

INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' ROLES ON THE ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of teachers' roles on the academic activities of secondary school students. It adopted a survey research design. The population comprised all secondary school students and their teachers in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo local government of Ondo state. Random and stratified sampling techniques were used to select 332 respondents (318 students and 14 teachers) across the town. Questionnaire was used for data collection. Mean was used for the analysis. Findings reveal: Academic activities of secondary school students which include interaction between students and teachers, solving of academic problems for self and mates and exhibiting good communication skills, among others. Roles played by teachers on the academic activities of secondary school students, which include motivating the students to learn, using effective teaching and learning strategies at every point in time and disciplinary of the students appropriately, et cetera. Factors militating against positive influence of teachers' roles on academic activities of secondary school students, which include teachers' level of competence, educational facilities available in schools and irregular payment of teachers' salaries, and so on. Strategies that can be used to improve on teachers' influence on secondary school students' academic activities, which include professional development, regular supply and maintenance of educational facilities and motivation in terms of regular payment of teachers' salaries among other incentives. It was therefore, recommended that Government (for public schools) and owners of private schools should make regular supply of educational facilities to schools, Government and all concerned individuals should please, endeavor to be paying teachers' benefits regularly and teachers are implored to develop themselves in their career by every good means possible, to mention but these.

Keywords: Academic Activities, Secondary Education, Teachers, Students, Roles.

Introduction

Academic activities in this context involve all planned, though not compulsory, activities of students that emanate as a result of the academic program the students are undergoing at that point in time, they are aimed at bringing successful achievement to the academic goals. The activities could be between learners or between learners and teacher(s), if the learners in question are secondary school students; it is called academic activities of secondary school students. This is to say, academic activity is more than just the teaching and learning that exist between teachers and students within the four walls of the classroom but includes all students' activities which are associated with their academic program such as tutorial, field trip, group discussion among others. Nelson, Mbugua and Kagema (2017) posited that the academic curriculum is the only program offered to learners and that often a range of other classes and activities are available in class routine and even after school.

Part of these activities could fall into the category of extra- curricular activities "Activities offered outside of school hours, but within the school setting (Singh & Mishra, 2019)" or co-curricular activities "Activities which are undertaken along with academic studies, they are carried out outside the normal classrooms but they supplement academic curriculum and help in learning by doing (Sarkar, 2020)". The truth is that, though some of the activities might be conducted after school hours but yet, they complement academic studies, there is therefore the need to modify the name(s) students' activities are called to properly portray its purpose. As posited by Ali, Ayaz, Khan, Ahmad and Khan (2018), in the earlier period people use the term "Extra-Curricular Activity", but nowadays the term "Extra" is not used because it means something "unnecessary". In the same vein, Singh (2017) opined that the distinction between curricular and extra-curricular is gradually disappearing in modern educational practice and the coordination and integration of all the experiences of the pupils' intellectual, social, moral, emotional and physical abilities has become the object of the persistent efforts of the school. Hence, the name academic activities.

The focus is on secondary school. Academic activities of secondary school students is especially worthy of note because it can be an important tool to measuring academic performance of the students and the success or failure of any student is hanged on its academic performance. To this, Dufaux (2012) is of the view that at the senior secondary level, academic performance is highly regarded as a measurement of student success and may be used by a wide range of stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, higher education institutions and employers to make decisions on the students future, such as entrance into higher education or the labour market. It can also be a strong foundation to what they become and their progress in the academics after secondary school. Souriyavongsa, Abidin, Rany, Mei, and Aloysius(2013) opined that regardless of the quality of university education that may be provided, the previous learning experiences of undergraduates constitute learning challenges and is a factor that is worthy of investigation. So also Uleanya, Uleanya, Oluyemi and Unlu (2018) posited that, while development is hinged on the level of education provided and experienced in a society, the quality of such education as well as learners' characteristics are to be considered. This is to establish the fact that the standard of a school in term of its facilities or location cannot be the only factor to presume academic performance of the students but the students' attitudes cum activities inclusive. According to Kapur (2018), the determinants of academic performance of the students include, class participation, class

assignments, home-work assignments, tests, examinations, and participation in competitions or other events.

