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THE INFLUENCE OF SOME INDICES OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR QUALITY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES IN OYO STATE

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Abstract

Accountability was traditionally used to refer to public service, in which stewardship of public funds must be accounted. Accountability as an educational concept, in recent years, has to do with advancing the effectiveness of school systems. If educators are to be accountable for students' performance, the expected performance should be clearly stated and adequately measured. Accountability should also provide information on how money has been spent, especially on infrastructure/facilities, teachers salaries and what return has been made on investment in terms of students' academic achievement. In this regard, researchers (Obemeata 1995, and Yoloye 2003, 2004) emphasized the need for accountability to demonstrate returns of taxpayer's money invested in education. For instance, Mark (2009), in a paper titled "Looking into Linking Teacher Pay to Student Performance" stated that President Obama "laid out his vision for education... including linking teacher pay to student performance". For accountability to flourish there must be a positive link between accountability on the teachers' part and the salaries they are paid for their particular job which is teaching. Schrag added that teachers are answerable for what they do.

Background to the Problem

Miller (2000), in a study titled "An Examination of Teacher Salary and Student Performance", found that the better the teachers' salaries relative to other salaries in the local area, the worse the students' performance. Miller added that this may be due to the theory that teacher salary depends on the teacher's local market and the concept of supply and demand.

The principle of accountability is premised on questions bothering on school effectiveness. For schools to be considered effective, there must be empirical evidence, among other things, of appreciable students' performance, which is the hallmark of schooling.

Ogunwuyi (2008) on his part, identified several factors that could lead to students' poor performance, among these are inadequate school facilities, shortage of fund to purchase relevant equipment, poor quality of textbooks, crowded classrooms and laboratories, poorly motivated teachers, lack of laboratories and libraries.

Educators agreed that school facilities could account for students' performance in schools. In this light, Eathmean (2002) hinted that:

School facility conditions do affect students' academic achievement... Researchers have found negative impact upon students' performance in building where deficiencies in any of the features (i.e. temperature, lighting, acoustic and age) exist.

Some researchers also noted with concern that, underachievement is now rampant at the secondary school level (Abdulaihi, 2000). The issue of students' poor performance becomes more serious when one considers the 2009 West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) Chief Examiners Reports, where the poor performance

of candidates who sat for the 2009 public examinations was decried. As a result of the reported poor performance, many state governments are worried about the abysmal performance by the candidates who are mostly from public secondary schools and are wondering what might be responsible.

In addition, there have been several outcries about the state of education in Nigeria. Olakurin (2001) declares that the Nigerian education has in recent years, become a source of concern to Nigerians and non-Nigerians. In the same vein, Obayan (2002) affirms that our education lacks desirable impact because the individual beneficiary of education has not acquired the right knowledge, skills, values and attributes.

English language is one of the major school subjects in which candidates perform poorly, especially in the 2009 WAEC and NECO examinations. The perennial poor performance of candidates in public examinations has become a burden to the students themselves and their parents. A credit pass in English language is one of the requirements for admission into tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Moreover, English language is the official language and the language of most businesses in Nigeria (Ibode, 2004). As a matter of fact, English language is the Lingua-franca in Nigeria. This probably explains in addition, why student, parents and some school authorities are so worried by the problem of candidates' poor performance in English language.

Statement of Problem

Accountability in education has to do with advancing the effectiveness of the school system. Accountability is responsibility. Responsibility in education is within the realm of adequate provision of infrastructure and facilities in schools and appropriate remuneration of teachers to enhance teaching and learning. Accountability, apart from tasking the teachers to perform, also requires improved academic performance from students.

In view of the fact that problems of adequate provision of infrastructure and facilities exist in schools, coupled with inappropriate remuneration of teachers, the study therefore, investigated the availability and adequacy of infrastructure/facilities in Oyo State Secondary School. The study also investigated the effect of school facilities on students' achievement in English Language. In addition, the effect of teachers' remuneration on their job performance was also investigated.

