



School Variables and Upper Basic Students' Performance in Social Studies in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated influence of school variables on Upper Basic students' performance in Social Studies in Ilorin, Kwara State. The study adopted descriptive survey method. Stratified Random Sampling Technique was employed to select six upper basic schools consisting of public and private, single and co-educational as well as day and boarding schools in Ilorin, Kwara State. Purposive sampling technique was used to select thirty upper basic II students in each selected school in Ilorin. A total of one hundred and eighty (180) upper basic students was sampled in the study. Proforma was used to collect the students' scores for data analysis. The data obtained were analyzed using t-test statistic. Based on the analyzed data, the findings of the study showed that school ownership has a significant influence on upper basic students' performance in Social Studies. School type and school structure are not statistically significant on students' performance in Social Studies in the upper basic schools. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that quality and standard of the teaching and learning in public schools should be given priority by all stakeholders in education, academic competition and cooperation should be encouraged among students in public and private schools and regular comparative analysis of public and private school students' performance in various subjects should be encouraged.

Key-word: School ownership, Structure, Types, Students' performance, Social Studies

Introduction

Social Studies Education is a programme of study in which a society uses to inculcate in the learners the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and actions it considers important concerning the relationship human beings have with each other and their environment. Okunloye (2006) defined Social Studies as an integrated school subject that focuses on the study

of human-environmental relationships for the purpose of citizenship education. This was supported by view of Mezieobi, Fubara and Mezieobi (2008) who defined Social Studies as an integrative field of study which probes human symbiotic relationships with the environments. It endows mankind with the reflective or contemplative capacities as well as the intellectual, affective and social skills



that will enable them to understand social problems and rationally solve or strategise coping mechanism for the challenges for effective living in the society.

Odetomi (2013) opined that Social Studies is an integrated discipline that emphasizes totality of human existence. Areas of human existence include Politics, Economy, History, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Geography, Linguistics and Technology among others. Each of these areas poses one challenge or another to human beings in the course of their interaction with their environments. The totality of these areas is embedded in the concept of integration in Social Studies. Ezegbe, Eskay, Anyanwu and Abiogu (2014) perceived Social Studies as a study concerned with issues of social change as it investigates outcome of human meaningful interactions with their physical, social and cultural environments. With all these definitions and different perspectives, it could be understood that Social Studies is centred on the desire to proffer solutions to the perceived and the anticipated problems that arise from man's interaction with the environment. Social Studies therefore deals with how human beings utilize the necessary attitudes, values, information, skills, technology and other available resources in the society purposely to fit or cope with social problems and challenges arise from daily individual activities in the society (Olokooba, 2015).

The contents of Social Studies provide background knowledge and experiences for the child to draw upon in the future when he or she picked any of disciplines. What to teach in Social Studies has always centered on discipline structures, concepts, contents and generalizations of ideas. What to teach includes human interaction, human endeavours, societal sensitization and problem solving skills using knowledge from many sources. How to teach the subject was perceived as dispensing information on social sciences. Social Studies emphasizes the development of desirable social, civic and personal behavior in learners, the scope has also changed to humanity. How to teach the subject has also centred on the method of seeking truth and includes inquiry, problem solving, learning by doing and discovery learning (Ogundare, 2010). When to teach, what to teach and how to teach Social Studies are solely depend on school environment where human and material resources are managed purposely to ensure effective teaching and learning.

The school is a formal institution of learning that enable learners to have access to human and materials resources which are inevitable in education. It is structured in such a way that it makes teaching and learning processes conducive for learners. Nature only provides the raw materials in form of potentials but it is the school environment that determines the extent of development of learners through effective utilization of available resources. There is a mismatch in



expected quality of students produced in secondary schools and quality of individuals expected to contribute to growth and development of various social institutions in the country. In assessing the causes and effects of the level of student academic performance, the researchers consider school variables as factors that influence the level of student academic performance (Abdulsalam, 2016 & Olokooba, 2019).