However, any investigation on students' academic activities will not be complete without strongly considering the teachers' role because the two major stakeholders in any school organization are the students and the teachers. As reviewed by Whittle, Telford and Benson (2018) evidence suggests that teachers are the most important school based influence on student academic performance and that they account for up to 30% of the variance in student achievement. In most cases, students' academic activities and performances are always linked to the teachers' roles. Omodara, Kolawole and Oluwatayo (2013) posited that, it is a common phenomenon that when students perform very well in external examinations in a particular subject, the school authority usually singles out the teacher who taught the subject for honour or commendation. To these reasons, it is imperative to investigate the roles teachers are playing alongside academic activities of secondary school students in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji Oke-Igo local government. Students cannot exist without the teacher, so also there is no teacher without the students to be taught.

As important as teachers' roles are in the academic activities and performance of secondary school students or as inseparable as teachers and students of secondary school students are in academic activities, teachers, in the course of influencing the academic activities of the students are faced with some obstacles. As opined by Berman (2017), teachers are responsible for passing down knowledge to students and that in the course of this great course of teaching; they have to deal with various challenges. Some of these obstacles or challenges could be teachers' related or outside teachers' control. Whittle, Telford and Benson (2018) posited that, behaviour, specifically teacher behaviour, is influenced by individual, social, physical environment and policy level factors. Some of these behaviors could be reflected when, according to Silva (2020), if a teacher shows a preference towards certain students or uses derogatory and humiliating language that can lower their motivation in education. The implication of this is that, the behavior of teacher, irrespective of what instigates it, has great influence on the students' cooperation and participation in the academic activities positively or negatively. Silva (2020) is of the view that, when students sense or see that classes follow a structure, and the curriculum and class materials have been prepared beforehand, it provides them with a greater sense of security. On the other hand, Nelson, Mbugua and Kagema (2017) posited that teachers have focused on the examination oriented curriculum thus denying learners an opportunity to exploit their talents and explore them to make their life better.

The challenges confronting teachers at influencing students' academic activities positively can be a great barrier to the progress of the school, individual students' development, teachers' career (According to Whittle, Telford and Benson (2018) teacher effectiveness has been strongly linked to student achievement.) and the society at large if allowed to linger on. Considering the un-alloyed roles of the teachers in academic setting, according to Ukpong and Uchendu (2012) which is to translate educational objectives specified in the "National Policy on Education, NPE" into knowledge and skill and transfer them to students in the classroom. They however posited further that every parent want his children to acquire knowledge and skills, good morals and value without giving serious thought to how these would be transmitted without the teachers. Meador (2019) is of the view that no matter what type of school you are talking about, teachers have to deal with a wide range of student needs.

Influence of teachers' roles on students' academic activities is second to known. There is therefore need to profound solution to any hindrance to successful influence of teachers' roles on academic activities of secondary school students, hence the research.

Statement of the Problem

There are many children who cannot give any cogent reason why they attend school if asked. According to Berman (2017) some of the young students do not know how important education is to their life. Some even thought they do it for their parents; as a result, they handle academic activities with levity. However, to help the situation before it becomes too late, their involvement in academic activities can be boosted or encouraged when they are motivated to do so by the relevant stakeholders like the teachers, the parents and probably, the school environment among others. The involvement will, as a matter of fact, have a dramatic impact on the students' academic performance and results, promote the teachers' and the schools' image. Teachers who have the best interest of the students at heart and are ready to stand up to the task at making their students do better in their academics should be aware of the roles to be played and the area of the students' activities where, when and how the roles should be played. Students of secondary school are at the second stage of the academic ladder, which of course, could be taken to be the most delicate; unserious from the students or obstacle to progress should not be condoned. This is because the foundation laid for the students at this stage can affect the academic progress of the students. If properly laid, it will bring development to the students, showcase the effort of the teacher and also promote the good image of the school and community. Teachers of secondary school students in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo needed to be aware that if the students will go further in the academic or be successful in their chosen vocations, positive influence on their academic activities at this stage is the state that can maintain the students' attention and behavior as well as provides with more energy needed to lead tasks to completion.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to examine the influence of teachers' roles on the academic activities of secondary school students. Specifically, the study has:

1. Established the various academic activities secondary school students in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo are engaging in.
2. Identified roles teachers are playing on the academic activities of secondary school students in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo local government.
3. Investigated factors militating against positive influence of teachers' roles on academic activities secondary school students in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo local government.
4. Suggested strategies that can make teachers to effectively influence the academic activities of secondary school students in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo local government.

Methodology

The area of research study was Bamikemo town in Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo local Government of Ondo State of Nigeria. Survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study consists of all students and teachers in all the secondary schools of the town, 332 respondents were sampled. A 37 item questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire has a modified Likert point scale of Strongly Agreed (4), Agreed (3), Disagreed (2) and Strongly Disagreed (1).

