



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL FACTORS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING STUDENTS IN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA

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Abstract

The issue of students' academic achievement is a concern to many stakeholders. The consistently low academic achievement of students in financial accounting in secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria, necessitated an assessment of the relationship between school factors and academic achievement of financial accounting students in public secondary schools in South-West Nigeria, to enhance the future of Business Education having known that Financial Accounting is one of the core courses of Business Education. A correlational research design was adopted. Two thousand and thirty (2,030) SSS 2 students and one hundred and sixty (160) teachers were selected through a multi-stage stratified random sampling technique from the study area to constitute the sample for the study. Data were collected using three instruments {School Factors and Academic Achievement of Financial Accounting Students' Questionnaires ($\alpha=0.60-0.95$ using Cronbach's Alpha)}, and Financial Accounting Achievement Test. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The results revealed, among others, that there is no significant combined contribution of school factors (resources and school instructional decision) to the academic achievement of students in financial accounting in South-West Nigeria ($R^2 \times 100 = 0.2$; $(F_{(2,1800)} = 1.575$; $p > 0.05$). The study concluded that there are variables that could have moderated the effect of school factors on the academic achievement of Financial Accounting Students. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others that the Federal Government through the Ministry of Education should develop policy that would regularize the frequent organization of in-service training with the aim of enhancing the school variables and improving the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Business Education, Financial Accounting and School Factors

Introduction

It is worrisome when students are taught, and the performance level is consistently low. The West African School Certificate Examinations (WASCE) result analysis between 2012 and 2016, done by the researcher, showed that the performance of secondary school students in Financial Accounting in South-West, Nigeria, was persistently low. More students consistently had low grades over five years, with an average percentage of 34.21% pass rate of the analysis. The frequency is no doubt disturbing. This is a clear indication that something is wrong somewhere. Students could not have been taught under a normal or favourable academic environment and their performance would be this bothersome, except there were factors not advantageous to the teaching-learning process; particularly in cases where the academic achievements of students were low.

Academic achievement is a concept that indicates the outcome of the teaching-learning process with the evidence of a relative change in the learner's behaviour. It is any acknowledged accomplishment which is a function of the worth of education obtained. It implies that, the academic achievement of a learner is a product of teaching-learning process, putting into consideration other factors involved in the process. There are different variables contributing to the performance of a learner positively or negatively which, when not handled properly, could make or mar the outcome of the effort of the school, the teacher and the learner. Some of these variables could be parents' level of education, socio-economic status, interest in a subject, gender, study pattern, punctuality in class, self-motivation, availability of teaching and learning materials, teachers' competency, school environment, personal goals and personality traits. Ezeagba (2014) noted that the academic performance of students in Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) is not encouraging particularly in numerate subjects like mathematics and financial accounting.

Financial accounting is a numerate subject that cannot be taught in abstract but with exercises and skills that will help learners to digest properly and intrinsically and must be taken by professionals that have good personal qualities that suit the subject matter. Supporting this position, Patrick (2012) sees the



teacher as the soul of the education system on whom the success or failure of the whole project of education depends. This should be the concern of the school through monitoring and assigning the right personnel (teacher) to take the appropriate subject. But is this the scenario in schools? Obidile, Amobi, Uzoekwe and Akuezilo (2017) carried out a study to find out factors that affect students' academic performance in accounting in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Findings revealed that institutional and socio-economic factors such as inadequate texts, inadequate number of teachers, inadequate libraries, ineffective teaching methods, teachers' attitude towards accounting, speedy coverage of the material, class size, inappropriate entry requirements for accounting class, inadequate time for teaching Accounting and inexperienced teachers to handle the subject affect the academic performance of students in accounting.

