



Problems of Teaching and Learning of Practical Agriculture: A Case Study of Junior Secondary Schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the problems of teaching and learning of practical agriculture in junior secondary schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area of Anambra State. The study was guided by five (5) research questions. The study adopted descriptive research design. The sample of this study consists of 225 Students and 25 Teachers which is in total 250. The sample was gotten from five schools out of nine government schools in Ekwusigo L.G.A using Simple random Sampling technique. A 25 item, modified 4-point rating scale constructed by the researcher was used to collect data for answering the five research questions. The instrument was validated by three Specialists in measurement and evaluation. Mean score and standard deviation were used to answer the research question. A grand mean of 2.50 and above was used to indicate "Agree" whereas below 2.50 indicates "Disagree". The grand mean scores of all data collected ranges from 1.84 to 2.31. It was found, among others, that unqualified teachers teaching Practical Agriculture is a problem of teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture, short time allotted for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture is not adequate for the Subject, over population of Students is a problem of teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture, poorly equipped laboratory and non-availability of farmland makes it difficult and ineffective for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture. The research recommended, among others, that government should provide sufficient instructional materials for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture, Students and their Parents should be made to know and understand the careers in Agriculture so as to encourage the teaching and learning of the subject, school authorities should set aside funds purposely for the teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture in their schools.

Keywords: Practical Agriculture; Agricultural Education; Teaching and Learning; Junior Secondary Schools; Agricultural Science Teachers; Instructional Materials; School Facilities; Ekwusigo Local Government Area; Anambra State.

1. Introduction

Agriculture plays an important role in the development of many developing Countries; hence, there is a need to focus on sustainability and increased agricultural productivity (Viana et al., 2022). More than four-fifths of the inhabitants of some Countries support themselves by farming (Onwumere et al., 2016). Agriculture is the oldest industry known to mankind (Kumar & Jatav, 2025). It is the basic source of food and rawmaterials for industries. Justifiably, it can be referred to as the World's primary Industry.

Nigeria is an agricultural country before and after the discovery of petroleum. It is a major sector of Nigeria economy, providing employment for about 70% of the population (Akpan, 2012). Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) Policy was introduced in 1976 in order to increase food production. Schools were therefore made to establish mess farms to feed the Students. However, most Agriculture production in the Country in subsistence and small scaled with low yields. Even medium and large scale farmers use the common tools like hoe, axe, cutlass, etc since most farmers cannot afford mechanization aside the over reliance on rainfall instead of irrigation.

Jones and Van den Heever (2022) noted that agriculture is perhaps the greatest single innovation that made it possible for man to live in settled community which grew gradually in complexity from families through village and Cities to modern nations. They also noted that the transformation agriculture from nomadic life was made possible by modern agriculture. To this effect importance of agriculture in a developing nation such as ours, cannot be over-emphasized. As a source of food supply, foreign exchange earners and employment of labour, agriculture should receive a priority of consideration towards the maintenance of a healthy economy.

Agricultural education therefore is imperative and should be taken more seriously so that it will wipe away ignorance with regards to practical agriculture and developed interest toward farming. In line with this thought, Jung (2023) stated that food supply is generally inadequate in quantity and quality in the Nigeria. According to him, there is at present a significant increase in the country's population. Thus with too many mouths to feed and too little land to farm, Nigeria has resorted to importing a lot of her Food with her foreign exchange earnings. It therefore, become pertinent at this juncture to tate that lack of property agricultural, education in our schools and lack of properly alified agricultural teachers has resulted to reduced interest and poor performance of dents in agriculture.

The systemic decline in agricultural education quality stems from interconnected teacher- and student-level challenges. Structurally, poor remuneration, irregular salary payments, a lack of performance incentives, and the exclusion of educators from administrative decision-making severely depress teacher morale and classroom effectiveness (Babalola & Ezenwa, 2010; Mustafa et al., 2015). This instructional deficit is exacerbated by a chronic shortage of qualified personnel, outdated syllabi detached from societal needs, and severe infrastructure deficits, including a lack of standard textbooks, modern equipment, and consistent school funding (Aina, 2020; Ndem & David, 2021). Consequently, poor instructional supervision and unfavorable student socio-economic backgrounds continue to hinder academic achievement (Akanbi, 2017).

Furthermore, pedagogical missteps actively alienate students from the discipline. Rather than fostering engagement, many educators utilize the school farm as a punitive zone for misconduct, stigmatizing agricultural science as a low-status pursuit meant only for low-achieving students (Nwakuba et al., 2023). As a result, students artificially prioritize abstract sciences like Physics and Chemistry over agriculture, severely limiting their interest and aptitude for practical fieldwork (Olorunfemi et al., 2020).

