



Perceived Influence Of Teachers' Quality On Students Academic Performance In Public Senior Secondary Schools In Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the perceived influence of teacher's quality on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, using three research questions and three hypotheses. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study was eleven thousand three hundred and sixty-four (11,364) SS2 students from the thirty-five (35) public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor Local Government Areas of Rivers State. A sample of 506 male and 631 female students totalling 1,137 students was obtained for the study through stratified and purposive sampling techniques. The instrument for the study was a self-designed questionnaire titled; "Perceived Influence of Teacher Quality on Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (PITQSAPQ)" which was validated by experts, while the Cronbach Alpha was used to achieve reliability index of 0.87, 0.93 and 0.87. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that teachers' years of experience, pedagogical skills and communication skills have positive influence on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that the government of Rivers State should employ only trained and qualified teachers in the public secondary schools in Rivers State, to enhance students' academic performance.

Keywords: Teacher quality, pedagogical skills, communication skills

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, education is seen as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development. To this end education is expected to be of high quality in order to produce sound and quality products that can contribute to the growth of the nation's economy. One of the determinants of a nation's quality of education is the calibre of her engaged teachers. In giving credence Abe and Ada (2013) were of the view that improving students' academic performance in schools is by employing seasoned qualified teachers in all schools. The issue of declining academic performance of students in Nigerian secondary schools has generated much interest among stakeholders in the education sector especially in Rivers State; since the quality of education and performance depends on the teachers as reflected in the discharge of their duties. It entails the ability to study, remember facts and ability to communicate the knowledge in verbal or written form in standardized tests, examination and interviews; thus, making academic performance the outcome of educational goals.

In recent times, there is an observable upsurge of research works on teachers' quality and how it predicts students' academic performance in schools. However, with the increasing demand on students' accountability; students' performance is considered an accurate measure and a basis for value-added teacher assessment system (Adaramola & Obomamu, 2011). Therefore, improving teacher quality has

been regarded as a successful way to improving student's performance (Piaro, 2018). Results of several researchers also indicate that, declining student's academic performance is multifaceted and that there seems not to be a consensus among stakeholders as to where the blame lies (Asikhia, 2010). A study conducted in Kwara State of Nigeria, revealed that teacher capacity building, classroom management, methodology, personality and discipline impacted significantly on students' academic performance (Adebayo & Sayaya, 2016). Additionally, teacher qualification, subject specialisation and time management have been reportedly linked to significant and positive impacts on students' academic performance (Akpo & Jita, 2013; Olatoun, 2010). Contrarily, a study carried out in Kenya, indicated that teacher qualification and experience had no significant relationship with students' academic performance but rather, remuneration, age and training (Lydia & Joash, 2016; Agwanda, 2015).

Senior secondary education in the National Policy on Education FRN, (2013) was under listed in Post Basic and Career Development. The Post Basic and Career Development has several identifiable objectives one of which is to offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, disposition, opportunities and future roles of graduates (FRN, 2013). This eminent role cannot be achieved if teachers are not in quality and quantity. No wonder the National Policy Education (FRN, 2004) categorically stated that, since no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers, education shall continue to be given major priority and emphasis in all educational planning and development.

A major goal of secondary education enshrined in the National Policy of Education (FRN 2013), is the preparation of its participants for higher education. This means that at the end of secondary education, students should have been well prepared to further their education at any higher institution of their choice based on good performance in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) and National Examination Council (NECO) examinations. However in pursuing the aims and objectives of this level of education, teachers' quality plays a vital role in order to achieve the set goals. It is therefore pertinent that teacher quality be prioritized in senior secondary schools so as to have quality students emerging as graduates prepared for higher education and/or useful living within the society. In view of the above, this study investigated perceived influence of teachers' quality on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Concept of Teacher Quality

Teacher quality is a term associated with a plethora of meaning. It reflects the perspectives and interest of different writers, researchers and policymakers (Stronge, 2012). To many, it is either academic ability, classroom practice, or adding value to students' academic performance. According to Olaleye, (2011), quality always requires value judgments about which disagreement abound. This has necessitated, the term 'quality teacher' to be often used with adjectives such as good and effective which implies a particular definition of quality teachers.