Hence, if anything goes wrong with the input or the process which constitutes the school, teachers or any other factor that performs any role while processing the input, there will be a causal effect on the outcome which is the academic achievement. Omogunwa (2016) examined teachers' motivation and students' performance in accounting in some selected secondary schools in Akure South Local Government Area of Ondo State. He found out that variables which include leadership style, monetized allowance, rapport between school management and staff, modern equipment and the teaching environment affect the performance of secondary school teachers. Among other recommendations, the paper recommended that government should embark on time-to-time monitoring and evaluation of teachers to ensure that teachers carry out their duties effectively in line with the guidelines of the teaching profession and that the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) should introduce tests and examination for teachers at regular intervals.

In any case, the school system is best applicable to this process, but there are factors that may determine the effective and efficient operations in the school such as the size of the school, class size, work load, school leadership, location of the school, content coverage, previous student attainment, time, learning environment, school type (public, private and catholic), cooperation, teacher stereotyping/labeling, classroom instruction monitoring, teacher's motivation/satisfaction, learner/teacher's characteristics among others. All these factors have association with the academic achievement of students since the teacher and learner in the formal setting cannot operate outside the school system. Hence, the school factors include the following variables: school size, class size, workload, school leadership, location of the school, content coverage, time-table arrangement, learning environment, school type (public, private and catholic), classroom instruction monitoring, school facilities, and instructional decisions, among others. The techniques or methods with which the content of the lesson is conveyed to the learner are equally important for better understanding. Different factors could affect the academic achievement of students simultaneously or separately. When there is an issue with the academic achievement of secondary school students in Financial Accounting, it may affect the future of Business Education because Financial Accounting is one of the core courses of Business Education. Business Education, therefore, is a branch of education that involves teaching the skills and procedures of the business industry. It involves teaching students the fundamentals, theories and processes of business (IGI Global, 2022).

Therefore, this study assesses the relationship between school factors and academic achievement of Financial Accounting students in public secondary schools in South-West Nigeria, to enhance the future of Business Education.

Research Question

What is the relationship that exists between school factors (resources and instructional decisions) and academic achievement of students in Financial Accounting towards enhancing the future of Business Education?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

Ho1: There is no significant combined contribution of school factors (resources and school instructional decision) to academic achievement of students in Financial Accounting in South-West Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant relative contribution of the school factors (resources and instructional decision) to the academic achievement of students in Financial Accounting in South-West Nigeria.

Methodology

A correlational research design was adopted. The population comprised 60,207 Financial Accounting teachers and 261,667 SS2 students in senior secondary schools in South-West, Nigeria. The



subjects of the population are homogeneous because they studied the same curriculum content and are subjected to the same examination conducted by the West Africa Examinations Council (WAEC). The sample consisted of two thousand and thirty (2,030) SSS 2 students, and one hundred and sixty (160) teachers. The samples were taken from three states, representing 50 percent; twenty-four local government areas, representing 17.5 percent; and one hundred and fifteen (115) senior secondary schools, representing 5.2 percent. These percentages were considered because of the large population involved. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted. Random sampling through balloting was used in selecting three states out of the six states at the first stage. To ensure the presence of each state in their proportion stratified sampling technique was used in selecting sample from each state, while local governments and schools were randomly selected. Random sampling was applied in taking samples from the different schools among teachers and students of Financial Accounting. Questionnaires {School Factors and Academic Achievement of Financial Accounting Students' Questionnaires (for Teachers and Students)} and Financial Accounting achievement test were used to collect data. Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship that exists between school factors (resources and instructional decision) and academic achievement of students in financial accounting towards enhancing the future of Business Education?

Table 1

Correlation Matrix of Relationship between School Factors and Students' Achievement in Financial Accounting

Variables	1	2	3
1 Achievement in Fin. Accounting	1		
2 School resources	-.040	1	
3 School instructional decision	-.006	-.181**	1
Mean	18.87	30.66	19.57
SD	7.39	4.37	5.48

Table 1 shows the relationship that exists between school factors and students' academic achievement in Financial Accounting. The table indicates that a non-significant relationship exists between school resources and students' academic achievement in Financial Accounting ($r = -.040$; $p > 0.05$) and between school instructional decision and students' academic achievement in Financial Accounting ($r = -.01$; $p > 0.05$). However, the table shows that resources and school instructional decisions had significant relationship ($r = -.181$; $p < 0.05$). In conclusion, it can be said that a non-significant relationship exists between the school factors (resources and instructional decision) and academic achievement of students in Financial Accounting.

