



Factors Influencing the Academic Achievement of Economics Students in WASSCE in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Mubi North Local Government Areas, Adamawa State

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the factors influencing the academic achievement of Economic students in the WASSCE at public senior secondary schools in the Mubi North Local Government Area of Adamawa State. The objective was to identify potential solutions to the persistent issues affecting students' academic performance in this region. To achieve these objectives, a descriptive survey research design was employed, covering all public secondary schools in the targeted area. The study population consisted of students from these schools. The findings of this study highlight that student-teacher relationships are as crucial as the teaching and learning processes themselves. Evidence suggests that a positive connection between learners and their instructors enables students to interact with their teachers without fear. Effective classroom engagement provides students with opportunities to socialize while learning, which keeps them motivated, ensures appropriate instruction with friendly feedback, and minimizes disruptive behavior. Students who have positive interactions with their teachers are likely to develop a positive attitude towards school and classroom commitment, which correlates positively with their academic performance. Therefore, classroom engagement and student motivation are key dimensions and determinants of academic performance in secondary schools. It is essential for all relevant stakeholders to make concerted efforts to improve the existing relationships between students and teachers.

Key words: performance, Education, academic, Economic and motivated.

Introduction

Academic achievement is a critical measure of students' success and is influenced by various factors, particularly in high-stakes examinations like the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). The academic performance of students in Economics, a core subject in the WASSCE, has garnered considerable attention due to its implications for students' future educational and career prospects. In recent years, educational researchers and policymakers have focused on understanding the factors that contribute to students' academic success in this subject, particularly in the context of public senior secondary schools in Nigeria.

Several studies have identified a range of factors that influence academic achievement, including socioeconomic status, availability of learning resources, teacher quality, and student motivation (Adeyemi & Adu, 2022; Johnson & Onuoha, 2021). The student-teacher relationship has also been recognized as a significant determinant of academic performance. Positive interactions between students and teachers are associated with increased student engagement, motivation, and

a conducive learning environment, all of which contribute to better academic outcomes (Oladipo et al., 2023).

In the Mubi North Local Government Area of Adamawa State, the persistent challenges faced by students in achieving satisfactory results in Economics have raised concerns among educators and stakeholders. Despite various interventions, the academic performance of students in this subject remains suboptimal. This study aims to investigate the factors influencing the academic achievement of Economics students in the WASSCE within this specific context, with a view to identifying potential solutions to these ongoing issues.

Statement of the Problem

The academic performance of students in Economics in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) in the Mubi North Local Government Area of Adamawa State has been consistently poor. This issue is alarming as it negatively impacts students' prospects for higher education and future employment opportunities. Despite various interventions, the persistent low achievement in Economics suggests that key factors influencing academic performance in this context remain inadequately addressed.

Potential contributors to this problem include ineffective teaching methods, lack of sufficient learning resources, poor student-teacher relationships, and low student motivation. However, the specific impact of these factors on Economics students in this region has not been thoroughly investigated. Without a clear understanding of these influences, efforts to improve academic outcomes may continue to fall short.

This study aims to identify and analyze the factors affecting the academic achievement of Economics students in public senior secondary schools in Mubi North. The findings will be crucial for developing effective strategies to enhance student performance in Economics, benefiting both students and the broader educational system.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the factors influencing the academic achievement of Economics students in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination

(WASSCE) in public senior secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area, Adamawa State. The study aims to provide insights that will inform strategies to improve student performance in Economics within this specific context.

Research Questions

In order to discover the extent of student-teacher relationships in public secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area, the following research question was raised to guide the study:

What is the level of student-teacher relationships and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area?

What is the relationship between classroom engagement as a subset of student-teacher relationships and academic performance of secondary school students in Mubi North Local Government Area?

Research Hypotheses

The following Null hypotheses were formulated for the study.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between student-teacher relationships and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between classroom engagement as a variable of student- teacher relationships and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area.

Methodology

This study was survey research design to determine the influence of teacher – students relationship on academic performance of senior secondary school Economic students in Mubi North Local Government Area of Adamawa State. A survey research design is a form of research in which data is collected by asking a set of reformulated questions in a predetermined sequence of a defined population. The population for this study consists of all the students in SS I secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area.

