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QUALITY EDUCATION ASSURANCE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GOMBE STATE NIGERIA

By:

¹Aishatu Ibrahim Shehu & ²Abdullahi Salami Magaji

¹08093117101

¹Curriculum Studies and Education Foundation, Department, School of Education
Federal College of Education (Technical) Gombe

²Psychology/Guidance and Counselling Department, School of Education Federal College
of Education (Technical) Gombe

Abstract

This paper examines quality education assurance on the academic performance of secondary school students in Gombe metropolis. A correlation survey design was adopted to guide the study. Four research questions and two null hypotheses, twelve (12) principals, twenty-four (24) vice principals and one hundred and twenty (120) teachers randomly selected from six (6) of Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary Schools in the metropolis were used for the study. Data collected using a structured questionnaire was analyzed with mean and standard deviation to answer the four (4) postulated research questions while the two (2) hypotheses were tested using a t-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. The study result revealed that quality education assurance significantly impacts the academic performance of secondary school students in Gombe metropolis. The conclusion was drawn that that quality education assurance plays a crucial role in the academic performance of secondary school students in Gombe metropolis. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were given to the government should employ enough qualified teachers in all the subjects to teach in secondary schools and should organize seminars, workshops and conferences for teachers, students and administrators to enhance conducive teaching learning and administrative capacity to enhance good performance of students in all secondary school subjects.

Keywords: Quality Assurance, Relationship, Performance, Secondary School Education

Introduction

Education has been described as the bedrock of every society and a tool for nation-building. It is also a means of preserving societal and cultural settings, plus the acquisition of skills that make members of the society useful to themselves and the society. Quality education is gaining global attention, especially in developing countries like Nigeria, where poor educational outcomes are a concern this includes adequate resources, skilled educators, effective leadership, and robust monitoring systems to have global learners from the secondary school level who will be useful for themselves after that level of education and achieve the curriculum aims planned for them which is educational outcome.

Education is the development of knowledge, skill, attitude, ability or character to make life worth living (Ani 2020). This means that the holistic development of individuals and society can be achieved through the process of education. He added that the most valuable means to acquire education is through teaching, imitation or training. Education is the process of inculcating norms and values of a society from the teacher to the learner to make them functional members of society. Durkheim (2001), defines education as the influence exercised by adult generations on those that are not yet ready for social life.

The objective of education is to stimulate and develop the learner; the physical, intellectual and moral abilities. These are demanded of him by the society of which he is specifically destined to be part. Onwuka (2018), defines education as the process by which people are acclimatized to the culture into which they are born so that they may advance in it. He opined that education involves nursing and nurturing an individual so that they will become a full-fledged member of society. Furthermore, they stated that it is the actualization of human potential that the individual can become something more than what he was before or achieve more goals than before. In this context, education, therefore, refers to the inculcation of formal or informal input in the development of innate potentials that make someone a useful member of society.

Quality education assurance, according to Ugwu (2017), refers to the activities that are conducted to achieve or maintain certain acceptable quality levels in every participant. He added that it includes the teachers, administrators, facilities and the learners in the institution of learning. Oakland (2020), opined that quality education assurance is the prevention of quality problems through planned and systematic activities with the establishment of a quality management system and the assessment of its adequacy, the system audit operation with the review of the system itself. Quality education assurance is an avoidance of defects in the process and indicates the learning of the students is well supported with adequate resources and those activities involved both in the school administration and teaching have clear job description and their job responsibilities well known. (Ani, 2019). For quality education to be achieved in a nation, the principal actors of learning who are the teachers, learners and the environment must be cooperatively organized to achieve the aims of the society. The societal expectations of quality inputs from the training institutions make the students central in any instructional program. The quality of staff in the school system presupposes the quality of the school output, which are the resources that will be available for the school to progress (Ochuba, 2019). He stressed that, in the school system, some determinants of high-quality education include goals of education, quality of inputs as well as an organized school system that ensures the articulation and effective coordination of all aspects of school life.

Ogunyemi, (2020) opined that Nigeria's educational system faces challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, insufficient funding, and a lack of qualified educators, which hinder progress and academic success among students.

These issues impact secondary school students' academic performance, as they face subpar learning environments and limited access to essential resources. These defects not only affect immediate academic achievements but also have long-term implications for the nation's human capital development. Addressing these systemic flaws is crucial for fostering a more effective educational framework that supports student success. There has not been significant positive result in our educational system owing to defects in some major areas.