Teacher quality refers to all teacher-related characteristics that produce favourable educational outcome such as students' performance on standardised tests or supervisor rating (Musau & Muola, 2013). The teacher plays a crucial role in the educational attainment of students and is ultimately responsible for translating policies and principles to implementation modules for achieving school goals. The way a teacher presents him/herself creates an impression on the administrator, colleagues, parents, and the students. Most times a student links his/her interest in a particular subject to a teacher's personality, value and how the subject was taught. A teacher who is enthusiastic and shows competence in content knowledge in a specialised subject area may transfer those skills to students. In addition, how the teacher relates with students has an impact on the students' experience in class. A review by the World Bank (2012) revealed that teacher effectiveness is one of the most important school-based predictors of student learning and that several years of teaching by outstanding teachers can offset the learning deficits of disadvantaged students. A range of studies that investigated what makes school systems effective looked for common characteristics in the top performing education systems in international achievement tests, with a view to identifying features that account for students' success (OECD, 2010). The key strategies

identified for improving student outcomes centre around developing a quality teacher workforce, which aims to: (i) Attract, recruit and retain high quality candidates into teacher training (ii) Train with extensive school-based practice (iii) Train with high level subject specialisation and academic rigour (iv) Provide teachers with personalised continuing professional development (CPD) through mentoring and coaching and (v) Involve teachers in research and education policymaking (Ibid, 2010).

Influence of Teachers' Years of Experience on Students' Academic Performance

Teachers' years of experience may be simply put as those years invested by a teacher in the teaching career which produces a positive or negative influence on the students' academic performance. Teaching experience has been noted to increase teacher effectiveness and students' outcome. One of the techniques for determining the quality of a teacher is the number of years such a teacher has taught. Teachers who have taught for more than ten (10) years are good in teaching and years of experience is often, considered to influence students' academic performance (Tera & Podolsky, 2016).

The influence of teacher's years of experience on students' academic achievement has been studied for several decades (Charles, Helen & Jacob, 2010; Gary, Kelvin & Kelvin, 2012) but has continued to receive significant references with the inception of the "No Child Left Behind Act". The results of these studies have been quite mixed with overwhelming consistent relationship; with some results indicating increased student performance as teachers' gain experience (Charles *et al*, 2010). Studies also indicated gains in particular areas like reading (Chetty, Friedman & Rockoff, 2014); other results showed that teachers experience have a positive impact within the first 3-5 years of the teaching career with little impact noticed thereafter (Dan & Michael, 2010; Charles *et al*, 2010).

A trend study including all third, fourth, and fifth grade students in North Carolina from 1995-2004 (Charles *et al*, 2010) unravelled that teachers with more experience were more successful at raising students' achievement scores than their less experienced colleagues. A similar study by Harris and Sass (2007) involving all public school students throughout the State of Florida from 1999-2005 found that with an increase of years of teacher experience supports a substantial increase in teacher productivity for elementary and middle schools but little gains in student achievement for high school teachers. Chetty *et al* (2014), also found that teacher experience was a predictor for students success in reading, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and math computation, but not for testing performance on math concepts. It was also revealed that better students' results are the main indicators of the experience and effectiveness of teachers (Akinsolu, 2010). This implies that there is a strong influence of teaching experience on students' academic performance; while inexperienced teachers contribute to poor academic performance of students. In other words, experienced teachers who use all the teaching methodologies and techniques at their disposal enhance students' academic performance.

Influence of Teachers' Pedagogical Skills on Students' Academic Performance

Teacher's pedagogical skill refers to the teaching skills teachers use and the activities generated by such skills for students' acquisition of new knowledge and abilities in relation to different subject areas. Researchers have opined that pedagogical skills of the teacher are a powerful force that influences students' academic performance (Amusan, 2016). Modebelu and Nwakpadolu (2013) in corroboration asserted that for teachers to succeed in their teaching strategies they must be conversant with the pedagogy of their profession.

Similarly, Voss, Kunter and Baumert (2011); Konig, Blomeke, Paine and Schmidt (2011) identified some components of competency in pedagogical skills that are bound to influence students' academic performance and they are: (i) **Knowledge of classroom management** which involves maximising the quantity of instructional time, handling classroom events, teaching at a steady pace, maintaining clear direction in lessons (ii) **Knowledge of learning processes** which entails supporting and fostering individual learning progress by having knowledge of various cognitive and motivational learning processes (e.g Learning Teachers' Pedagogical Knowledge and the Teaching Profession) (iii) **Knowledge of teaching methods** which gives room to having a command of various teaching methods, as well as