Finally, institutional and socio-economic barriers prevent secondary agriculture education from translating into entrepreneurial success. Issues such as rigid land tenure systems, inadequate startup finance, and immature production procedures discourage youth from entering full-time farming, leaving civil service as the sole viable employment pathway (Fawole & Olajide, 2022). To counter these shortcomings and align student interest with national food security goals, stakeholders must prioritize specialized agricultural training institutions, modernize practical farming models, and establish robust funding frameworks to cultivate agriculture as a viable economic career path (Mgbenka et al., 2016; Onwuka, 2024).

1.1 Statement of Problem

Agricultural science today is regarded as one of the most important aspects of human life. It has greatly increased man's knowledge of his environment together with basic needs of food, shelter and clothing. Nigeria being a developing country and in a great need to meet the food demand of her population requires effective and purposeful Agricultural Education in her schools. Presently, performances of students do not predict the hope of fulfilling our agricultural expectation as regards meeting the food need of the population through schools in spite of the effort being made by government to improve standard of teaching agricultural science in our secondary schools. It then became pertinent to look inwardly for a better way of having a solid base for effective agricultural education in secondary schools. This study uses the junior section of the secondary school system to discover the problems facing teachers and students towards effective teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture. The identification of these problems for lasting agriculture programme for secondary schools in turn meeting the national objective in food production is the subjects of this research.

1.2 Scope of the Study

This study covers the problems of teaching and learning by teachers and students of Practical Agricultural science in Junior Secondary Schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area of Anambra State.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to find out the problems of teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture using Junior Secondary Schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area of Anambra State as a case study. The specific objectives are;

- a. To find out if there are professional teachers teaching Practical Agriculture in Ekwusigo Local Government Area.
- b. To investigate if the teacher's teaching method is a factor in teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture.
- c. To find out if there are adequate facilities for the teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture.
- d. To find out if there are enough farmland available for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture.
- e. To investigate if the time allotted for the teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture is enough.
- f. To identify the extent to which fund is available in the school for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture.
- g. To find out if there are availability of teaching aids and instructional materials in the schools.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be of immense benefit to science teachers and students. This study will be significant to a number of Agricultural science teachers who will become aware of problems of teaching agricultural science, and guide them in making adjustment in their methods and techniques of teaching agriculture science. The teachers and students will have a true concept of, and develop positive attitude towards agriculture science. The Government, the researcher believes will come to realize the importance of agricultural development of the nation. The need to provide the school with facilities relevant to the learning and teaching modern agriculture practices as secondary school level is very essential. It will also help in the acceptance new innovations in present day agriculture. This information may be helpful in the evaluation of teaching and learning of Agriculture thus helping in putting in place the strategies aimed at improving teaching and learning of Agriculture in schools. Findings may be of value to teaching learning strategies and teaching learning resources in implementation of agriculture curriculum. Finally, it will be helpful to farmer and creates in them the awareness of being part the economy and contributing measures towards its development.

1.5 Research Questions

Below are the research questions that guide the study:

- a) To what extent are qualified teachers available for the teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture?
- b) How adequate is time in the school time table for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture?
- c) How does population explosion constitute a factor in the teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture?
- d) To what extent are there equipped laboratory for effective teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture?
- e) How adequate is farmland available in Schools for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture?

2. Literature Review

Practical Agriculture is one of the core vocational curricular subjects taught at both junior and senior secondary schools in Nigeria. Egbule (2004) defines it as a process of training learners in the process of Agricultural productivity as well as the techniques for teaching of agriculture. Practical Agriculture education as a broad multidisciplinary field deals with the selection, breeding and management of crops and domestic animals for economic production. It is a subject taught in secondary schools as a means for self-reliance and preparation for further studies. Practical Agriculture is therefore designed for inculcation of the necessary skills for the practice of agriculture for effective citizenship and contribution to food security for national sustainability. That is why the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in the Blueprint for Family Support Programme (1994) outlines the seven major objectives of teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture to reflect the:

- a. Ability to stimulate students' interest in agriculture.
- b. Ability of students in acquiring basic knowledge of agriculture.
- c. Ability to develop basic agricultural skills in students.
- d. Students' ability to integrate knowledge with skills in agriculture.
- e. Ability to expose students to opportunities in the field of agriculture.
- f. Ability to prepare students for further studies in agriculture.
- g. Ability to prepare students for occupations in Agriculture.

