



EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' GENDER AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This study analysed teachers' gender and the academic performance in Business Education subjects among secondary school students in Ijebu-ode, Ogun state, Nigeria. 8 (eight) senior secondary schools were randomly selected from the 13(thirteen) secondary schools in the township. 40(forty) professionally qualified classroom teachers (20 males and 20 females) were purposely selected for the study. Teachers' Gender and Secondary School Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (TGSSAPQ) which was developed by the researchers was the main instrument used to collect data. The research instrument recorded a reliability coefficient of 0.95 having been treated to Kuder Richardson (KR_2) formular. The only hypothesis in the study was tested using the chi-square statistics at 0.05 error margin. Two research questions were answered as well using the descriptive statistics (simple percentage). The study found that female teachers put extra effort in ensuring high standard of performance by students than their male counterparts who perceive teaching as a profession for the weaker sex (females). The study recommended, inter alia, that students should not base their academic achievements on their teachers' gender while the government should encourage people, irrespective of gender, to go into teaching profession through proper remuneration.

Keywords: Socio-Economic, Gender, Secondary school, Inequalities, Discrimination.

INTRODUCTION

Women have always had some economic power and have exerted influence on Nigerian society through women's councils, family connections and to a much lesser extent, mainstream social, economic or political organisations.

[Olufemi \(1993\)](#) believed that in traditional societies, the woman's role was taken for granted. She was expected to nurture the children and take care of the home. Such traditional views had consequences which did not augur well for social and economic development. According to [Olufemi \(1993\)](#), women were given fewer educational opportunities than men. They were also denied jobs in such male dominated occupations as engineering, architecture and town planning.

[Temisanren \(1995\)](#), refined the argument about the pre-colonial sources of discrimination against women, contending that some practices may have been relevant at that time they emerged but have become questionable given the changes in societies over time.

Researchers like [Yoloye \(1970\)](#), [Ogunlade \(1973\)](#) and [Erinosho \(1992\)](#) argued that the socio-economic background of women can constrain women's access to rights and entitlements in society. All these findings showed that there are distinctions among Nigerian societies as to the customary treatment of men and women. Inequalities in education associated with sex especially in Secondary schools are taken for granted in Nigeria because it is assumed that both male and female have equal educational opportunities.

There is a need for more female scientists and technologists in decision-making positions as this would enable them to control the direction of technological research and promote policies which favour female species. [Erinosho \(1997\)](#), mentioned that there is discrimination against girls in science class regarding ability for, and access to the subjects.

The disproportion of women in teaching profession in general and particularly Secondary schools gives cause for concern. As a result of this, the 60:40 ratio policy of the Federal Government in favour of Science also has effect in Secondary schools.

Taking a cue from the forgoing discourse, ([Ijaduola, 1999](#); [Ijaduola, 2008](#)) chipped in that school environments are dynamic, but the most dynamic factor in school is the human factor. Teachers today are a lot more educated than before and are more likely to raise questions about their environment of work. Apart from conducive environment, [Banmeke \(2006\)](#) posited that lack of adequate and improper physical conditions in the teachers' offices as well as in the classrooms dampens teachers' morale.

This constitutes the reason why Subair and Awolere (2006) lend credence to the fact that there should be maximum use of certain physical conditions such as lighting, ventilation, good building constructions, sufficient windows, doors, vents and fans to cool the heat during hot seasons. Anthony (2007) cautioned that with poor physical working conditions, there are usually mental fatigue, truancy, frustration, discomfort and poor health; all these consequently reduce teachers' productivity. That is perhaps why (Ijaduola, 2007; Ijaduola, 2010; Ijaduola, 2011) agreed that since staff spend almost half of their lives at work, it is important to provide them with pleasant and comfortable working conditions. It is against this background information that this study is embarked upon.

Purpose of the Study

The main aim of the study is to examine the teacher's gender and students' academic performance in Secondary Schools in Ijebu-Ode township. To achieve this aim, the objectives of this study were:

- To determine the extent to which teachers' gender affect the academic performance of students in secondary schools.
- To investigate the extent of commitment by men to the teaching profession.