Research Questions

1. Are infrastructure and facilities adequate in Oyo State schools?
2. What is the influence of:
 - i. availability
 - ii. adequacyof school infrastructure and facilities on students' academic achievement in English language?
3. What is the relationship of remuneration of teachers' salary and teachers' productivity?

Significance of the Study

It has become expedient that accountability be given its rightful place in Nigerian educational system. Since accountability is responsibility, the study has necessarily revealed the level of responsibility among some stakeholders of education in Oyo State. This means that the level and state of infrastructure and facilities in Oyo State, revealed in the study, is a pointer to funding agencies in the state that urgent steps should be taken to remedy the situation in the schools. Also, the poor remuneration and motivation of teachers in the state is also an indicator that it is high time, teachers are adequately remunerated and rewarded if students' academic performance are expected to improve.

Methodology

Research Design

The study is a survey research. It is considered appropriate because it facilitates the collection of factual information describing the existing phenomena according to Kerlinger & Lee (2000).

Population

The population for the study comprises all senior secondary schools in Oyo State, Nigeria.

Sampling technique and Sample

Multi-stage sampling technique was used in the study. Two senatorial zones were randomly selected from the existing three senatorial zones, comprising thirty-three Local Government Areas. The two senatorial zones selected were Oyo South and Oyo Central. Five (5) Local Government Areas were randomly picked from the two senatorial zones. Furthermore, two public senior secondary schools and one private senior secondary school were randomly selected from each of the ten (10) Local Government Areas chosen. In conclusion, ten (10) students, comprising five boys and five girls were randomly selected from each of the thirty schools chosen for the study, making a total number of three hundred (300) students.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed along the lines of the stated research questions. Descriptive statistics was employed, using mean and Standard Deviation, Multiple Regression Analysis and Pearson Correlation.

Instrumentation

The instruments used for data collection were two, and were developed by the researcher. They are:

1. School Facility Question (SFQ)
2. English Language Achievement Test (ELAT)

1. School Facility Questionnaire (SFQ)

The SFQ has three sections A, B & C. Section 'A' is on the biodata of the school. This section contains items such as: name of school, year school was founded, location of the school. Section 'B' contains items on school infrastructure/facilities, while section 'C' contains items on remuneration structure of teachers in each of the schools. The instrument has reliability coefficient of 0.75.

2. English Language Achievement Test (ELAT)

The ELAT comprises two sections; Section A & B. Section A contains biodata of the respondents. Section B contains 25 items of multiple choice English language test with four options per item. It is based on the S.S 2 syllabus and it has a reliability estimate of 0.86.

Results and Discussion

The results are presented along the lines of the stated research questions.

Research Question 1

1. Are the infrastructure and facilities adequate in Oyo State schools?

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
School location	30	1.00	2.00	1.5000	.5056
School type	30	1.00	2.00	1.6333	.4901
Year of Establishment	30	1.00	4.00	1.6000	.7701
Adequacy school	30	1.00	17.00	13.1667	1.6418

The table shows that thirty schools were used for the study. In the case of school type, ten (10) schools are privately

owned while twenty (20) schools are public schools. The mean score found was 1.6333. The year of establishment of the schools was classified into three and these are: (i) Before 1960; (ii) Between 1960 and 1983 and (iii) Schools after 1983. The mean was found to be 1.6000. Schools established before 1960 were four in number, those between 1960 and 1983 were eleven while those after 1983 were fifteen. The standard deviations of all the description of the school are between .4901 and .7701. The mean score of adequacy of infrastructure and facilities in Oyo state was 13.1667. The pre-set standard for adequacy of infrastructure in Oyo State was 13.5. In view of the fact that the mean score found was less than the pre-set standard, it can be inferred that infrastructure/facilities are not adequate in senior secondary schools in Oyo State.