Attainment of the above objectives depends on teachers' pedagogical approaches. Teachers in this case are practical Agriculture teachers.

Practical Agriculture teachers are trained and groomed from teacher preparation institutions for quality impact of agricultural skills, knowledge attitudes and values for self reliance, promotion of agriculture and food security in their future lives. It is therefore the duty of this group of teachers to stimulate and sustain students' interest in agriculture, enable students acquire basic knowledge and practical skills in agriculture, enable students integrate knowledge with skills in Agriculture, prepare and expose students for occupation. Attainment of the goals and objectives of practical Agriculture depends on effectiveness of teaching and learning going on.

2.1 Teaching and Learning of Practical Agriculture in Secondary Schools

The education axiom that when a learner has not learnt, then the teacher has not taught is true. This directly relates to the concepts of teaching and learning as a process of inculcating the right values, attitudes, knowledge, modern life, long life skill acquisition necessary to make individuals benefit from the society as well as contribute meaningfully to the same society. Waliki and Usman (2009) see teaching as a systematic, rational and an organized process of transmitting knowledge, skills and so on in accordance with professional principles. The implication is that practical Agriculture teachers who do not perform the act in accordance with the principles of teaching are therefore not teachers but cheats. Naturally, the outcome of teaching is learning. Learning

occurs only where there is relatively positive permanent change in an individual behaviour. Modebelu and Duvie (2012) recommend four innovative teaching methods that could enhance quality and effective teaching and learning of subjects/courses. These could be adopted and applied by Agriculture Science teachers.

These methods are:

- 1) Information transformation and reception method.
- 2) Cognitive strategies development method.
- 3) Attitudes development method.
- 4) Cognitive and motor skills development method

Combination of these modern methods helps to achieve the required goal. Other relevant methods include: assignment, demonstration, project, field-trip, experimental and so on.

Effective application of these teaching methods, skills or strategy depends greatly on the teacher's ability to plan the lesson ahead. Ihebereme (2010) posits that quality teaching and learning is a sine qua non to prudent adherence to quality indicators in the pedagogical approaches. Babalola (2011) reports of some contemporary soft skills that are imperative in teachers' effectiveness in today's global world. He argues that teachers should not only be trained to teach but to become polyvalent by mastering hard and soft skills that make teachers functional in a rapidly changing multicultural environment. The implication is that teachers are no longer trained for students' certification alone but for effective inculcation of learning to learn skills. Students, in addition to learning concepts and theme, must have deep understanding and application of the learning skills. This is also expected in the teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture in Nigerian secondary schools. Obanya (2010) recommends teaching and learning that revolve around the principles of transformational pedagogy. Egbule (2004) emphasizes that every agricultural teacher must be effective, liberally educated, current in subject matter and its pedagogy, aware of what is expected of teachers and schools, skillful and conscientious in planning, preparing for, carrying out instruction, respectful towards students, concerned about their welfare, actively involved in faculty, professional and community affairs.

As in learner-centered method, practical Agriculture students should occupy a prominent position in the teaching and learning of practical Agriculture. Teachers should therefore make these students the centre of all activities. This entails:

1. Encouraging active participation of practical Agriculture students in the teaching and learning process.
2. Practical Agriculture students being always actively involved in a manner in which they interact with the teacher, with instructional aids and with the environment.
3. Teaching and learning of practical Agriculture that promote students' development of basic life skills.
4. Enabling students to utilize the learnt skills in solving their everyday problems using their own initiatives.
5. Practical Agriculture teachers' effort to discourage rote learning and passivity in the classroom.

2.2 Attitudes of Students towards the Study of Practical Agriculture in Secondary Schools

According to Chang (2005), individual interest, ability and needs are important factors that contribute to attitudinal life of students studying Practical Agriculture. Also, culture and gender play a major role in determining the attitude of students to Agriculture, Margolis (2008). Ohiwerei and Nwosu (2009) also identified the following external factors as key players in career interest choices:

- 1) Teachers' Influence.
- 2) Parental Pressure.
- 3) Economic and Political Condition of the Country.
- 4) Peer Groups' Pressure

2.3 Adequate Vocational Choice Information and Subject Studies/Combination.

Tumer and Lapan (2002) identified family and friends, stating that parents influenced children's educational plan. Turner, Steward and Lapan (2004) identified encouragement from parents and influence of people surrounding an individual as some of the factors that can affect career interest (Wong and Liu, 2010). Block et. al. (2025) opined that children who develop more positive competence-related beliefs and values for activities they believe in are appropriate for their gender tend to seek more engagement of such activities in the future.