Researchers have postulated a form of severe relationship between the ownership of school, the students' academic performance as well as availability and utilization of instructional facilities in the schools (Adu, 2002 & Olokooba, 2019). The availability of educational resources at the disposal of the students in terms of schooling materials affects learners' level of academic performance. Most excelling students tend to emerge from private school in the modern academic dispensation with the paradox of whose teachers emerging from the public school in the old academic dispensation in Nigeria. The school ownership is the body, organization or government who organizes, controls and coordinates human and material resources in the schools. The ownership of school could be divided into two broad ownership structures which are: public and private ownership. The schools established and managed by the governments are referred to as public schools compared to the latter which are established and controlled by individuals, organizations and mission bodies and

are supported wholly by payment of fees without relying on public or government funding. In a study on school ownership and students' academic performance in Nigeria, Isah (2004) pointed out that 86.5% of the respondents affirmed that private schools offer better quality instruction that improve their students' performance than public schools. Furthermore, Odewumi (2008) conducted a study on the effect of a computer assisted instructional package on students' performance in Fine arts. The findings of the study showed that school ownership had no significant effect on the performance of students exposed to computer assisted instructional package. Most publicly owned schools which are characterized by failing structures, physical dilapidated building, teachers with outdated information, examination malpractice, lack of planning and non-motivated teachers have a negative effect on the students' academic performance as they may not be able to compete with their private counterpart (Ehiametalor, 2005).

The school type is the composition of students in terms of gender in the school setting. This can be broadly divided into two namely: single-gender schools and mixed gender schools (co-educational). Single gender schools are the schools in which their compositions of students are based on the gender. There is either male only or female only school while the mixed gender school comprises of both male and female. Making this a matter of choice for parents to either



choose between a single gender school or mixed schools for their wards, based on what suits their wards.

Sadker, Sadker, and Zittleman (2009) reported that many proponents of single-sex education believe that separating boys and girls increases students' achievement and academic interest. Other proponents, it should be noted, take the stance that regardless of the effects of single-sex schooling, single-sex schooling should be available as an option for interested families. In this case, however, parents and school districts making the choice need accurate information about whether single-sex programs yield better outcomes than co-educational programs. The question of whether single-sex schooling improves student outcomes is still important, particularly because it is expensive and cumbersome to implement in public schools. In public school single-sex environments, students' achievement improves, especially for minority students or students in poverty, because of improved behaviours and teachers focus on learning-style differences (Guarisco, 2010). Females also benefit from single-sex environments. While the risk is still present in single-sex schools, some feel that the single-sex environment provides a safer environment for female students. However in co-educational environments, sexual harassment is among the unfortunate problems in co-educational, school counselling and effective social controls should be taken as measures in curbing the social problems in schools.

School structure is the arrangement of school setting on the account of accommodating students in the school hostel or outside the school premises. This can be referred to as day and boarding school system. A boarding school is a school where some or all the students study and live in the school hostel purposely to face their study. Day school is a school where students go by day and return to their families in the evenings because they live outside the school environment. The boarding students enjoy their studies and utilize both school human and materials resources to improve their academic performance. Boarding students face some challenges such as exorbitant costs, over crowdedness, food problems, and bad companies, among others (Bahadar, Mahnaz & Jadoon, 2014). Day system is also important as it gives room for the interaction of parents with children that improve the confidence and aspiration of students on their academic performance. However, day students face many challenges that negatively affect their performance. These include unsuitable home environment for study, walking long distances before reaching the schools sometimes in harsh weather conditions, lateness to school, involving in domestic work at home (child labour) and bad company among others. Some of the present day boarding schools have day students who attend them.