The questionnaire was face validated by two (2) lecturers from the school of education and one (1) from the department of Home Economics all in Adeyemi College of Education Ondo. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Chronbach Alpha. It has a coefficient of 0.91 which is high enough for the items used.

Data were analyzed using mean scores. The items within the mean rating of 2.50 and above were accepted while otherwise rejected.

Result of Findings

Table 1: Mean responses of the respondents on academic activities secondary school students are performing in Bamikemo, Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo Local government.

		N ₃ = 332 C = 2.50	
S/N	Possible academic activities of secondary school students in Bamikemo	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Interaction between students and teachers.	3.36	Agreed
2.	Sharing of learning experiences among colleagues.	3.39	Agreed
3.	Making enquiry from both instructors and mates.	3.57	Agreed
4.	Solving of academic problems for self and mates.	3.85	Agreed
5.	Doing academic assignments given by teachers.	3.64	Agreed
6.	Exhibiting good communication skills.	3.84	Agreed
7.	Test and examination writing by self.	3.91	Agreed
8.	Participating in tutorial classes.	3.42	Agreed
9.	Participating in practical classes.	3.39	Agreed

Key: N – Number of respondents, C – cut-off point, $\bar{X}$ - Mean response of all respondents.

Table 1 revealed that the respondents agreed with all the item as academic activities secondary school students are performing because their mean ranges from 3.36 - 3.91 which is above the cut-off point of 2.50.

Table 2: Mean responses of the respondents on the roles played by teachers at influencing academic activities secondary school students are performing in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo local government.

		N = 332, C = 2.50	
S/N	Possible roles played by teachers at influencing academic activities secondary school students are performing	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Motivating the students to learn.	3.74	Agreed
2.	Challenging the students to learn.	3.78	Agreed
3.	Using effective teaching and learning strategies at every point in time.	3.93	Agreed
4.	Handling out of classroom matters as serious as in classroom matters.	3.79	Agreed
5.	Monitoring level of students' attendance at school.	3.88	Agreed
6.	Disciplining of student appropriately.	3.80	Agreed
7.	Commitment to professional work.	3.25	Agreed
8.	Use of adequate instructional material	3.12	Agreed

Key: N – Number of respondents, C – cut-off point, $\bar{X}$ - Mean response of all respondents.

Table 2 revealed that the respondents agreed with all the items as roles played by teachers at influencing the academic activities secondary school students are performing because they have the mean range of 3.12- 3.93 which is above the cut-off point of 2.50.

Table 3: Mean responses of the respondents on factors militating against positive influence of teachers' roles on the academic activities secondary school students are performing in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo local government.

N ₃ = 332 C = 2.50			
S/N	Possible factors militating against positive influence of teachers' roles on academic activities secondary school students are performing.	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Teachers' level of competence.	3.03	Agreed
2.	Classroom size cum workload.	3.56	Agreed
3.	Academic qualification of teachers.	2.74	Agreed
4.	Teacher's work experience.	3.25	Agreed
5.	Teachers' attitude to work.	3.77	Agreed
6.	Educational facilities available in school.	3.62	Agreed
7.	Administrator's leadership behaviour.	3.41	Agreed
8.	Irregular payment of teachers' salary.	3.68	Agreed
9.	Students' poor response attitudes.	3.69	Agreed
10.	Lack of cooperation from the parents.	3.78	Agreed

Key: N – Number of respondents, C – cut-off point, $\bar{X}$ - Mean response of all respondents.

Table 3 revealed that the respondents agreed with all the items as factors militating against positive influence of teachers roles on the academic activities secondary school students are performing because they have the mean range of 3.08- 3.78 which is above the cut-off point of 2.50.

Table 4: Mean responses of the respondents on the strategies that can make teachers to effectively influence the academic activities of secondary school students in Bamikemo Ile-Oluji/Oke-Igbo local government.

N ₃ = 332 C = 2.50			
S/N	Possible strategies that can make teachers to effectively influence the academic activities of secondary school students.	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Acquisition of relevant knowledge on secondary school aged children.	3.03	Agreed
2.	One's professional development..	3.56	Agreed
3.	Motivation in term of regular payment of teacher's salary	2.74	Agreed
4.	Develop interest in the job.	3.25	Agreed
5.	Teamwork among the staff.	3.77	Agreed
6.	Positive attitude towards work.	3.62	Agreed
7.	Motivation from the school administrator.	3.41	Agreed
8.	Effective discipline measure.	3.68	Agreed
9.	Regular supply and maintenance of educational facilities.	3.69	Agreed
10.	Support from parent.	3.55	Agreed

Key: N – Number of respondents, C – cut-off point, $\bar{X}$ - Mean response of all respondents.