2.4 Relationship between Students' Attitudes and their Performance in Agriculture Science

- **Self-Concept and Academic Performance**

A student's attitude towards the study of Practical Agriculture can affect his performance in the subject. Some students exhibit a dislike for the subject due to the fact that it involves rigorous practical works which are carried out on the farm. This dislike as shown by apathy towards various practical farm activities then leads to low performance and subsequent failure. Motivation has been recognized as another pertinent factor that is related to student's scholastic performance. According to Howard et. al. (2021), high motivation and engagement in learning are associated with increased level of student's success and low dropout rates. Studies show that a moderate amount of anxiety aids in academic performance by creating motivation. However, high levels tend to interfere with the students concentration and memory which are necessary for academic success.

So many factors have been known to influence the academic achievement of students in their various school endeavours. These factors can be either be personal (poor self-concept, motive, readiness, emotion, attitude, maturational level of the student) or environmental. The personality of an individual refers to a collection of emotional, thought and behavioural patterns unique to a person that is consistent overtime. It can also include an individual's thoughts, behaviour, feelings, emotions, attitudes, physique adjustment, unique learning history response patterns, habits and general poise (Denga, 2007).

According to Okwubunka (2007), low self-concept can be closely associated to learning difficulties in students. A student who believes he is incapable of accomplishing his academic task is bound to be an academic failure. Denga (2007) views self-concept as an organized configuration of perceptions of self which are admissible to awareness. He further stated that self-concept is what determines the goals that are set, attitudes, behavior and responses that one makes towards others. The way an adolescent perceives himself or herself with little or no regards for what one may say or think of him or her is referred to as self-concept. According to Child (2003), the conception which we hold of ourselves as a result of interaction with insignificant others and influences on our behavior collectively is known as self-concept.

Many studies show likely correlation between self-concept and academic performance. Wang (2007) stated that there are recent researches that show a causal relationship between academic self-concept and subsequent achievement and that this relationship is reciprocal in nature. Thus, while better student achievement leads to improvement of self-concept, positive self-concept can help increase student achievement concurrently. Weiner (2006) stated that highly motivated students in any area of interest may perform more difficult task than those who have low motivation in the same area. Adediji (2007) stated that when pupils express lack of interest in a subject, it affects the way they react and listen to the teacher. Thus, interest and attitude of the learner towards a particular subject matter a lot. This agrees with Hansford and Hattie (2002).

- **Attitude and Academic Performance**

Attitude as a psychological concept is a relative. It could be viewed as the way one reacts towards an object or situation. It could be favourable or unfavorable. Inyang-Abia (2003) asserts that attitude is a desire or tendency to approach or avoid something" He stated further that attitude of an individual can be either positive or negative. When it is positive, the individual approaches the object. Otherwise, the object is avoided when attitude is negative. Attitudes are interwoven with affective and highly motivated experience so that they viewed as personality characteristics.

According to Okpala (2006) there is a positive relationship between students' attitude and their performance in academics. In a study carried out by Bassey (2002) to determine the degree of co-variation between students test attitude and their test performance. Results show that there was a significant difference in performance in the different attitudinal groups with respect to their varying levels of attitude. Umoinyang (2004) carried out a study to establish the relationship between student's attitude and their academic achievement in Mathematics. He used 229 students (118 males and 111 females) randomly selected from six (6) secondary schools in Abak Local Government of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Achievement was based on their 1988 1st terminal examination and attitude was measured based on the responses to the questionnaire designed and validated by the researcher. A positive and significant correlation was found between students' attitude towards Mathematics and their academic achievement in the subject. This could suggest that attitude to school or the subjects can be related to performance if it is on the premise that positive attitude leads to higher performance of the students in their academics. Camilus (2011) reported that students' attitude plays a very important role in their academic performance in Practical Agriculture.

2.5 Challenges of Teaching and Learning of Practical Agriculture in Secondary Schools

Modebelu and Nwakpadolu (2013) identified seven major challenges facing Practical Agriculture teachers in their quest to achieve effective teaching and learning of the subject. These are:

- i. **Inadequate qualification of teachers:** Most teachers teaching practical Agriculture in Junior Secondary Schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area are not well trained. Majority are not graduate. They do not have the experience and most/major challenges facing practical Agriculture" in Junior Secondary schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area, Anambra State. Poorly developed school farm and garden: Several schools in Ekwusigo L.G.A do not have school farm while those that said to have do not have a proper functioning school farm nor garden, but make use of the open field available in the school environment which have just few plants for practical agricultural teaching. The field serving as the school farm garden is not fenced and do not have regular few animals such as Pigs, goat and sheep. The animals are kept under semi-intensive rearing system. Therefore, animals are allowed to graze openly and are only housed during the night. The teachers were obviously worried about the lack of proper functioning school farm/garden and limit species of animal which affected effective teaching and learning of practical agriculture.
- ii. **Inadequate tools/equipment:** Students studying practical agriculture are to make use of tools and equipment such as wheel barrow, spade, cutlass, hoe, shovel, hand folk, travel and watering cans, cutter, rake, head pan etc. However, I observed that apart from cutlasses and hoe which students brought to school, the schools did not have sufficient simple farm tools which I mentioned above. Inadequate number of this farm tool coupled with the large number of junior students make it difficult for teaching and learning of practical agriculture.

- iii. Inconveniences in conveying students for practical agriculture: Though, the schools had buses for carrying students out of campus for practical work, but the arrangements usually distracted classes and distorted day's lessons. The buses cannot convey all practical agriculture students at once to practical site and have to do it in many rounds and this make monitoring the students difficult as some truants students take advantage of that to abscond from school.
- iv. Insufficient funding for practical agriculture: Practical lessons are always expensive to organize, especially if it had to be undertaken outside the school compound where student have to be conveyed to practical site. I noticed that fueling and maintaining the buses to support practical agriculture in junior secondary school in Ekwusigo Local Government Area have been noted as one of the challenges or problems teachers face in organizing practical agricultural lesson. Teachers always get "No fuel response" from the school's principals anytime they requested for a bus to convey students for practical.
- v. Large class size: In teaching and learning of practical agriculture, teachers have to make sure that every student handles the tools for practical. However, due to the large class sizes, teachers found it difficult to monitor student during the practical lessons. As the number of student available were more than the number of tools available, while some could not get any tool or equipment to use for the agriculture practical.
- vi. Short period allocated to practical: I noticed that the period (time) mapped out for practical agriculture were too poor and most schools did practical only on Fridays which was not enough for teaching and learning of practical agriculture. This was one of the biggest challenges I found facing teaching and learning of practical agriculture in Ekwusigo L.G.A. Most schools did not value practical agriculture, that was why they only mapped or fixed short period for teaching and learning of practical agriculture and this made it difficult for the teachers to teach all they supposed to teach the students.
- vii. Lack of parental support: Even when it is the role of teachers to provide students with quality education, the prices is only complete with the cooperation and understanding of parents and school management. Parents should be the ideal working partners of teachers to provide the best learning experience for students. I noticed that parents left their children for the teachers to take care of them. Most parents did not even support their children in participating on agriculture practicals. They thought, practical agriculture is for poor people. They preferred subjects like Business, Biology, and Chemistry to practical agriculture.
- viii. Inadequate teaching method: Most teachers, teaching in junior secondary schools in Ekwusigo L.G.A were not actually teaching with the rightful teaching method and this made it difficult for students to understand the teachings. Instead of teachers to use practical method, demonstration, illustration methods, they were using teaching, lecture methods and this affected the learners. Students saw practical agriculture as hard and tough subject and developed hatred towards practical agriculture.
- ix. Poor attitudes of students towards practical agriculture: Most practical agriculture students expressed lack of interest in the subject, it affected the way they reacted and listened to their teachers.

2.6 Solutions To The Challenges Of Teaching And Learning Of Practical Agriculture In Junior Secondary Schools In Ekwusigo L.G.A

During the research many challenges were found to be facing teachers and students in learning and teaching of practical agriculture. Below are my suggestions that can possibly combat the whole challenges so as to enhance effective teaching and learning of practical agriculture in junior secondary schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area of Anambra State. The solutions include:

1. Only professional qualified teachers should teach practical agriculture. Qualified teachers will be able to identify the best teaching strategy that is suitable for the subject and know how to handle the students.
2. The Researcher suggest government should provide enough and developed school farm and garden likewise owners of private schools. This is one of the vital things needed in teaching and learning practical agriculture. Students are expected to practicalize what they are been taught.
3. Government and private school owners should endeavor to provide all the equipments need. Equipment such as wheelbarrow, spade, shovel, cans etc, even most needed machines etc, tractor etc.
4. Buses should be made available for conveying students to school farms. Most Ekwusigo junior secondary schools have their farms far away from school premises.
5. Funds for fueling and maintenance should be made available.
6. Classes should be big enough and conducive for learning. And number of students per teacher handles should not be much so that teachers will be able to monitor each student closely.
7. Most schools allocated short/title period for practical agriculture which is too bad and not helping both teachers and learners. Schools should made available enough period/time for teaching and learning of practical agriculture.
8. Most agriculture practical materials and tools are really too costly. Students find it hard to get most of the materials due to the high costs. Government should endeavor to bring down the prices and make it fixed.