knowing when and how to apply each method (iv) **Knowledge of classroom assessment** which involves knowledge of different forms and purposes of formative and summative assessments, knowledge of how different frames of reference (e.g Social, Individual, Criterion-Based) impact students' motivation (v) **Structure** that entails structuring of learning objectives and the lesson process, lesson planning and evaluation (vi) **Adaptivity which** gives room to dealing with heterogeneous learning groups in the classroom strategies, impact of prior knowledge, effects and quality characteristics of praise, etcetera, (vii) **Knowledge of individual student characteristics** which is having knowledge of the sources of student cognitive, motivational, and emotional heterogeneity. There is no doubt that a teacher with the right skills for teaching should be able to manage his time and classroom effectively and efficiently using the appropriate teaching techniques for promotion of students' academic performance.

Teachers' pedagogical skills could be categorized under the following: time management, classroom management and teaching techniques. Time management refers to the way teachers manage their time in order to accomplish learning and teaching set goals and objectives or the ability of a person to accomplish desired goals either in short term or long term with the effective allocation of time. Maximization of the use of time for academic activities is necessary to enhance students' academic achievements and attitudes as well as enable the teacher to devote a balanced attention to interpersonal relation and production (Ekundayo, 2010).

Classroom management is the orderly control of students, class environment and teaching materials in order to obtain the desired learning objective which can further enhance the academic performance of students. Asiyai (2011) perceived classroom management as a process of establishing and maintaining an environment which makes possible for both the teacher and the students to exhibit their human abilities. Classroom management is the process of planning and organising teaching and learning activities which have direct impact on the objective of the lesson. It is asserted that a good teacher organises and controls the teaching/learning environment to achieve co-ordinated tasks. It involves the following: teacher starts a class by being firm with the students; setting silence before speaking to the class; controlling students' entry in the classroom and using the students' names; preparing lesson and structuring them firmly. Finally, to achieve effective classroom management the teacher must exhibit acceptable control through his or her personality, inter-personal relationship, professional competence and effective communication skills (Gatbonton, 2008; George, Sakirudeen & Sunday, 2017).

Teaching techniques involve the methods teachers apply in the process of teaching and learning. According to Jadama (2014), an in-depth pedagogical knowledge of teachers make them able to use various methodologies suited to deliver their classes. The full understanding of content makes them confident about selection of teaching strategies and skills which are best for student understanding. Some students demand detailed clarification on any topic which is only possible when the teacher has a good subject content. Teacher's expertise and latent knowledge of subject content has a great positive influence on teaching and learning. It makes students to be able to learn, practice and apply the knowledge and skills in their daily lives, which will inadvertently influence their academic performance.

Influence of Teachers' Communication Skills on Students' Academic Performance

Communication skill is a face to face interaction that teachers use. It is the language that teachers use to translate expectations of students, elicit relevant knowledge from students, to respond to things that student say and to describe the classroom experiences that they share with students (Kazi, Abdul-Razak & Mosa, 2012). Communication in classroom is more complex and unpredictable than in other situations. This is because how effective teachers are depend on their communication skills. Teachers transmit ideas, information and expectations in a variety of ways; through speaking, body language and in written form. Dutta, Panisoara and Panisoara (2015) asserted that without communication the teaching and learning process will not take place. Teachers with good communication skills create a more successful teaching ambience for students' learning. Relatively, someone with great communication skills have the potential to influence others as effective communication strategies lead to success (Adaji, 2018). Communication is both receptive and expressive hence teachers must be skilled at looking at their students while explaining

concepts clearly. Teachers need clarity of thought to present the materials; which include the breakdown complex ideas into simpler forms and in coherent steps to transmit knowledge to their students. It is the prerogative of teachers to adapt such methods of communication that will influence the learning abilities of students positively. Thus, effective communication involves transforming the boring subject into an interesting one by good presentation skills.

Norliza (2010) perceived communication to be the process of increased community or sharing between participants on the basis of receiving and sending messages. Communication does not only connote transmitting a message, rather, it entails understanding of the transmitter's message by the receiver. Effective communication in the classroom therefore, is the act of teacher inducing the students to interpret an idea or a concept taught in the manner intended by the teacher. This denotes that for learning to take place among the students in the classroom, the students must have a clear-cut interpretation of the teacher's teaching. Thus, effective communication in the classroom involves the encoder (the teacher) and the de-coder (the students) understanding their interactions. It has also been found that teachers communication skills empower teachers and learners by transforming the teaching-learning process from being highly teacher dominated to students centred and this transformation increases learning gains for students through creating opportunities for learners to develop their creativity, problem solving abilities, informational reasoning skills, communication skills and other higher-order thinking skills (Adekoya, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

The quality of teachers serves as a great source of input in the educational system because without it teaching and learning will be ineffective. In the colonial era only teachers who were professionally qualified were engaged to teach in schools. Supervision and inspection were thoroughly performed to ensure that school operations were hinged on teacher qualification, years of experience, pedagogical skill, professionalism, communication skill etcetera.