The administrative system in our schools is nothing to write home about, primarily due to the presence of incompetent school administrators who often lack the necessary skills and vision to foster a conducive learning environment. In Nigeria, the principal serves as the executive head of secondary schools, playing a pivotal role in shaping the educational landscape (Oboegbulem&Onwurah, 2021). They emphasize that one of the most important functions of the secondary school principal is the structuring of the school for instruction, which includes the strategic organization of resources, personnel, and programs to facilitate effective teaching and learning. However, many principals struggle to fulfil this role adequately due to various challenges, such as inadequate training, lack of leadership experience, and insufficient support from educational authorities.

Effective teaching and learning processes require quality education assurance concerning the availability of teachers and student's academic performance. In most public secondary schools, teachers are not adequate which affects students' academic performance (Arikewugo 2016). Furthermore, he stressed that the availability of teachers is needed to facilitate effective teaching and learning in an educational institution. Adequacy of teachers according to Ene (2020), is the process of providing the required number of teachers in school to achieve greater output, he maintained that the adequacy of teachers works hand in hand with the academic standard which is an index of quality education assurance in the school system. For Earthman (2018), competent teachers, comfortable classroom temperature and smaller classes enhance teachers' effectiveness and provide opportunities for students to receive more individual attention. Earthman (2022) further stressed that students in comfortable classroom temperatures and standard facilities ask questions, participate fully in discussions, reduce disciplinary problems and perform better than students in schools with substandard facilities and inadequate teachers. Adequacy of teachers in this context refers to the availability of required number of teachers in school to ensure output maximization on students' academic performance with other facilities in different categories. Adegbesan (2015), observed that school facilities are divided into two parts: the tangible, non-movable structures like classrooms, football fields, library and fish pond. The movable ones are equipment used in the classroom such as seats, tables, computers, and chalkboards among other things and, with the availability of the above facilities, the academic standard in schools will be achieved. In this context, facilities mean all the components and equipment used in school that help in achieving the objective of the school.

Learning is a process where responses are developed and reinforced through consistent interaction with stimuli. The learning environment plays a crucial role in fostering effective teaching and facilitating student engagement and comprehension. Agbo (2021) extends that a well-designed environment not only supports instruction but also enhances the learning process by providing essential stimuli for sustained attention, retention, and knowledge application. This extends beyond the initial design of physical structures like classrooms, libraries, and laboratories, necessitating proper maintenance to ensure their functionality, aesthetically pleasing, and safety.

Good working facilities within a school environment create an atmosphere where both teachers and students feel supported, motivated, and able to perform at their best.

When facilities are well-maintained and resources are readily available, teachers are better equipped to deliver lessons, and students are more likely to be engaged, focused, and inspired to learn, thereby enhancing the overall educational experience. Akhtars (2020), asserted that a good school environment presents learning as a lifelong enterprise and enables students to discover appropriate value systems for their self-awareness and national consciousness. He stressed that teaching through a technology-based learning environment enhances the achievement level of the students. Furthermore, he emphasized that creating a good school learning environment will require substantial financial resources and allocation from the national budget, and a strong political commitment by the government to ensure equity and universal access to education.

Statement of Problem

Recent trends in external examinations and academic competitions have revealed alarming rates of failure among public school students, where public schools face substantial challenges compared to their private school counterparts highlighting an urgent need for systemic improvements. As the educational landscape evolves with modern teaching methodologies, the necessity for teachers to engage in professional development workshops and seminars has become critical for enhancing instructional effectiveness. Unfortunately, quality education assurance measures, essential for hiring qualified teachers and providing necessary facilities have not been fully implemented in educational settings. Consequently, public school students struggle to compete with their private school peers in both national and global contexts, prompting many to transfer to private institutions where they encounter better resources, more skilled educators, and superior management practices. This research aims to investigate how quality assurance correlates with students' academic performance in public secondary schools in the Gombe metropolis, thereby shedding light on the critical components that need to be addressed for educational improvement.

Research Questions

The following postulated research questions will guide the study: -

- v. What is the relationship between school leadership and the academic performance of secondary school students in Gombe State?
3. What is the relationship between the quality of teachers and the academic performance of secondary school students in Gombe State? What is the relationship between the adequacy of facilities and the academic performance of secondary school students in Gombe State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and will be tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

H0₁: H0₃: There is no significant relationship between the quality of teachers and the academic performance of secondary school students.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between the adequacy of facilities and the academic performance of secondary school students.