Table 3 revealed that the respondents agreed with all the items as factors militating against positive influence of teachers roles on the academic activities secondary school students are performing because they have the mean range of 3.08- 3.76 which is above the cut-off point of 2.50.

Discussion of the findings

The following were established as academic activities secondary school students are performing: Interaction between students and teachers; Sharing of learning experiences among colleagues; Making enquiry from both instructors and mates; Solving of academic problems for self and mates, Doing academic assignments given by teachers; Exhibiting good communication skills; Test and examination writing by self; Participating in tutorial classes and Participating in practical classes. Sarwar (2002) in Nelson, Mbugua and Kagama (2017) argued that the modern curriculum is wide and comprehensive and includes experiences acquired inside and outside the school; Ali, Ayaz, Khan, Ahmad and Khan (2018) posited that, we cannot overcome all of a child's mental, physical, social, moral and emotional developmental need only with books reading.

The following were agreed as roles played by teacher at influencing academic activities secondary school students are performing: Motivating the students to learn; Challenging the students to learn; Using effective teaching and learning strategies at every point in time; Handling out of classroom matters as serious as in classroom matters; Monitoring level of students' attendance at school; Disciplining of student appropriately; Commitment to professional work; Use of adequate instructional material. Silva (2020) is of the view that, when students sense or see that classes follow a structure, and the curriculum and class materials have been prepared beforehand, it provides them with a greater sense of security.

The study found out that the following were factors militating against positive influence of teachers roles on the academic activities of secondary school students: Teachers' level of competence; Classroom size cum workload; Academic qualification of teachers; Teacher's work experience. Slater, Davies and Burgess (2012) however disagreed with this that, teacher characteristics including age, gender, years of experience and level of qualification do not appear to predict teacher effectiveness. Some other factors include: Teachers' attitude to work; Educational facilities available in school; Administrator's leadership behavior. Whittle, Telford and Benson (2018) agreed that, influences at the physical environment and policy/organizational level (for example, timetabling, access to professional learning opportunities or resources and facilities) are generally beyond the control of the individual teacher and may be perceived by teachers as barriers to effective teaching. Irregular payment of teachers' salary is another factor. This supports Ukpong and Uchendu (2012) that despite the leading roles teachers play in the classroom towards attaining educational objectives, their motivation has remained a very serious problem in Nigeria. They posited further that, teachers' welfare needs are hardly considered by different stakeholders in Nigerian educational system. Finally, Students' poor response attitudes and lack of cooperation from the parents are also hindrance to teachers' influence. Berman (2017) is of the view that some of the young students do not know how important education is to their life that, when a class has such students, the teacher will get frustrated in the course of their teaching; Meador (2019) is of the view that it can be incredibly frustrating for a teacher when parents do not support their efforts to educate children.

From the findings, strategies that can make teachers to effectively influence the academic activities of secondary school students are: Acquisition of relevant knowledge on secondary school aged children; One's professional development; Motivation in term of regular payment of teacher's salary; Develop interest in the job; Teamwork among the staff; Positive attitude towards work; Motivation from the school administrator; Effective discipline measure, Regular supply and maintenance of educational facilities; Support from parent. Berman (2017) opined that problem from unruly students can be solved by understanding what the students have interests in and also encouraging them to achieve their goals; Ukpong and Uchendu (2012), school administrators can boost morale and motivate teachers to excel by means of participatory governance, in-service education and systematic supportive evaluation; Meador (2019), school finance has a significant impact on teachers' ability to maximize their effectiveness; Berman (2017) the success of a student is also influenced by the support the parents give to the teachers.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that success of the school requires the cooperation and effort of the students, the teachers, the school administrators, the parents, the government and all other relevant stakeholders. However, the effort of the teacher, which is at the fore front, should be adequately supported by all

Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government (for public schools) and owners of private schools should make regular supply of educational facilities to schools.
2. Government and all concerned individual should please, endeavor to be paying teacher's benefits regularly.
3. Teachers are implored to develop themselves in their career by every means possible.
4. Parents are advised to commensurate the effort of the teachers at training their children academically.
5. Students should realize that all the efforts of the teachers is for their own good, they are therefore advised in their own interest to take their future in their hands and get the best out of the teachers' effort.

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