9. Parents should not leave all the work for teachers. Parents should teach their children at home. Parents should go to farm along with their children, teach them how to weed, cultivate, plant, harvest, apply fertilizers, and insecticides etc. This will go to have interest, zeal, and knowledge of practical agriculture.
10. Most practical agriculture student express poor attitude or lack interest towards the subject. This can be due to either the students do not have enough knowledge about practical agriculture or the teacher is not using the adequate teaching method to teach. Teachers should explain to students first, what, what "Practical Agriculture" is all about, tell them the reasons why they have to accept and study the subject, give them enough benefits or profits from the subject.

Modebelu and Nwakpadolu (2013) suggested ten possible ways of managing and redressing the challenges. These include ensuring that only professional qualified teachers teach, repositioning of teacher preparation institutions to produce highly relevant manpower who are conscientious and well-motivated in the field, provision of relevant instructional materials and so on. Modebelu and Duvic (2012) also recommended innovative teaching methods for effective teaching and learning of practical Agriculture. Egbule (2004) also suggested that teaching and learning of practical Agriculture must both be competence-based and production-oriented. Egun (2009) suggested that there is the need for a total overhauling of agricultural administration in Nigeria.

In the Nigeria, Owalabi (2012) examined the effect of teacher's qualification on performance of tertiary institutions agricultural students. The purpose was to determine whether the status of the teacher has any impact on the performance of students in agriculture. The study used descriptive survey design. Data was collected using questionnaires and document analysis and was analyzed using inferential statistics. The study found that students taught by teacher with higher qualifications performed better than those taught by teacher with low qualifications. The results also revealed that students taught by professional teachers performed better. However, teacher's experience in teaching the subject was of significant advantage in agriculture. Based on the results it was recommended that students in the year of examination should be taught by experienced teacher.

3. Research Design and Methodology

This study employed descriptive research design. This study was designed to examine teachers and students' perception of problems of Practical Agriculture in junior secondary school in Ekwusigo Local Government Area of Anambra State.

3.1 Area of the Study

This research study was carried out in government owned secondary schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area of Anambra State. The Communities that constitute Ekwusigo Local Government Area are 4 in number and they include; Themboosi, Ozubulu, Oraifite and Ichi.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study was made up of all the students enrolled in Practical Agriculture and teachers teaching practical agriculture at the junior secondary school level in Ekwusigo Local Government of Anambra State. The population of the Students is 852, while that of Teachers is 208.

3.3 Sample and Sample Technique

The sample of this study comprises of 250 respondents. Five (5) out of the nine (9) secondary schools were sampled. The total number of Students and Teachers in the five secondary schools is 656. The sample size is 250 which consist of 225 students and 25 teachers in the government secondary schools in Ekwusigo L.G.A.

3.4 Instruments for Data Collection

The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured to consist of five sections. It is made up 25 questions. It was of four points scale format using strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD)

3.5 Development and Validation of the instruments

The instrument (questionnaire) was carefully constructed by the researcher and submitted to three specialists for face and content validation; two in Measurement and Evaluation and one in Agricultural Science Education. By this, the content validity was confirmed before trial testing and consequent administration of the instrument to the respondents in Ekwusigo junior secondary schools.

3.6 Administration of the Instruments

Selected schools were visited and the questionnaires were administered personally to the teachers and students and collected each questionnaire back on the spot after their filling. This was to ensure that every questionnaire was recovered from the respondent. In addition to this, the researcher was not far from the respondents in order to clarify and assist subjects in area where difficulties and misunderstanding were encountered.

3.7 Method and Techniques of the Data Analysis

In analysis, the data collected for the study were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. Since the rating scale is on a 4 point, the mean ($\bar{x}$) of 2.50 was used for decision such that mean ($\bar{x}$) rating of the item equal to or above 2.50 were regarded as "Agree" and mean ($\bar{x}$) rating less than 2.50 were regarded as "Disagree".

4. Results

Research Question One: To what extent are qualified teachers available for teaching and learning of Practical agriculture?