It is adduced that most teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State have a lackadaisical attitude towards teaching because of poor teacher qualification, lack of pedagogical skill, professionalism and communication skills. These factors tend to have impacted negatively on students' performance in the West African Senior Secondary Examination (WASSE). A cursory examination of the West African School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) results depicted it below; as regards overall credit level passes in percentages in the years 2013 and 2017 for English Language and Mathematics which were compulsory for all students. 2013-English Language: Male 40.6 %, Female 38.14%; Mathematics: Male 43.8 %, Female 44.34 %. 2014- English language: Male 39.41 % Female 34.9 %, Mathematics: Male 44 % Female 40.3 %. 2015 - English language: Male 43.43 % Female 44.20 %, Mathematics: Male 39.1 %, Female 38 %. 2016 - English language: Male 46.9 %, Female 47.61 %, Mathematics: Male 43.4 %, Female 45.22 %. 2017 – English language; Male 46.51 %, Female 46.6 %, Mathematics; Male 47.9 %, Female 47.68 % (**Source:** WAEC Zonal Office, 2017). Based on the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004) which stated that, no education system can rise above the quality of teachers in the system; it is therefore instructive that teacher quality enhances the quality of education of a nation. This truism corroborates with Ahmed and Wais (2012) who asserted that, the academic standard in all Nigerian educational institutions have fallen considerably below expectations. Sequel to the afore, in recent times, graduates with single honours, National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) members and N-power teachers who are not professionally qualified are posted to teach in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State and specifically in Port Harcourt and Obio/Akpor Local Government Areas. This trend has so much affected students' academic performance negatively in many subjects taught in public senior secondary schools. The rate at which the issues raised above have proved to be counterproductive in terms of the academic performance of students has become worrisome to all stakeholders, hence the study on perceived influence of teachers quality on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the perceived influence of teachers' quality on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Specifically the study sought to:

1. ascertain the extent teachers' years of experience influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.
2. determine the extent teachers' pedagogical skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.
3. examine the extent teachers' communication skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does teachers' years of experience influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?
2. To what extent does teachers' pedagogical skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?
3. To what extent does teachers' communication skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance in the study:

Ho₁ There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' years of experience influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Ho₂ There is no significant difference between mean opinion scores of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' pedagogical skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Ho₃ There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' communication skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used for this study was the descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 11, 364 (SS2) students consisting of 5,056 males and 6,308 females in all the 35 public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas of Rivers State. A sample size of 1,137(SS2) students consisting of 506 males and 631 females were derived through stratified and purposive sampling techniques. A self-developed questionnaire titled: "Perceived Influence of Teachers' Quality on Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (PITQSAPQ)" was used to collect data from the respondents. The instrument had two (2) sections; Sections A and B. Section A dealt with demographic information while Section B had 15 questionnaire items based on the objectives of the study. The response scale was structured on a 5-point Likert rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Moderate Extent (ME), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) with values 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine and obtain reliability indexes of 0.87, 0.93 and 0.87. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. The criterion mean was 3.00. Questionnaire items with ratings below 3.00 denotes 'Low Extent' while 3.00 and above signifies 'High Extent'. The hypotheses were tested using z-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance. Analysed data therefore, with calculated z-values above the z-critical value of ± 1.96 were rejected and below ± 1.96 were accepted.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *To what extent does teachers' years of experience influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?*