The sample for this research is four hundred (400) students from four selected secondary schools (4) out of all the senior secondary schools in Mubi North local government area. The sampling technique used in this study is simple random sampling technique. The questionnaire is the instrument for data collection. It is structured based on the research questions that guide the study. A four-point Likert scale of very Strongly Agree [AD], Agree [A], Strongly Disagree [SD] and Disagree [D] was used. The instrument was validated by the project supervisor and other lecturers from the department of Science Education. Corrections and modifications were made accordingly on the affected items, before the final production of the instrument.

The researcher used Cronbach's Alpha formula to establish the internal consistency reliability of the study. The index obtained (0.90) served as a measure of its reliability. The reliability index shows that the instrument is reliable.

The instrument use in this study was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaires was administered personally by the researcher to the respondents in order to retrieve number of the questionnaire issued out. The questionnaire was collected at the spot. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation) were used to answer the research questions where a value of 2.5 was used as the acceptable mean. Any item with the value of 2.5 and above was accepted as the advantages and disadvantages in the use of social media and those below 2.5 were rejected in reaching the decision. T-test method of data analysis was used to test the hypotheses formulated.

Research Question 1: What is the level of student-teacher relationships and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area?

Table 1: Student-teacher relationships and academic performance of students

Item	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
My teacher provides support for all students	400	3.92	.567	Accepted
My teacher has a positive attitude on a daily basis	400	2.69	.133	Accepted
My teacher presents the information in a way that is easy to understand	400	2.34	1.133	Rejected
My teacher cares about my academic and social	400	2.56	.089	Accepted

well-being				
My teacher is sensitive to all students	400	2.97	.671	Accepted

*Accepted ($\bar{x} = 2.5$ and above); Rejected ($\bar{x} =$ less than 2.5)

The analysis of student-teacher relationships and their impact on academic performance in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area provides insightful findings. According to the data presented in Table 1, several aspects of student-teacher relationships were evaluated to determine their effectiveness in supporting students' academic achievements.

The item "My teacher provides support for all students" received a mean score of 3.92 with a standard deviation of 0.567, indicating a strong acceptance of this aspect. This suggests that students perceive their teachers as being supportive, which is a crucial factor for fostering a positive learning environment. Supportive teacher-student relationships are known to enhance academic performance by providing students with the necessary encouragement and resources to succeed academically.

On the other hand, "My teacher has a positive attitude on a daily basis" and "My teacher cares about my academic and social well-being" were both accepted with means of 2.69 and 2.56 respectively. These scores reflect a moderate level of acceptance and imply that while teachers generally exhibit a positive attitude and care about students' well-being, there is room for improvement in consistently demonstrating these qualities.

The evaluation also reveals that "My teacher presents the information in a way that is easy to understand" received a mean score of 2.34 with a high standard deviation of 1.133, indicating a rejection of this aspect. This suggests that students find the presentation of information by their teachers to be less effective in facilitating understanding. This aspect is critical, as the ability to convey information clearly impacts students' comprehension and academic performance.

Additionally, the item "My teacher views me as an important part of the classroom" had a mean score of 1.96 and was rejected, which points to a significant area of concern. This low score indicates that students do not feel valued or recognized as important contributors to the classroom environment, which can negatively impact their motivation and engagement in learning.

The findings also show that "My teacher motivates me to give my best effort" and "I admire my teacher" were accepted with means of 2.56 and 3.21 respectively. These results suggest that students feel motivated by their teachers and hold them in high regard, which can positively influence their academic performance by fostering a sense of respect and inspiration.

The results suggest that while there are positive aspects in the student-teacher relationships, significant improvements are needed in areas such as making information more accessible and recognizing students as integral parts of the classroom. Enhancing these aspects could potentially improve academic performance and overall student satisfaction in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between classroom engagement as a subset of student-teacher relationships and academic performance of secondary school students in Mubi North Local Government area?

Table 2: Relationship between classroom engagement as a subset of student-teacher relationships and academic performance of students.