Table 1: Respondents response on availability of Qualified Teachers for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	ΣfX	$\bar{X}$	S	Remark
1.	All of the teachers teaching practical agriculture are professionals	10	42	88	110	250	452	1.81	0.86	Disagree
2.	Teachers teaching practical agriculture are competent enough to handle the subject	20	50	81	99	250	491	1.96	0.96	Disagree
3.	The teachers use the best teaching method for practical's to teach the students	39	68	71	72	250	754	2.30	1.05	Disagree
4.	The teachers know how to handle the equipments/tools	48	55	65	84	250	563	2.25	1.1	Disagree
5.	The teachers possess adequate modern skills for practical oriented teaching Mean of item means	10	55	77	108	250	467	1.87	0.89	Disagree

The data on response in table 1, it showed that the mean response disagrees with the questionnaire items generated from the research question. Mean responses from teachers and students are 1.81, 1.96, 2.30, 2.25, and 1.87 respectively. Generally, the mean of item means 1.84 shows that the questionnaire items were not agreed upon.

Research Question 2: How adequate is time in the time table for teaching and learning of practical agriculture?

Table 2: Responses on adequacy of time in the time table for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	ΣfX	$\bar{X}$	S	Remark
6.	The time allotted for teaching and learning of practical agriculture is enough	10	42	88	110	250	452	1.81	0.86	Disagree
7.	The period assigned for teaching and learning of practical agriculture is good and conducive	20	50	81	99	250	491	1.96	0.96	Disagree
8.	Short period for teaching and learning of practical agriculture allows students to study and practice well	39	68	71	72	250	754	2.30	1.05	Disagree
9.	The teacher covers the curriculum before examination within the short period allotted for practical agriculture	48	55	65	84	250	563	2.25	1.11	Disagree
10.	Short period for teaching and learning of practical agriculture concepts affect its effectiveness.	10	55	77	108	250	467	1.87	0.89	Disagree

From the response in table 2, the mean responses of the respondents are 2.35, 2.36, 2.12, 2.43 and 2.28 respectively. The mean of item means which is 2.31 shows that the questionnaire items were not agreed upon.

Research Question 3: How does population explosion in the school constitute a factor in the teaching of practical agriculture?

Table 3: Responses on population explosion as a factor in the Teaching and Learning of Practical Agriculture.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	ΣfX	X	S	Remark
11.	The teacher can control the whole students	10	42	88	110	250	452	1.81	0.86	Disagree
12.	There is enough equipment for each student	20	50	81	99	250	491	1.96	0.96	Disagree
13.	There is enough space for 8 each student to practical	39	68	71	72	250	754	2.30	1.05	Disagree
14.	The high population of the students hinder easy teaching and learning of practical agriculture	48	55	65	84	250	563	2.25	1.11	Disagree
15.	Each teacher teaches just few students Mean of item means	10	55	77	108	250	467	1.87	0.89	Disagree

From the response in table 3, the mean responses are 2.13, 2.14, 1.94, 2.44, and 2.40 respectively. The mean of item means is below 2.50, indicating what that the respondents disagreed on questionnaire items.

Research Question 4: To what extent are there equipped laboratory for teaching and learning of practical agriculture?

Table 4: Responses on Extent of Existence of Equipped Laboratory for Teaching and Learning of Practical Agriculture

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	ΣfX	X	S	Remark
16.	The whole laboratory equipment needed for teaching and learning of practical agriculture is available	10	42	88	110	250	452	1.81	0.86	Disagree
17.	Every student gets his own tools during practical	20	50	81	99	250	491	1.96	0.96	Disagree
18.	There is always practical manual practical exercises	39	68	71	72	250	754	2.30	1.05	Disagree
19.	There is adequate first aid kits in the Laboratory	48	55	65	84	250	563	2.25	1.11	Disagree
20.	All the tools are well labeled and secured	10	55	77	108	250	467	1.87	0.89	Disagree

Mean of item means 2.09

From the response table 4, the mean responses from the respondents are 1.78, 2.20, 2.25, 1.87 and 2.36 respectively. The mean of item means 2.09 which is below 2.50. From the response table 5, the mean responses from the respondents are 1.14, 2.35, 2.36, 2.31 and 2.28 respectively. The mean of item means of 2.05 which is however below 2.50 shows that the questionnaire items were not agreed upon. It shows that there is poor availability of farmland in the schools.

5. FINDINGS

- Unqualified teachers teaching practical agriculture is one of the problems hindering effective teaching and learning of practical Agriculture.
- The time allotted in the timetable for teaching and learning of practical Agriculture is inadequate.
- The number of students for each teacher is too much that the teacher cannot control all of them.
- Unequipped laboratory reduces the effectiveness of teaching and learning of practical Agriculture.
- Inadequate availability of schools' hinders effective teaching and learning of practical Agriculture.