Methodology

The segment takes into consideration the processes of carrying out the research and includes research design; area of study; population and sampling techniques; instrument for data collection; validation and reliability of the instrument; procedure for data collection; and method of data analysis. A correlation survey research design was adopted for the study. Correlation Survey research design according to Ali (2016), is a process of determining the relationship between two or more variables in the sample. Thus, with this design both qualitative and quantitative methods which involve systematic and objective collection and analysis of data will be adopted to elicit responses from the participants to find solutions to the problems identified. The area of this study was the Gombe metropolis. There are about two thousand five hundred (2500) schools with more than ten thousand (10000) principals, vice principals and teachers (Gombe State Education Management). Using all the selected principals, vice principals and teachers of secondary schools in the state. Six (6) schools of three (3) Junior Secondary and three

(3) Secondary Schools were randomly and purposively selected from the metropolis. The population of the study comprised all the principals, vice principals, teachers and students of all secondary schools in Gombe state. However, the target population consisted of a selected number of teachers, principals and vice principals from six (6) secondary and junior schools in Gombe State. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were employed to select twelve

(12) principals, twenty-four (24) vice principals and one hundred and twenty (120) teachers from six (6) junior and senior secondary schools each in the three districts of the state. Therefore, the sample for the study of one hundred and fifty-six (156) respondents was sampled out of about two thousand and five hundred (2500) population.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: Quality Assurance and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (QASAPQ). The instrument was divided into two sections. Section I is for bio-data of the respondents and section II contains four (4) clusters A-D. Cluster A was on the relationship between school leadership and student's academic performance; Cluster B was on the relationship between the quality of teachers and student's academic performance; Cluster C was on the relationship between teachers' professional development and students' academic performance; and cluster D was on the relationship of the standard of facilities and students' academic performance. The respondents were requested to express their opinions on five (5) points Likert response scale of Agree (5), Strongly Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree. (1). The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts from the Faculty of Education, Gombe State University Gombe. Two are from the Department of Educational Foundations (Educational Administration & Planning), while one is from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation). The experts were requested to critique, add or remove items and assess the importance and clarity of the items in addressing the research questions based on the purpose of the study, research questions and research hypotheses. All their corrections were strictly effected for the final production of the instrument and before using it for the study. To determine the reliability of the instrument, twenty (20) copies of the questionnaire were trial tested at Government Day Secondary School Bauchi, which was outside the study area. Data collected was subjected to the test of internal consistency using the Cronbach Alpha procedure yielding 0.85, 0.65, 0.76 and 0.83. For Cluster A, B, C and D respectively. Therefore, showing the reliability level of the instrument and usability level for the study. The direct delivery and retrieval method will be used in administering the instrument to the respondents. To ensure a high rate of returns, two research assistants were of assistance in administering and retrieving the instrument from the respondents. The responses were sorted out research question by research question, while the hypotheses were sorted separately on the means table. With the assistance of the two (2) research assistants of the study.

The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation (SD), while t-test statistic was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Any item with a mean score of 3.00 and above was accepted while any item with less than 3.00 was rejected. The hypotheses were accepted when the calculated-t value was less than the table-t value and rejected when the calculated-t was greater than the table-t. The result of the data analysis is presented in this chapter. Data was collected from two hundred and sixty (260) respondents stratified and randomly selected and analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the postulate research questions while a t-test was used to the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Result

Research Questions

The data are presented according to the order of the four research questions that guided the study.

Research Question One: What is the Relationship between School Leadership and Students' Academic Performance?

The data collected with items 1-6 of the instrument dealt with the relationship between school leadership and student's academic performance in Gombe metropolis were used to answer the above state research question with the summary of the results as presented in Table 1 below.

Table I: Means Rating of Principles and Teachers on the Relationships Between School Leadership and Students' Academic Performance.

S/N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Free flow of information between head and students encourage students' learning	156	3.6	0.81	Accepted
2	Involvement of subordinates in decision-making assures better student' performance	156	3.9	0.71	Accepted
3	Effective monitoring of both teachers and students enhances students' good performance	156	3.5	0.22	Accepted
4	Effective motivation of both teachers and students enhances students' good performance	156	3.4	0.66	Accepted
5	The principal formulates aims and goals that suit teachers and students in thoughtful manners	156	4.0	0.81	Accepted
6	Effective guidance and counselling of students in the the school encourages students' positive performance	156	3.6	0.83	Accepted

From the table above, it can be seen that both principals and teachers think that school leadership has a great relationship with students, academic performance. The mean score of each item fell above the criterion of 3.00, therefore, all the items were accepted. Hence, there is a good relationship between school leadership and the performance of secondary school students.

Research Question Two: What is the Relationship between Availability of Teachers and Students' Academic Performance?

The analysis of the data collected with items 7-16 of the instrument which dealt with the relationship between the availability of teachers and students' academic performance in Gombe metropolis summary of the result is presented in Table II below:

Table II: Means Rating of Principals and Teachers on the Relationship between Availability of Teachers and Students Academic Performance.