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Extent Teachers' Years of Experience Influence Students' Academic Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SS2 Students (Male) N= 506		SS2 Students (Female) N=631		Average Mean	SD	RMK
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂			
1.	Teachers' have a greater positive impact only within the first 3-5 years of their teaching career.	4.03	0.56	4.11	0.64	4.07	0.60	VHE
2.	Teachers' with more experience are more successful in raising student achievement scores than their less experienced colleagues.	4.05	0.92	3.96	0.96	4.01	0.94	VHE
3.	Teachers' who have worked for more than 10 years are very good in teaching because of the experience that they have garnered in course of their job.	4.32	1.22	4.35	1.17	4.34	1.19	VHE
4.	Teachers who are old in the school system are abreast with better instructional materials to use thereby enhancing students' performance.	3.14	0.73	3.17	0.72	3.16	0.72	HE
5.	Experience in class management, interpersonal relationship with students and diversification of teaching methods influence students' performance.	4.50	1.02	4.55	0.97	4.53	1.00	VHE
Aggregate Mean/SD for male and female students		4.01	0.89	4.03	0.89	4.02	0.89	VHE

Field survey: January, 2020

The result on table 1 revealed that male and female students agreed to all the questionnaire items with average mean scores of 4.07, 4.01, 4.34, 3.16 and 4.53. This infers that teachers' years of experience to a high extent influence student's academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Research Question 2: *To what extent do teachers' pedagogical skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?*

Table 2: Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Extent Teachers' Pedagogical Skills Influence Students' Academic Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SS2 Students (Male) N= 506		SS2 Students (Female) N=631		Average Mean	SD	RMK
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂			
6.	Pedagogical skills, such as classroom management, knowledge of learning processes, time management and assessment influence students' academic performance.	3.65	0.89	3.69	0.87	3.67	0.88	HE
7.	Making good pedagogical decisions based on pedagogical knowledge held by the teacher influence students' academic performance.	4.19	1.33	4.20	1.29	4.19	1.31	HE
8.	Basic time management skills which involves prioritising and placing more emphasis on important task are characteristics of effective teachers' which influence students' academic performance.	3.00	0.68	3.02	0.67	3.01	0.68	HE
9.	Cognitive knowledge for creating effective teaching and learning environment influence students' academic performance.	3.07	0.78	3.09	0.78	3.08	0.79	HE
10.	The ability of a teacher to teach efficiently by his/her disposition to adopt diversified teaching methods for different concepts.	3.00	0.75	3.03	0.74	3.02	0.75	HE
Aggregate Mean/SD for male and female students		3.38	0.89	3.41	0.87	3.39	0.88	HE

Field survey: January, 2020

The result on table 2 revealed that respondents agreed to all the questionnaire items with average mean scores of 3.67, 4.19, 3.01, 3.08 and 3.02. This infers that teachers' pedagogical skills to a high extent influence student's academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Research Question 3: *To what extent do teachers' communication skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State?*

Table 3: Mean Ratings of Respondents on the Extent Teachers' Communication Skills Influence Students' Academic Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SS2 Students (Male) N= 506		SS2 Students (Female) N=631		Average Mean	SD	RMK
		\bar{X}_1	SD ₁	\bar{X}_2	SD ₂			
11.	The ability of the teacher to relay concepts to students in the classroom enhance students' academic performance.	3.63	0.78	3.67	0.74	3.65	0.76	HE
12.	Student -teacher relationship induces communication flow and removes fear from students, thus adding value to students	3.36	0.74	3.31	0.70	3.34	0.72	HE
13.	Inadequate verbal communication skill of speaking and listening promotes learning in the classroom.	3.04	0.56	3.03	0.55	3.04	0.56	HE
14.	Effective communication is indispensable in classroom teaching and learning process for students' academic performance.	4.07	0.55	4.06	0.52	4.06	0.53	HE
15.	Teachers' understanding of the principles and processes of communication will enhance students' academic performance.	4.03	0.63	4.03	0.59	4.17	0.61	HE
Aggregate Mean/SD for male and female students		3.63	0.66	3.60	0.62	3.60	0.64	HE

Field survey: January, 2020

The result on table 3 revealed that respondents agreed to all the questionnaire items with average mean scores of 3.65, 3.34, 3.04, 4.06 and 4.17. This also denotes that teacher's communication skills to a high extent influence student's academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Hypotheses

HO₁ There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' years of experience influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Table 4: z-test Analysis of Difference Between the Mean Opinion Scores of Male and Female SS2 Students on the Extent Teachers' Years of Experience Influence Students' Academic Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Respondents	N	X	Std	DF	z-cal	z-crit	LS	Decision
SS 2 Male Students	506	4.01	0.89					HO ₁ Accepted No significance difference
SS2 Female Students	631	4.03	0.89	1135	0.99	±1.96	0.05	