Research Questions

- Do gender inequalities affect the academic performance of students in secondary schools?
- Do male in the teaching profession seek for other means of survival?

Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant relationship between teacher's gender and students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Method

In this study, the descriptive research design of ex post-facto was used. Forty (40) professionally qualified classroom teachers purposively selected from eight (8) out of the thirteen (13) secondary schools in Ijebu-Ode township of Ogun State participated in the study. A 25-item, four points Likert-type questionnaire called: Teachers' Gender and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (TGSAPQ) as well as two research questions constituted the chief instrument used for data collection. These were, however, complemented by oral interviews.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections (A & B). Section A comprised general information e.g. Name of School, sex of respondent etc. Section B contained questions on teachers' gender and secondary schools students' academic performance. The following corresponding scores were used as rating scale for the teachers' responses: Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 points; Disagree (D) 2 points; Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point.

The drafts of the questionnaire were given to professional colleagues for the purpose of validation. The input of the expert informed the final draft. The researchers adopted the Test-retest treatment of the questionnaire while a reliability coefficient of 0.94 was obtained following the Kuder Richardson (KR_2) formular. All questionnaires were returned since the questionnaires were personally administered by the researchers. The collected data were analysed using the chi-square statistics at 0.05 error margin.

Results

The data collected from the questionnaire was analysed using simple percentage as well as.

Research Question 1 - Do gender inequalities affect the academic performance of students in Business Education subjects?

Table-1. Distribution of responses on gender inequalities and Academic Performance of students

NAME OF SCHOOL	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
Our Lady of Apostle Secondary School, Ijebu-Ode	1	20	2	40	1	20	1	20
Muslim Girls High School. Ijebu-Ode	2	40	2	40	1	20	-	-
Ansarudeen Gram. School, Ijebu-Ode	1	20	1	20	2	40	1	-
Muslim College Ijebu-Ode	1	20	2	40	2	40	-	-
Moslem Comprehensive high school, Ijebu-Ode	2	40	3	60	-	-	-	-
Luba Secondary School, Ijebu-Ode	1	20	2	40	2	40	-	-
Anglican Girls Gram. School, Ijebu-Ode	2	40	2	40	1	20	-	-
Ijebu-Ode Gram. School, Ijebu-Ode	1	20	3	60	1	20	-	-
TOTAL	11	27.5	17	42.5	10	25	2	5

Source: Authors' field survey - 2009

The research question was answered in table 1; it is obvious that female teachers in the administered secondary schools are more committed than the male teachers. They are also more understanding; as a result students are closer to the female teachers and consequently have positive effect on the performance of the students. This was agreed to by 70% of the respondents who also believe that female teachers in Business subjects are more respected than the male teachers, while the minority which is 30% disagreed with this assertion.

Researches Question 2- Do male in the teaching profession seek other means of survival?

Table-2. Distribution of responses on the commitment of male to the teaching profession.

NAME OF SCHOOL	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
Our Lady of Apostle Secondary School, Ijebu-Ode	1	20	2	40	1	20	1	20
Muslim Girls High School. Ijebu-Ode	2	40	1	20	1	20	1	20
Ansarudeen Gram. School, Ijebu-Ode	2	40	1	20	1	20	1	20
Muslim College Ijebu-Ode	2	40	1	20	1	20	1	20
Moslem Comprehensive High School, Ijebu-Ode	2	40	2	40	1	20	-	-
Luba Secondary School, Ijebu-Ode	2	40	1	20	1	20	1	20
Anglican Girls Gram. School, Ijebu-Ode	1	20	2	40	1	20	1	20

Ijebu-Ode Gram. School, Ijebu-Ode	2	40	2	40	1	20	-	-
TOTAL	14	35	12	30	08	20	06	15

Source: Authors' field survey – 2009

Table 2 shows that because teachers are not well remunerated, the few that finds themselves in that profession seek other means of survival. This shows that the commitment to the teaching profession by the few men in the profession may not be serious.

Table-3. Chi-square summary of test of the relationship between teacher's gender and secondary school students' academic performance.