6. Discussion

The findings through the analysis of the result are that the teachers teaching practical Agriculture are almost unqualified teachers which reduces the effectiveness of teaching and learning of practical Agriculture. Analysis from response table 1 was used to arrive at this finding. From the table, it was observed that the questionnaire items in the cluster have the mean of 1.84 which is below the grand mean of 2.50. This implies that students and teachers are of the view that the level of unqualified teachers is high and it contributes towards the problems in teaching and learning of practical Agriculture. The adequacy of time in the time table for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture:

Through the analysis of the result, it was discovered that time in the timetable allotted for teaching and learning of practical Agriculture is not conducive and enough for the study. The teachers and teachers' response to the questionnaire items in the cluster has the mean of 2.31 which is below the grand mean 2.50. This indicates that they disagreed to the point that the time allotted for teaching and learning of practical Agriculture is adequate. The effect of population explosion in the schools for teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture: Through the analysis of the study, it was discovered that students' population is too much and teachers cannot control them. Response table 3 was used to arrive at this finding. It is observed that the Respondents' response on the questionnaire items has the mean of 2.21 which is below the mean score of 2.50. This shows that most teachers and students lead to poor learning. They believe that lesser population of the students leads to effective teaching and learning of practical Agriculture.

Through the analysis of the result, it was also discovered that the laboratories are not well equipped. The analysis on the response table 4 was used to arrive at this finding. It was observed from the table that the respondents' response in all questionnaire items have the mean of 2.09 which is below the grand mean of 2.50. This shows that un-equipped laboratory affects the effectiveness of teaching and learning of practical Agriculture. Another finding through the analysis of the result is that most of the schools do not have adequate farmland for teaching and learning of practical Agriculture. The analysis on response table 5 was used to arrive at this finding. The teachers and students' response have mean of 2.08 which is below the grand mean of 2.50 indicating that they disagreed to the point that the farmland available is adequate.

Educational Implications of the Study

The data presented by the tables leaves one with no doubt that most of our Junior Secondary schools have a dismissal level of conducting practical Agriculture. Such assessment has proved indispensable in the repositioning of the schools to fulfill their service delivery roles. When schools are not well equipped, the students become half baked. The teachers found themselves handicapped when they are not provided with sufficient equipment for the teaching and learning of practical Agriculture.

Limitations of the Study

Some respondents felt that the questionnaire items were too much to be answered and they do not have time to read through, so they picked at random. This could affect the validity of the findings.

Recommendations

The study therefore made the following recommendations;

1. The government should provide sufficient instructional materials needed for the teaching and learning process of practical Agriculture.
2. The community leaders should be made to allocate land for agricultural practical or for school farming.
3. Parents should be made to understand the importance of learning practical Agriculture to the individual, the community and to the nation at large.
4. Students and their parents should be made to understand careers in agriculture so as to encourage the teaching and learning of the subject.
5. School authorities should set aside funds purposely for the teaching and learning of Practical Agriculture in their schools.

Suggestion for Further Studies

The researcher is of the opinion that this particular study offer avenue for further research in other related areas such as;

1. A similar study should be carried out in another local government area in a more modified manner.
2. Further research should be carried out to find out other problems other than the ones discussed in this work that teachers and students are facing towards effective teaching and learning of practical Agriculture.
3. Further research should be carried out to determine the extent at which the problems facing teachers and students affect the effectiveness of teaching and learning practical Agriculture.
4. Further research should be carried out to examine the extent at which parents affect the teaching and learning of practical Agriculture.

7. Conclusion

This study examined teachers' and students' perceptions of the challenges affecting the teaching and learning of practical Agriculture in junior secondary schools in Ekwusigo Local Government Area, Anambra State. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from teachers and students through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using mean and standard deviation.

The findings revealed that several factors hinder the effective teaching and learning of practical Agriculture, including the shortage of qualified teachers, inadequate time allocated in the school timetable, overcrowded classrooms, poorly equipped laboratories, and insufficient farmland for practical activities. These constraints limit students' opportunities to acquire the practical skills and knowledge required for effective agricultural education.

The study concludes that improving the quality of practical Agriculture education requires a coordinated effort from government, school authorities, communities, and parents. Priority should be given to recruiting and training qualified teachers, providing adequate instructional facilities and farmland, allocating sufficient time for practical lessons, and ensuring appropriate funding for agricultural education. Addressing these challenges will enhance the effectiveness of practical Agriculture instruction and improve students' learning outcomes.

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