Field survey: January, 2020

Data on Table 4 above revealed summaries of respondents' mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' years of experience influence students' academic performance, at 0.05 level of significance and 1135 degree of freedom. The z-calculated value of 0.99 as displayed on the table was less than the z-critical value of ± 1.96 . Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted, which infers that there is no significant difference

between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' years of experience influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

HO₂ There is no significant difference between mean opinion scores of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' pedagogical skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Table 5: z-test Analysis of Difference Between the Mean Opinion Scores of Male and Female SS2 Students on the Extent Teachers' Pedagogical Skills Influence Students' Academic Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Respondents	N	X	Std	DF	z-cal	z-crit	LS	Decision
SS 2 Male Students	506	3.38	0.89					
SS2 Female Students	631	3.41	0.87	1135	0.73	± 1.96	0.05	HO ₂ Accepted No significance difference

Field survey: January, 2020

Table 5 above shows the summaries of respondents' mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' pedagogical skills influence students' academic performance, at 0.05 level of significance and 1135 degree of freedom. Since the z-calculated value of 0.73 was less than the z-critical value of ± 1.96 , the null hypothesis was

accepted, which infers that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' pedagogical skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

HO₃ There is no significant difference between the mean opinion scores of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' communication skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Table 6: z-test Analysis of Difference Between the Mean Opinion Scores of Male and Female SS2 Students on the Extent Teachers' Communication Skills Influence Students' Academic Performance in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

Respondents	N	X	Std	DF	z-cal	z-crit	LS	Decision
SS 2 Male Students	506	3.63	0.66					
SS2 Female Students	631	3.60	0.62	1135	0.27	± 1.96	0.05	HO ₃ Accepted No significance difference

Field survey: January, 2020

Data on Table 6 above revealed summaries of respondents' mean, standard deviation and z-test of difference between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' communication skills influence students' academic performance, at 0.05 level of significance and 1135 degree of freedom. The z-calculated value of 0.27 was less than the z-critical value of ± 1.96 . Hence, the

null hypothesis was accepted, which infers that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' communication skills influence

students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Findings from Table 1 on Research Question 1 showed that teacher's years of experience to a very high extent influence student's academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with an aggregate mean of 4.02 which far exceeds the criterion mean of 3.00. Hypothesis 1 on Table 4 also showed no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' years of experience influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The findings corroborate with findings of Tera and Podolsky (2016) which stated that teachers who have taught for more than ten (10) years are good in teaching and that years of experience influence students' academic performance.

Findings from Table 2 on Research Question 2 revealed that teacher's pedagogical skills to a high extent influence student's academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with aggregate mean of 3.39 which exceeded the criterion mean of 3.00. Again, Hypothesis 2 displayed on Table 5 showed no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' pedagogical skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. This finding is in tandem with Modebelu and Nwakpadolu (2013) who asserted that for teachers to succeed in their teaching strategies they must be conversant with the pedagogy of their profession.

Findings from Table 3 on Research Question 3 revealed that teacher's communication skills to a high extent influenced student's academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State with aggregate mean of 3.60 which is greater than the criterion mean of 3.00. Again, Hypothesis 3 on Table 6 showed no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female SS2 students on the extent teachers' communication skills influence students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. These findings are in consonance with Adekoya (2012) who buttressed that, teachers communication skills empower teachers and learners by transforming the teaching-learning process from being highly teacher dominated, to students centred and that the transformation tend to increase learning gains for students by creating opportunities for learners to develop their creativity, problem solving abilities, information reasoning skills, communication skills and other higher-order thinking skills.

CONCLUSION

In view of the results obtained from the study, the researchers are of the view that teacher's years of experience, teacher's pedagogical skills and teacher's communication skills have positive influence on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The teacher-student relationship in senior secondary schools also accounts for students added experiences in class. It can thus be translated that a teacher who is not enthusiastic and lack competence in his/her area of specialization is likely to negatively influence students' academic performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made:

1. The government of Rivers State should employ only professionally trained teachers in the public senior secondary schools in Rivers State, so as to enhance quality instructional delivery and students' academic performance generally.
2. Teachers should be exposed to different skills on classroom management through in-service training, conferences and seminars in order to increase their pedagogical skills.

3. All unqualified teachers who are interested in teaching should be encouraged to get a fresh Degree in Education, just like other professions such as Law and Medicine.
4. Teacher's communication skill should be considered during recruitment and selection of teachers since lack of good communication skill affects the teaching and learning process and consequently influences students' academic performance negatively.

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