This finding connotes that the operation of the school factors with the students' academic achievement in Financial Accounting is not significant. This implies that no matter the quality and quantity of the available resources, if the learners are not in a good frame of mind to learn, they may not perform well academically. Bower (2017) noted that, with effort, practice, attentiveness and meta-cognition you can achieve more than you think you can. Also, she stated that a student with a growth mindset will accept challenges and persevere to succeed. The student will face learning and challenges with the attitude of "I have not mastered this yet". Therefore, regardless of the available resources in school and instructional decision, student with a growth mindset will find his way around challenges and come out successful.

Aside the learners' frame of mind, their level of intelligence, rate of assimilation and ability to adapt what they have learnt to examination questions in Financial Accounting could have influence on their academic achievement. Again, the language used in the teaching-learning process could also be a factor of low performance of students. Particularly, a child that is so used to his mother tongue may not assimilate fast or have a good grasp of the learning content when English language which is the official language is used. Mwakira and Mwangi (2021) revealed that language used by teacher influences the students' performance in English language. Since English Language is used as a lingua franca in the teaching-learning process, students who cannot cope may not perform well.



The result of this study is contrary to the quantitative study of Greenway (2017) who found that there is a statistically significant, positive relationship between school climate and student academic achievement in middle schools in his region. Adeniyi (2024) also, noted that deterioration of education standard within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) is a grave concern which has been attributed to many factors. It then means it is likely that deterioration of facilities has effect on educational system. Many people have come to realize that government alone cannot fund education. So, if other stakeholders contribute their quota the issue of facilities may not be a problem. That is why the former Pro-Chancellor of the University of Lagos, Dr. Wale Babalakin called on individuals and corporate bodies to join the government in funding education to deliver quality education to Nigerians (Punch, 2019).

The finding of Ndiouvu (2018) is also contrary to the finding of this research. He found out that a teacher trained in the relevant subject, having a moderate class size, a highly qualified school head and a generally high resources endowment at school level improve students' test scores. Though his finding was on school factors, but the indices used in his study were different from the indices considered in this study. Then, the difference in the studies could be because of other indices considered which were not used in this study. Again, his study was carried out in Zimbabwe, which means there could be difference in the education system.

The attitude of students to learning could also be a factor that influences students' academic achievement. A student that is goal oriented is disciplined, diligent, resourceful and spends less time for pleasure. But when the reverse is the case, the academic achievement of such candidate may be at risk, regardless of the quantity of resources available. Kapur (2018) asserted that it is vital for students to possess positive thinking in terms of their school, teachers and academics and that with positive attitude, students will be able to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly towards learning and generate the desired academic outcomes.

Consequently, all the above could have been the reasons the finding showed a non-significant relationship between school factors and student academic achievement, because if there are adequate facilities in the school and instructional decisions are well taken but the students are not in good frame of mind, cannot cope with the flow of the English language used in teaching, or the learners are not goal oriented, they may still not perform well academically and this may have effect on their involvement in Business Education in future.

Ho1: There is no significant combined contribution of school factors (resources and school instructional decision) to academic achievement of students in Financial Accounting in South-West Nigeria.