Variation	Df	X ² observed	X ² critical	P	Remark
Teacher's gender	2	9.04		0.05	S
Students' academic performance			5.67		

Table 3 indicated that there was a significant relationship between teacher's gender and secondary school students' academic performance because the X² observed (9.04) is greater than the critical X² (5.67) at df = 2 and P<0.05. This implies that the gender of teachers determines the students' academic performance.

Discussion of Findings

It is worthy of note that female Business Education Subjects teachers are more committed to the teaching profession than their male counterparts. Students tend to be closer to the female teachers ; hence the latter have positive effect on the performance of the students. This was shown in Table 1.

Table 2 above indicates that majority of male are not interested in the teaching profession. Generally, men that find themselves in the teaching profession usually look for other means of survival since the remuneration is not adequate to sustain the families. They therefore show less commitment to the profession. This was supported by Klein (1985) who confirmed that the education sector is one of the most feminized and the lowest-paid in Nigeria. Oake (1990) also agreed that the high feminization of the teaching profession has an impact on a low social prestige of the profession and its low financial remuneration. The result showed that teaching profession was characterised by moderate levels of gender- based discrimination during posting. The overall perceived levels in discrimination were also shown to be moderate. The profession was also characterised by moderate extrinsic rewards which includes job security, promotional opportunities and access to managerial positions. The results also revealed that teaching profession was high in work overload, moderate in role conflict and resource inadequacy but low in role ambiguity and sexual harassment.

Relative to men, women reported substantially lower levels in grievance procedures but were statistically equal to men in supervisory support, work group cohesion and socialization practices.

As expected, female teaching professionals were substantially higher in perceived work overload, role ambiguity, role conflict and levels of sexual harassment. Concerning affective orientations toward work, the results showed that substantial gender differences existed for men and women teachers in job satisfaction, organisational commitment and intent to remain in the teaching profession. As expected, female teaching professionals were found to be significantly lower in job satisfaction but higher in organisational commitment and intent to stay.

The low levels in gender-based discrimination during recruitment and in the profession recorded by the study could be interpreted variously. First, these can be a reflection of the domination of the teaching profession in the area of study by women. This is particularly true about senior secondary school teaching from which many of those studied were drawn. Because the profession is dominated by women, competition during recruitment is mainly between women themselves rather than between men and women. In labour markets such as the one associated with the teaching profession where women tend to predominate, women mainly compare themselves to other women rather than to men and the experience/perception of discrimination that may accrue in the process of justice evaluation is diminished.

CONCLUSION

Interviews with teachers that are the main part of this research indicated that gender inequalities exist in schools in Ijebu-Ode. High feminization of the teaching profession has an impact on a low social prestige of the profession and its low financial remuneration.

The situation in education as seen by teachers themselves does not appear to be very rosy. Teachers identify a number of problems in the current educational system as well as in their daily work. The most visible is the long-term problems of inadequate remuneration, related to the low social status of the teaching profession and disinterest of young people especially men in the profession.

The secondary school teachers also expressed their dissatisfaction with excessive bureaucracy unrelated to the teaching process and with the fact that due to the lack of finances they have to elicit contributions from parents. Many of the teachers find this humiliating and regard it as something that even further belittle their status before the parents and unnecessarily hinders their friendly communication with them.

It is mostly women who take care of children and the household and these tasks are also understood as women's primary responsibility. The idea that the family and household is primarily a women's sphere is among female teachers even stronger, as it is reinforced by the idea that the teaching profession is particularly suitable for women due to the organisation of working time facilitating reconciliation of the family and professional life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers proffer the following recommendations: In order to achieve higher gender sensitivity of teachers, it is important to foster change in their social status, remuneration, working conditions and gender balance of the profession. Government should make the teaching profession more attractive to men by making the remuneration very attractive.

The students should not base their achievements on the gender of the teacher, while their parents should always encourage the teachers by appreciating the teachers' worth. The teaching profession should not be looked upon as the weaker sex profession thereby making men to run away from it. Teachers should be encouraged to be proud of their profession so as to encourage the younger ones to be interested in it.

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