This result confirms Alabi's (2008) study which found school infrastructure and facilities are grossly inadequate and dilapidated in Oyo State. Also, School Construction (2000) affirms, that many schools are "plagued" by decaying buildings that are inimical to the "health, safety and learning opportunities of students".

One wonders why school facilities are still lacking in school in Oyo State, despite the overwhelming evidence that these school indicators are germane to teaching and learning in school.

Research Question 2

What is the influence of:

- i. availability
 - ii. adequacy
- of school infrastructure/facilities on students' academic achievement in English language?

Table 2: Descriptive statistics showing the Mean and Standard Deviation of Scores in Adequacy and Availability of

Infrastructure facilities and Achievement scores in English language

	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Adequacy score	13.167	1.832	300
Availability Score	14.667	1.976	300
Achievement	12.270	3.549	300

Table 2 indicates that the mean score of adequacy was 13.167 while that of availability was 14.667. The mean achievement test in English Language was found to be 12.27. The values of adequacy and availability for pre-set values were 13.5 and 16.5 respectively. Nine (9) items measured adequacy while eleven (11) items measured availability. It was expected that for each of the item, there should be a mean of 1.5 and this translates to 13.5 for adequacy and 16.5 for availability. The mean score of achievement test in English language was 12.27 and this is considered below average.

Table 3: Correlations of Adequacy and Availability of Infrastructure/Facilities with Achievement Scores in English Language

		Achievement	Adequacy	Availability
Pearson correlation	Achievement	1.000	.210	.265
	Adequacy	.210	1.000	.850
	Availability	.285	.850	1.000
Significance	Achievement		.000	.000
	Adequacy	.000		.000
	Availability	.000	.000	
N	Achievement	300	300	300
	Adequacy	300	300	300
	Availability	300	300	300

The correlation in table 3 indicate a significant relationship between availability and achievement which is $r =$

.285; $p < .05$. Also, there is a significant relationship between adequacy and achievement which is $r = .210$; $p < .05$. The descriptive statistics in Table 2 indicate non adequacy and availability of school infrastructure/facilities in Oyo State. This correlation, though positive implies that students are negatively affected by the non availability and adequacy of school infrastructure/facilities in English Language in Oyo State.

Table 4: Model Summary of contribution of Adequacy and Availability to Achievement.

Model	R	R square	Adjust R square	Std. error of the Estimate
1	.291	.085	.079	3.406

Table 5: Anora Summary Table

Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sy
Regression	319.379	2	159.690	13.764	.000
Residual	3445.751	297	11.602		
Total	3765.134	299			

Table 6:

Model	Unstandardised		Standardised Coefficient	T	Sig
	B	Std error	Beta		
Constant	5.153	1.518		3.395	.001
Adequacy score	-.224	.204	-.115	-1.094	.275
Availability score	.688	.190	.385	3.630	.000

The model summary of Table 4 and the ANOVA summary indicate that the overall model of two independent variables significantly predict achievement score in English language, $R^2=.291$, $R^2_{adj}=.085$, $F(2,297)=13.764$, $P=0.000$. However, a review of the beta weights in Table 6 specify that only availability $B=.383$, $P=.000$, significantly contributed to the model. This value indicates the fact that availability is not a sufficient condition for adequacy of infrastructure/facilities. The conclusion that can be drawn is that availability and adequacy of school infrastructure/ facilities can influence students' academic achievement in English language. In this particular case, the non-availability and adequacy of school infrastructure/ facilities as measured by descriptive statistics of mean could be said to have influenced the academic achievement of English language in the negative direction.

In other words, availability and adequacy of infrastructure and facilities in school positively affect students' performance in English language. This result is supported by Emerald (2008) who confirmed a link between adequate school facilities and students' achievement in English language. In fact, Duran-Narucki (2008) that little is known about how the conditions of school facilities affects academic outcomes and state from the findings on his study that there is empirical evidence quality of school buildings affect students' academic outcomes. The centrality of school facilities and school infrastructure to students' performance cannot be over-emphasized. Stakeholders in education, especially government must take the bull by the horn and confront the problem of school facilities. This become more important in view of what Holt (1994) stated that many public school facilities are in disrepair, a situation affecting the "morale, health, and academic achievement of students".

