study was carried out in Port Harcourt metropolis, Port Harcourt metropolis comprises Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The population of study consisted of 96 Accounting teachers from thirty-eight (38) public secondary schools in Port Harcourt metropolis in Rivers State. The researcher adopted a census sampling as the entire population was used for the study.

The instrument used for the data was a self-structured questionnaire developed by the researcher and titled "Accounting Teachers' Demographic Factors and Students' Academic Performance (ATDFASAPQ) Questionnaire". The instrument consisted of forty (40) items and was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with a numerical value of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity and three-experts validated it. Two from the Department of Business Education and one from Measurement and Evaluation, in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University.

Test re-test method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach alpha to realize a reliability coefficient of 0.78. The 96 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondent and 93 copies were retrieved which signifies 95% retrieval. The data collected were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient (PPMCC) formula.

The research questions were answered based on the value and direction of the correlation co-efficient (either positive and high positive or negative and high, negative and low or moderate).

The hypothesis were tested to show significant relationship at 0.05 level of significance with 98% degree of freedom. It was further tested by transforming the co-efficient of correlation (r) to t in order to establish the significance or otherwise the r value.

Results

Research Question 1: How does gender as a factor Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness relate to secondary school students' academic performance?

Relationship between Gender as a Factor in Accounting Teachers' Instructional Effectiveness and Secondary School Students' Academic Performance.

| Variables | N | ΣY | ΣX^2 | ΣXY | t | Remarks |
|--------------------------|----|------------|--------------|-------------|------|----------------------|
| Gender (x) | 93 | 249.70 | 687.67 | 728.85 | 0.77 | |
| Academic Performance (Y) | 93 | 266.60 | 780.98 | | | Moderate Positive |

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.1 shows the relationship between gender as a factor in accounting teacher instructional effectiveness and secondary school students' academic performance. It would be observed from die table that while covariance (ΣXY) of gender as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and secondary school students' academic performance was 728.85, the coefficient of correlation (relationship) was 0.77.

This value is moderate and positive. Therefore, the relationship between gender as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and

secondary" school students' academic performance is moderate and positive.

Research Question 2: How does age as a Factor in Accounting teachers instructional effectiveness relate to secondary" school students' academic performance?

Relationship between Age as a factor in Accounting Teachers' Instructional Effectiveness and Secondary School Students' Academic Performance.

| Variables | N | EX | EX ² | EXY | T | Remarks |
|--------------------------|----|--------|-----------------|--------|------|------------------|
| EY | | | EY ² | | | |
| Age (x) | 93 | 251.99 | 699.92 | 736.07 | 0.81 | High Positive |
| Academic Performance (Y) | 93 | 266.60 | 780.98 | | | |

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.2 displays the correlation analysis between age as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and secondary school students' academic performance represented by X and Y respectively. With equal number of respondents (N=93), the sums of respective mean responses (EX, EY) were 251.99 and 266.60. The squares of sums (EX², EY²) were 699.92 and 780.98 while the sum of covariance of mean scores was 736.07. The analysis revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.81, which is high and positive. This implies that the relationship between age as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and secondary school students' academic performance is high and positive.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between gender as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and secondary school students' academic performance.

Correlation Analysis of Relationship between Gender as a Factor in Accounting Teachers' Instructional Effectiveness and Secondary School Students' Academic Performance.

| Variables | N | EX | EX ² | EXY | r | df | t-calt-crit |
|--------------------------|----|-----------------|-----------------|-------|------|----|------------------------------|
| Decision | EY | EY ² | | | | | |
| Gender (x) | 93 | 249.70 | 687.67 | | | | |
| Academic Performance (Y) | 93 | 266.60 | 780.98 | 28.85 | 0.77 | 91 | 0.05 11.48 1.98 Reject HO |

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.6 revealed that the sum and sum of squares for age as a factor in Accounting teachers' institutional effectiveness are 251.99 and 699.92 while that of secondary school students' academic performance are 266.60 and 780.98 respectively. The sum of product of scores on the two variables representing (x) and (r) is 736.07. The correlation coefficient is 0.81 which is greater than the critical value of t (1.98) at 91 degree of freedom under 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between age as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and secondary school students' academic performance is rejected. This implies that there is a positive relationship between age as a factor in accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and secondary' school students' academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings in this study were done according to each research questions posed in chapter one:

Gender as a Factor in Accounting Teachers' Instructional Effectiveness Relates to Secondary Schools Students' Academic Performance

Result from table 4.1 revealed the relationship between gender as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and secondary school students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The findings of the study revealed that gender as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness has a moderate and positive relationship with secondary school students' academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis. The findings from the study is in corroboration with the view of Peter (2014) whose finding reveal that there is significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' academic performance. Regan (2014) opined that women tend to perform better in teaching than their male counterparts.