S/N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
7	The availability of teachers develops students' Intelligent Quotient (I.Q)	156	3.6	0.88	Accepted
8	The availability of teachers increases teachers' output	156	3.7	0.78	Accepted
9	Availability of teachers reduces workload	156	3.1	0.51	Accepted
10	The availability of teachers improves students' performance	156	3.8	0.65	Accepted
11	The availability of teachers reduces stress for the principal	156	3.5	0.55	Accepted
12	Availability of teachers enhances the school to cover the scheme of work/syllabus	156	3.1	0.83	Accepted
13	Availability of teachers removes friction between teachers and students	156	3.8	0.66	Accepted
14	Availability of teachers engender job satisfactions	156	3.7	0.78	Accepted
15	Availability of teachers engender decision-making between the teachers and the principal	156	3.6	0.97	Accepted
16	Availability of professional trained teachers engender efficiency and productivity	156	3.3	0.71	Accepted

From Table II obtained and presented above, both principals and teachers believe that the availability of teachers has a great relationship with students, academic performance. The mean scores of all the items are above the criterion mean of 3.00 and accepted. Therefore, there is a positive relationship between the availability of teachers and the performance of secondary school students.

Research Question Three: What is the Relationship between Teachers' Professional Development and the Performance of Secondary School Students?

The data collected with items 17-23 of the instrument which dealt on the relationship between teachers' professional development and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Gombe metropolis were used to answer the above state research question summary of the results as presented on table III below:

Table III: Mean Rating of principals and Teachers on the Relationship between Teachers' Professional Development and Students Academic Performance.

S/N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
17	It helps the teachers to develop good rapport with the students	156	3.6	0.96	Accepted
18	Increases the students' level of understanding	156	3.8	0.80	Accepted
19	Teachers which are adequately developed tech with confidence	156	3.9	0.69	Accepted

20	It allows the teachers to be exposed to them Subject areas	1562.7 0.73 Rejected
21	Teachers' professional development engender participative activities on the part of students	156 4.00.85 Accepted
22	It exposes the teachers to the use of instructional materials for effective teaching	156 3.23 0.85 Accepted
23	It exposes teachers to the importance of attending conferences and workshops	156 3.1 0.71 Accepted

The data on the table III above shows that all the principals and teachers that responded to all questionnaires agreed that teachers' professional development has a great relationship with students' academic performance. The mean scores of all the items are above the criterion of 3.00 and were accepted except item 20 which was less than the criterion of 3.00 and was rejected. Therefore, there is a relationship between teachers' professional development and the performance of secondary school students.

Research Question Four: What is the Relationship between Adequacy of Facilities and Academic Performance of Secondary School Students?

The data collected with item 24-30 of the instruments which dealt on the relationship between adequacy of facilities and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Gombe metropolis is summarized as presented on table IV below:

Table IV: Mean Rating of principals and Teachers on the Relationship between Adequacy of Facilities and Students Academic Performance

S/N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	N	MEAN	SD	DECISION
24	Adequacy of facilities allow students to learn well	156	3.30	0.62	Accepted
25	Adequate facilities improve students' level of understanding	156	3.6	0.77	Accepted
26	Adequate facilities expose students to different career opportunities and choices	156	3.2	0.64	Accepted
27	Adequate facilities engender healthy competitions among students and retain attention of students	156	3.8	0.69	Accepted
28	Adequate facilities attract prospective candidates' interest to schools	260	3.40	0.26	Accepted
29	Adequate facilities engender excellent performance of students in examinations	260	3.50	0.93	Accepted
30	Adequate facilities equip students to stand them counterparts around the globe	156	3.6	0.70	Accepted

From the data presented in Table IV above, all the principals and teachers who responded to the questionnaire's items agree that the adequacy of facilities has a great relationship with students' academic performance. All the items from 24-30 were accepted because the mean scores were above the criterion mean of 3.00. Hence, adequate facilities availability in school enhances the good performance of secondary school students.

Hypotheses Testing

Two (2) null hypotheses postulated were analyzed and tested using t-test statistical tools at a 0.05 level of significance. Both principals and vice principals were represented by principals in the results.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the Mean Rating of Principals and Teachers on the Relationship between School Leadership and Students Academic Performance.

Table V: T-test statistics of the significance difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the relationship between school leadership and students' academic performance.