Item	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remarks
My teacher uses examples of student background experiences, beliefs, and knowledge	400	2.10	.013	Rejected
My teacher provides high and clear expectations for academic Performance	400	2.45	.081	Rejected
My teacher lets students take risks in classroom learning activities	400	2.65	.321	Accepted
My teacher takes the time to assist individual students that need help	400	1.97	.321	Rejected
My teacher motivates students through inspiring teaching				

*Accepted ($\bar{x} = 2.5$ and above); Rejected ($\bar{x} =$ less than 2.5).

The analysis of classroom engagement as a subset of student-teacher relationships and its impact on academic performance in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area reveals several key insights. According to Table 2, the data indicates that most aspects of classroom engagement were perceived negatively by students, which has implications for their academic performance.

The item "My teacher uses examples of student background experiences, beliefs, and knowledge" received a mean score of 2.10, with a very low standard deviation of 0.013, indicating a rejection of this aspect. This suggests that students feel their teachers do not effectively incorporate their personal backgrounds into lessons. This lack of contextual relevance can diminish students' engagement and connection with the material, which is crucial for effective learning and academic success.

Similarly, "My teacher provides high and clear expectations for academic performance" was also rejected with a mean score of 2.45 and a standard deviation of 0.081. This finding implies that students perceive a deficiency in the clarity and level of expectations set by their teachers. Clear and high expectations are essential for guiding students towards achieving their academic goals and can influence their motivation and performance.

The item "My teacher lets students take risks in classroom learning activities" was accepted with a mean score of 2.65. This indicates that while students feel somewhat supported in taking risks, this aspect alone is not sufficient to enhance overall classroom engagement. Risk-taking is a component of an engaging learning environment but must be accompanied by other supportive practices to be effective.

The analysis also shows that "My teacher takes the time to assist individual students that need help" and "My teacher motivates students through inspiring teaching" were rejected, with mean scores of 1.97 and 2.29 respectively. These results suggest that students perceive insufficient individual assistance and a lack of motivational teaching approaches, both of which are critical for fostering an engaging and supportive learning environment.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between student-teacher relationships and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Mubi North local government area.

Table 4: Difference between student-teacher relationships and academic performance.

Source of Variable	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	F-crit	Remark
Between Groups	2.800	1	2.800	3.433	3.87	Accepted
Within Groups	273.636	398	.918			

Total 314.437 399

*Not Significant: $P < 0.05$

The analysis of the relationship between student-teacher relationships and academic performance, as presented in Table 4, reveals important insights regarding the impact of these relationships on students' academic outcomes in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area. The data includes an F-value and critical F-value to determine whether there is a significant relationship between the variables.

From the table, the F-value calculated is 3.433, which is compared against the critical F-value of 3.87. Given that the F-value of 3.433 is lower than the critical F-value of 3.87 at a significance level of $P < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is accepted. This outcome indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship between student-teacher relationships and academic performance.

The F-value, which measures the ratio of variance between groups to the variance within groups, reflects how much the group means differ from each other relative to the variance within the groups. Since the calculated F-value does not exceed the critical value, it suggests that the variability in academic performance cannot be significantly attributed to differences in student-teacher relationships. In other words, changes or differences in student-teacher relationships do not appear to have a substantial impact on students' academic performance based on the data analyzed.

This result implies that while student-teacher relationships are important, their direct effect on academic performance may not be as pronounced as initially hypothesized. Other factors, potentially beyond the scope of this analysis, could be influencing academic outcomes. Therefore, while fostering positive student-teacher relationships remains valuable for creating a

supportive learning environment, this study's findings suggest that these relationships alone may not significantly alter academic performance in the context of Mubi North Local Government Area's secondary schools.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between classroom engagement as a variable of student- teacher relationships and academic performance of students in secondary schools in Mubi North local government area?

Table 5: Difference between classroom engagement as a variable of student-teacher relationships and academic performance of students.

Source of Variable	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	F-crit	Remark
Between Groups	29.872	1	29.872	42.134	3.87	Rejected
Within Groups	211.274	398	.709			

Total 241.147 399

*Not Significant: $P < 0.05$.