Supporting the assertion of Regan (2014), Moganzu (2015) opined that female teachers performed significantly better than students taught by male teachers in Accounting. Also, Benjamin (2015) postulated that students taught by female teachers achieved more than those taught by male teachers. In the study of Bodhe (2015) found that students do not find gender of the teacher worth discrimination but noted that a well-dressed, clean and neat teacher produces good first impression, very well draws the attention of the students and facilitate the further process of learning and academic performance. John (2016), asserted that the relationship between gender and students' academic performance has been one of the most interesting aspects for research in the recent past. The author maintained that the impact of genders on teachers' effectiveness and academic performance of students has been reported with mixed results. John added that male and female teachers may behave differently in the classroom and students may react differently to their teachers' behaviours. However, John buttressed that what appear to be gender differences might, be different teaching style Waseka et al (2016) found that gender difference between male and female teachers was statistically significant determinants of students' academic performance. Also, that female teachers' had the capacity to perform in core functions than male teachers since majority of students preferred being taught by female teachers.

Similarly, Lee et al (2017) found that female teachers had high level of achievement in terms of teaching style, and this had considerable influence on female and male students' academic performance. In the view of Chima (2018) showed that female teachers' performance could be measured in terms of their dedications and longer stay in the profession than their male colleagues. Supporting the view of Chima (2018), Shxlpa and Usha (2018) revealed that many students preferred ladies as teacher due to their sincerity, hardwork, efforts taken to preparing lectures, politeness and high pitch, audible voice quality'. Feldman (2018) also opined that students are little biased to female teachers, which may be related to variety of factors like empathic listening, better understanding and view of concern shown by the students.

Contran, to the above assertion by the above authors, Apollonian (2016) affirmed that teachers gender characteristics may not influence students' academic performance. Furthermore, William (2017) in his own study', noted that male teachers performed better than female teachers in areas of asserting authority' and using meaningful voice tones during teaching.

Age as a Factor in Accounting Teachers' Instructional Effectiveness Relates to Secondary Schools Students' Academic Performance

The findings of this study in hypothesis two revealed that age has significant high positive relationship with secondary school students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis. The findings of this study is in line with the finding of David (2014) who found that there is a general proposition which postulate that younger Accounting teachers' in their forties exhibit better teaching capabilities than the older staff since individuals tend to gradually disengaged from active teaching with age. It may as well be that older teachers will be more proactive, vigorous and more effective than younger ones, due to vitality and innovativeness associated with being young. This was supported by Matthew (2014) who submitted that difference in age could be a potential factor for teaching performance. Matthew maintained that age is one of the important variables that affects teaching and learning in a classroom. The author affirmed that age can influence academic performance of students. Sivasathi and Mtlumanickam (2012) observed that younger teachers of age 30 years old and below, mature or middle age teachers of between 30 to 40 years old and older teachers of above 40 years did not differ significantly in their teacher effectiveness which indicates that age, regardless of young, mature or older teachers does not make any difference to teacher effectiveness and academic performance of students in senior secondary schools. Meanwhile Marlin and Smith (2014) found that middle age teachers were more effective in communication, classroom organization and that they are competent.

In view of Alufohai et al (2015) observed that middle aged teacher of between the ages of 36 to 48 years older were more effective to produce higher students' academic performance than younger and older teachers. Nyagah and Gathumhi (2017), contend that older teachers were more likely to enhance students' academic performance compared to their middle age and younger teachers. Shilpa et al (2018), opined that as age advances the teacher becomes experienced and knows where to tap the potential of the students and how to make the students understand their worth. Gift (2017), summarized that teachers' age and job performance is a societal concern because the teachers play a critical role in shaping the lives of learners and enhance their academic performance as they perform various core functions assigned; interact with the students more regularly. However the study shows that there is a high positive relationship between age as a factor in Accounting teachers' instructional effectiveness and secondary school students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that teachers' gender and age significantly influence their instructional effectiveness and academic performance of secondary school students. Hence, it was concluded that accounting teachers' background such as gender and age, were found to have a high and moderate positive relationship with secondary school students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Recommendations

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

1. Regular and continuous professional development is paramount to developing and retaining high quality accounting teachers. The school authorities should ensure that all accounting teachers are giving the opportunity to enhance their classroom instruction by receiving ongoing training aimed at professional growth (qualification) and better students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis.
2. Deployment of accounting teachers' into effective teaching leading to increase of secondary school students' academic performance should be based on age.

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