Groups	N	MEAN	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Principals	36	4.45	3.23	154	2.25	1.96	Reject Ho
Teachers	120	5.56	2.73				

Table V above shows that the calculated t-value of 2.25 at 154 degree of freedom is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0); which states that there is no significant difference between principals and teachers in the relationship between school leadership and students' academic performance is therefore rejected.

Hence, there is a significant difference between the principals and teachers in the relationship between school leadership and the academic performance of secondary school students.

Hypothesis 2

There is no Significant Difference in the Mean Rating of Principals and Teachers on the Relationship between Teachers' Professional Development and Students academic performance.

Table VI: T-test statistics of the significant difference between the mean rating of principals and teachers on the relationship between teachers' professional development and academic performance of secondary school students.

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Principals	36	3.98	2.87	154	1.44	1.98	Reject Ho
Teachers	120	4.35	2.59				

It can be seen from the table VI above that the calculated t-value of 1.44 at 154 degree of freedom is less than the critical t-value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that there is no significant difference between principals and teachers on the relationship between teacher's professional development and students' academic performance, is therefore accepted. Therefore, there is no any significant relationship between teachers' professional development and the performance of secondary school students.

Discussion of Findings

With reference to research question one which dealt with the relationship between school leadership and students' academic performance. The findings of the study show that both principals and teachers share the view that school leadership helps in the free flow of information between the heads and the students, the involvement of subordinates in decision making assure better students' performance, helps in effective monitoring of both the teachers and the students, effective motivation of students and teachers, formulating of aims and goals that suit students and teachers in a thoughtful manner and effective guidance and counseling of students in the school shows that school leadership has a relationship with students' academic performance.

The findings agreed with that of Uche (2012) which states that quality assurance influence contributed significantly to school leadership. Also, the lack of administrative materials was the problems facing principals' administrative job. With reference to research question two which dealt on the relationship between teacher's professional development and students' academic performance, the findings of the study show that both principals and teachers share the view that teachers' professional development helps teachers to develop good rapport, with students, increases students' level of understanding, given teachers to teach in classroom, allowing teachers to be exposed in their subject areas, engenders participative activities, exposing teachers to sue of instructional aides and exposing teachers to the importance of conferences and workshops. The findings also agreed with the finding of Obend (2012) whoshowed that there is no significant difference in the relationship between teachers' professional development and students' academic performance. With references to research question three which dealt with the relationship between the availability of teachers and students' academic performance, the findings of the study show that both principals and teachers share the view that the availability of teachers develops students' intelligence quotient, increases students' output, reduces workload, improves student s' performance, reduces stress for the principals, enable the school to cover the scheme of work, it reduces friction among teachers and engenders job satisfaction.

The finding agreed with that of Ekanem and Ijaiya (2013) who showed that employment of qualified teachers increases-the academic performance of students. Also, the inadequate teachers in the school system have been a major problem in students' performance in public secondary schools.

Research question four which dealt with the relationship between adequacy of facilities and students' academic performance. The findings of the study show that both principals and teachers share the view that the relationship between adequacy of facilities helps students to learn effectively, improves students' level of understanding, exposes students to different career choices, engenders healthy competition among students, engenders excellent performance in examination and equip students to stand their counterparts around the globe. The findings agreed with the findings of Adegbesan (2012) who stated that adequate facilities help in increasing the students' performance in the school system, also the implementation of quality assurance practice in schools will help in making sure that there are adequate facilities in schools.

Conclusion

The study reveals that quality education assurance is crucial for the academic performance of secondary school students in Gombe metropolis. It emphasizes the importance of proper educational resources, teacher development, and effective monitoring systems. Schools that provide adequate facilities, teaching materials, and technology enhance student learning outcomes. Continuous professional training and workshops foster a culture of growth and collaboration

among educators. Effective monitoring systems identify areas for improvement and prompt intervention. Schools led by competent administrators create a positive learning climate, promoting accountability and innovation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the researcher made the following recommendations.

1. Gombe State Ministry of Education should implement targeted leadership training programs for school administrators to enhance management strategies and foster a supportive learning environment.
2. Teacher training institutions should establish a robust professional development framework that includes regular training and encourages further education to improve teaching practices.
3. School management boards should conduct a comprehensive audit of school facilities and prioritize investments to create a conducive learning environment for students.
4. School district supervisors should explore the impact of different leadership styles on academic performance and implement participatory decision-making practices in schools.
5. Education stakeholders should design and evaluate professional development programs linked to student achievement, gathering data to ensure effective training.
6. School human resource departments should develop recruitment and retention strategies for qualified educators, along with regular evaluations focused on instructional quality.
7. Local government and community leaders should advocate for improved school facilities through a multi-stakeholder approach, establishing clear standards for adequacy and resource allocation.

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