Table 2

Multiple Regression showing combined Contribution of Resources and School Instructional Decision to Students' Achievement in Financial Accounting

Model Summary

R = .042

R Square = .002

Adjusted R Square = .001

Sd. Error of Estimate = 7.38715

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Regression	171.857	2	85.928	1.575	.207 ^b	Not Significant
Residual	98226.058	1800	54.570			
Total	98397.915	1802				

Dependent Variable: *Students' Academic Achievement in F/Accounting*

Predictors: *Resources, School instructional decision*



Table 2 shows the combined contribution of school factors (resources and school instructional decision) to academic achievement of students in Financial Accounting in South-West Nigeria. The R Square value in the model summary indicates that the school factors jointly explain 0.2% of the total variance in the achievement of students in Financial Accounting ($R^2 \times 100 = 0.2$). As shown in the ANOVA, the combined contribution of the school factors to the student's achievement is not statistically significant ($F_{(2,1800)} = 1.575$; $p > 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis 1 is not rejected.

The usefulness of resources to the attainment of high academic achievement cannot be disregarded and the contribution of instructional decision cannot be overemphasized, but in this case these two indices only correlated but their correlation to academic achievement of Financial Accounting students is not significant. In line with this study, Tahira, Kiani and Dahar (2016) found that the overall school resources have insignificant impact on the academic achievement of students. They noted that the availability of school resources is very low and that this varies from school to school. The non-correlation may be because the school factors are not the only elements of the teaching-learning process. This is to say that, if there are good and enough resources, but the students who are to be taught are not ready for learning, learning may not be achieved. Also, if the teachers who are to teach are not in a good frame of mind, they will either not be able to teach at the appropriate time or not teach effectively and efficiently. As found by Abiodun, Ogundeji and Asanre (2020), that teachers' skills of commitment, motivation and communication when taking together, will significantly predict students achievement.

To uphold this, Javornik and Mirazchiyski (2023) noted that "the issue of school effectiveness is a multifaceted challenge as the effectiveness of schools is a complex concept that can be measured through various indicators such as academic achievement, student engagement and teacher satisfaction". Then, there are factors that determines the effective and efficient operations in the school such as the size of the school, class size, work load, school leadership, location of the school, content coverage, previous knowledge, time, learning environment, school sector (public, private and catholic), cooperation, teacher stereotyping/labeling, classroom instruction monitoring, among others. Therefore, if the workload on a teacher is much or the class size is too large, the teaching-learning may not be effective. Wilson (2019) noted certain basic assumptions people make about the rudimentary skills of all teachers, many of these expectations have to do with instructional decision-making skills concerning what content and processes to teach, and how to best organize and deliver content (method of teaching) in the most effective ways possible. In a nutshell, certain decisions could mar the effort of the school and teacher if the wrong decision is taken. For instance, taking Financial Accounting in the afternoon when the students may be exhausted. This may not go well with some of the students because of the numerate nature of Financial Accounting. Victoria (2016) stated that regular monitoring provides formal and informal assessments with treasured information on the progress and achievements of students. It offers teachers the opportunity of more informed instructional decisions to change their teaching style to improve the quality of their teaching. It then means that if proper monitoring is not carried out on both teachers and students, it could have effect on their performances.

This finding is contrary to Odongo and Koskei (2024) who indicated that for pupils and teachers to improve their skills and academic performance, the class features must be well managed, developed and maintained so as to use them to the maximum and optimum results. Another important reason for this result could be because of the indices involved. Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) found out that several institutional factors predict students' academic performance. According to them, factors like student-teacher ratio, lecturers' interest and commitment, school calendar stability and teaching method were significant predictors of academic achievement. Though, their study was carried out in Colleges of Education in South-West Nigeria, but the variables measured could also apply to secondary school more so that it is the same geo-political zone. In other words, if there are resources in the school but the student-teacher ratio is imbalance, the available resources may not be effectively used. Again, if the school calendar is not stable, it could influence the academic achievement of the students. Instability in the school calendar can be caused by industrial actions like a prolonged strike or a pandemic as was the case of covid-19 that occasioned a lockdown in 2019/2020 academic session. In such situations, teachers may not be able to cover the syllabus. In the quest to cover the syllabus, teachers may rush through topics that need in-depth teaching without touching every necessary aspect of the topic. Then, if the teachers' interests are not put into consideration by necessary authorities, their commitment to work might be affected and this may be evident in the academic achievement of the students.