Research Question 3

What is the influence of remuneration of teachers salary on teachers productivity.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics showing the Mean and Standard Deviation of remuneration of teachers salary.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Teachers Remuneration	30	1.000	4.000	1.967	.837

Table 7 reveals that teachers' remuneration at a minimum level of 1 and a maximum level of 4 has a mean of 1.967. The measurement of the teachers' remuneration is:

Below ₦ 30,000 = 1

Between ₦ 30,000 - ₦35, 000 =2

Between N35, 000 – N40, 000 =3

Above N40, 000 =4

Teachers' productivity here is measured, using the academic achievement of students in English language.

Table 8: Correlation of Teachers Remuneration and Teachers Productivity in English Language

		Teachers remuneration	Achievement
Teachers remuneration	Pearson correlation	.199	.001
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.300	.300
N			
Teachers productivity	Pearson correlation	.199	.001
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.300	.300
N			

Table 8 indicates that there is a positive significant relationship between teachers remuneration and teachers productivity ($r = .199$; $p < .05$). It therefore implies that a high level of remuneration of teachers' salary should translate to high teachers' productivity as measured by the academic performance of the students. Similarly, a low level of remuneration of teachers' salary as demonstrated by this study would lead to below average achievement of the students.

It has become obvious that there is world-wide correlation between teachers' remuneration to teachers' productivity, and even correlation between teacher's pay and students' performance. In Nigeria, where teachers' salary has become an issue of debate and sometimes has led to "work-to-rule" or "strike actions" by teachers, it is of great concern to stakeholders in education to address the issue of low remuneration for teachers in the educational institutions. This becomes more important in view of the relationship between teachers pay and productivity and students performance. In a paper titled "Looking into Linking Teacher pay to Student Performance", Mark (2009) stated that President Obama of the United States and other people believe that there is link between teachers pay and students performance. In the same light, Miller (2000) found that "performance based system for teacher can improve students' performance".

Conclusion

The study was borne out of a curious desire for practical accountability in the secondary school education with the obvious suspicion that all was not well with out education. School infrastructure, school facilities, teachers' remuneration and students' academic performance are some of the major school indicators which must not be handled with levity. In view of the public outcry about the poor performance of students in public examinations, coupled with the on-going debate on the quality of

products from our educational institutions, the provision of these indicators has become a task that must be done. It is of course not surprising that this study found most of the school infrastructure/facilities either not available or not adequate. Secondary schools in Oyo State have been observed in recent years to be on a steady decline. Except urgent steps are taken to arrest the ugly situation, the resultant effect of this decline in facilities will continue to be an embarrassment to educational stakeholders in the state and to Nigeria in general. The same phenomenon applies to teachers' low remuneration, which teachers unions all over the country, have battled to a stand-still. A "hungry man", says an adage "is an angry man". Same goes for teachers, a poorly paid teacher may not put up his best at work. The implication is that, students are the ones on the receiving end – low remuneration – poor job performance – poor students' academic performance. This is indeed frightful. For accountability to become a positive reality in education, all stakeholders in education must live to their responsibilities of adequate funding of education by way of providing adequate and functional quality educational infrastructure/facilities. In addition, teachers' motivation and remunerations must be jealously guarded and upgraded to ensure maximum job delivery from teachers which ultimately translate to improved students' academic performance.

Recommendation

In view of the findings of the study, the researcher hereby recommends that:

- a) Stakeholders in education should set up committees to be charged with the responsibilities of providing infrastructure/facilities in schools and see to it that these school indicators are provided urgently.

- b) Government should expedite action on increment of teachers' remunerations and motivations of teachers for better job delivery.
- c) Students should be changed to study hard and come out in flying colours. This could be done by way of motivating the students through awards to those students who perform highly in the examinations.

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