The analysis of classroom engagement as a variable of student-teacher relationships and its impact on academic performance in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area provides important insights into how this specific aspect of student-teacher relationships relates to academic outcomes. The data presented in Table 5 includes the F-value and critical F-value, which are used to determine the significance of the relationship between classroom engagement and academic performance.

In Table 5, the calculated F-value is 42.134, which is significantly higher than the critical F-value of 3.87 at a significance level of $P < 0.05$. This result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that there is a significant relationship between classroom engagement and academic performance.

The F-value, representing the ratio of variance between groups to variance within groups, measures how much classroom engagement impacts academic performance compared to the variability within the groups. The high F-value suggests that the differences in classroom engagement are associated with significant differences in academic performance among students. Specifically, it indicates that variations in how engaged students are in the classroom—driven by

the interactions and practices of their teachers—can meaningfully influence their academic outcomes.

The analysis shows that classroom engagement, as an aspect of student-teacher relationships, plays a crucial role in affecting students' academic performance. Teachers' efforts to engage students actively in learning activities, connect lessons to real-world experiences, and create a stimulating learning environment contribute to improved academic outcomes. This finding underscores the importance of fostering effective classroom engagement strategies to enhance student performance.

In summary, the significant F-value indicates that classroom engagement is a key factor influencing academic performance in the context of Mubi North Local Government Area's secondary schools. This result emphasizes the need for educators to focus on engaging students more effectively to positively impact their academic achievements.

Discussion

The analysis of student-teacher relationships and their impact on academic performance in secondary schools in Mubi North Local Government Area reveals both strengths and areas for improvement. Data from Table 1 indicates that while students generally perceive teacher support positively, there are significant gaps in how teachers present information and recognize students' contributions. Effective communication and recognition are crucial for creating an environment conducive to learning, as supported by Oladipo et al. (2023), who emphasize that clear instruction and active recognition significantly influence student motivation and engagement.

The results from Table 2 further show that classroom engagement, particularly in how teachers incorporate students' backgrounds and set academic expectations, is perceived as lacking by students. This aligns with Johnson and Onuoha's (2021) findings that classroom engagement is a critical determinant of academic success. The significant relationship between classroom engagement and academic performance found in Table 5 underscores the importance of actively involving students in the learning process to improve outcomes.

The hypothesis testing results suggest that while student-teacher relationships are important for a supportive learning environment, they do not directly influence academic performance in this

context (Table 4). Instead, classroom engagement emerges as a key factor, highlighting the need for educators to focus on strategies that enhance student interaction and participation in class (Adeyemi & Adu, 2022).

Conclusion

This study concludes that while student-teacher relationships contribute to a supportive learning environment, they do not have a direct and significant impact on academic performance in Mubi North Local Government Area secondary schools. Instead, classroom engagement plays a crucial role in determining academic success. Teachers' ability to engage students through clear, relevant, and inspiring instruction is essential for improving academic performance. Therefore, efforts to enhance classroom engagement should be a primary focus for educators aiming to improve students' academic achievements.

Recommendations

Improvement of Instructional Methods: Teachers should focus on presenting information more effectively to ensure lessons are clear and accessible to all students. Professional development programs can provide teachers with strategies for enhancing instructional delivery (Oladipo et al., 2023).

Enhancing Classroom Engagement: Schools should encourage teachers to incorporate students' backgrounds and experiences into their lessons to make learning more relatable and engaging. Additionally, setting high and clear expectations for academic performance should be prioritized (Johnson & Onuoha, 2021).

Recognition and Inclusion: Teachers should strive to recognize students as important contributors to the classroom environment, fostering a culture where every student feels valued and included in the learning process (Adeyemi & Adu, 2022).

Ongoing Assessment and Feedback: Regular assessments of student-teacher relationships and classroom engagement should be conducted to identify areas for improvement. Feedback mechanisms can help teachers adjust their approaches to better meet students' needs (Oladipo et al., 2023).

Stakeholder Involvement: Collaboration between teachers, school administrators, parents, and the community is essential in creating an environment that supports both student-teacher relationships and classroom engagement. Stakeholders should work together to implement policies and practices that enhance these areas, ultimately improving academic performance (Johnson & Onuoha, 2021).

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