Ho2: There is no significant relative contribution of the school factors (resources and instructional decision) to the academic achievement of students in Financial Accounting in South-West Nigeria.



Table 3

Relative Contributions of Resources and School Instructional Decision to Students' Achievement in Financial Accounting

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	T	
(Constant)	21.416	1.503		14.252	.000
Resources	-.071	.040	-.042	-1.755	.079
School instructional decision	-.019	.032	-.014	-.576	.565

Dependent Variable: Students' Achievement in F/Accounting

Table 3 shows the relative contribution of resources and school instructional decision to the achievement of students in Financial Accounting in South-West Nigeria. The table reveals that resources had the highest non-significant relative contribution to students' achievement in Financial Accounting ($\beta = -.042$; $t = -1.755$; $p > 0.05$) while school instructional decision had the least non-significant relative contribution to the student's achievement in Financial Accounting ($\beta = -.042$; $t = -1.755$; $p > 0.05$).

There is non-significant relative contribution of resources and school instructional decisions to academic achievement. This does not deny the fact that there could be other indices of school factors that could have effect on student academic achievement aside the indices used in this study. In fact, Oladebinu, Adediran and Oyediran (2018) established the relevance of school factors to students' performance. Hervie and Winful (2018) also found that lack of material for teaching affect teachers' performance which in turns affects the academic achievement of the students. The difference in the findings may be due to the indices of school factors studied or the geographical areas of the other studies. Some other factors like the readiness of students to learning activities, participation in class discussion, and the quality of teacher may also be contributing to the variance in the studies.

According to Adedayo and Adebola (2016) who emphasized that the free secondary education in Ondo State has led to the rapid expansion of the Secondary School system. This was also noted by Adepoju and Oluchukwu (2011) in Oyo State. It is no gainsaying the fact that such rapid expansion of the school system would bring about high demand for more school buildings, more qualified and competent teachers and clerical staff and instructional facilities for effective teaching and learning in the schools. But is government employing adequate teachers that would take care of the expansion of the school system? If this is not done, the workload of teachers might increase, and teachers could also be saddled with other responsibilities that should not ideally concern them. This might affect the teachers' effectiveness and in the long run affect the academic achievement of the recipients of the teaching-learning process. Savasci and Tomul (2013) also reported positive effects of student-teacher ratio, educational materials, library size, and teacher education on learning outputs. All these are other indices of the school factors that may determine students' academic achievement, and these may be the reason for the result of this study.

Again, it is endorsed that academic achievement of students is related to individual differences between students, socioeconomic features in which they grow up and educational resources of students' current school (Tomul & Savasci, 2012). Hence, even if the resources of the school are adequate, the individual differences among the students may affect academic achievement if the school does not do proper monitoring to ensure that the right teaching method is employed where and when necessary. Also, if the basic needs of the students are not met because of their socioeconomic status, there is little or nothing the school can do about it and it may in the long run affect the academic achievement of the students now and in the future if necessary action is not taken.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the issue of academic achievement is attached to many variables, whether directly or indirectly. Some variables could have moderated the effect of school factors on the academic achievement of Financial Accounting Students, thereby making the effect of school factors on academic achievement insignificant. Be that as it may, the indices of school factors are not limited to the ones in this study; other indices could significantly affect the academic achievement of Financial Accounting students which in turn will enhance the skills and procedures of business inculcated in the students of Business Education.



Recommendations

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

1. The Federal Government through the Ministry of Education should develop policy that would regularize the frequent organization of in-service training with the aim of enhancing the school variables and improving the teaching-learning process.
2. The training should be done when students are on holiday so that it would not affect their classes.
3. Schools should ensure the instructional decision that will engender positive record of the learners' academic achievement.

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