Academic performance of students as well as the quality of the products in secondary schools in Nigeria are great issues that many stakeholders in



education feel concerned about the schools and their graduated students. The learning experiences that the students are exposed to in the schools determine the quality of products graduated by the schools. The quality of education not only depends on the teachers as reflected in the National Policy on Education but also on the effective structure and coordination of school environment. It was believed that the school features have a form of relationship with the student academic performance in terms of the school structure, ownership and type. A school with highly populated students as it is common in public schools may result in the teachers not being able to monitor the learners' activities and performance and thus affecting the students' academic performance. The school variables, which include school ownership, school type and school structure were investigated to determine their effect on students' academic in Social Studies.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of school variables on upper basic students' performance in Ilorin, Kwara State while the specific objectives are to examine influence of school ownership, school type as well as school structure on upper basic students' performance in Social Studies.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided this study:

1. There is no significant difference

between public and private upper basic students' performance in Social Studies.

2. There is no significant difference between co-educational and single upper basic students' performance in Social Studies.

3. There is no significant difference between day and boarding upper basic students' performance in Social Studies.

Method

The study adopted descriptive survey method. The population of the study was all upper basic students in Kwara State. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to select six upper basic schools consisting of public and private, single and co-educational as well as day and boarding schools in Ilorin, Kwara State. Purposive sampling technique was used to select thirty upper basic II students in each selected school in Ilorin. A total of 180 upper basic students was sampled for the study. A researchers' designed proforma was used to elicit information from the students' record. This proforma consisted of two main sections. Section A sought the basic information of respondents in correlation with the school variables while section B also sought the performance of the students in their last examination with a table consisting of fifteen (15) rows to record each student's name, gender and their scores so as to determine the influence of school type, school structure as well as school ownership on upper basic students' performance in Social Studies. For the validity of



this instrument, drafted copy of the proforma was given to two experts in Social Sciences Education in Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. The corrections and suggestions made were incorporated in the final copy of the

proforma used for data collection. The proforma was administered by the researcher to the selected schools after getting the right permission from the school management. The hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 significance level.

Results

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between public and private upper basic students' performance in Social Studies.

Table 1: t-test Analysis of the Difference between Public and Private Upper Basic Students' Performance in Social Studies

School Ownership	N	Mean	S. D	Df	Cal. t- value	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
Public	30	51.93	15.49	58	2.71	0.00	S
Private	30	62.67	14.46				

P<0.05

Table 1 showed the mean academic performance of upper basic students based on school ownership. The P-value of 0.00 is less than the sig. value of 0.05 thus, the null hypothesis is not accepted. Therefore, there is a significant difference between public and private upper basic students' performance in Social Studies in Ilorin, Kwara State. The difference is in favour of Private school students

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between co- educational and single upper basic students' performance in Social Studies.

Table: 2: t-test Analysis of Difference between Co-educational and Single Upper Basic Students' Performance in Social Studies

School Type	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t- value	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
Co-educational	30	50.70	9.19	58	1.167	.25	NS
Single	30	54.4	14.72				

P > 0.05

The mean academic performance of upper basic students are 50.7 and 54.4 respectively. The p-value .25 is greater than the significant level of 0.05 thus have no evidence against the null, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between co-educational and single upper basic students' academic performance in Social Studies.



H_{03} : There is no significant difference between day and boarding upper basic students' performance in Social Studies.

Table 3: t-test Analysis of Difference between Day and Boarding Upper Basic Students' Performance in Social Studies

School Structure	N	Mean	S. D	Df	Cal. t- value	Sig. (2 tailed)	Decision
Day	30	59.5	14.02	58	0.310	.76	NS
Boarding	30	60.80	18.21				

$P > 0.05$

Upper basic students' academic performance is shown on the table by the mean score. The p-value .76 greater than the sig. level of .05. Thus, the null is not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between day and boarding upper basic students' academic performance in Social Studies.

Discussion

Based on the finding of this study, it was revealed that school ownership is a significant variable that influence upper basic students' performance in Social Studies in Ilorin, Kwara State, in which private school students performed better than their counterpart in public schools. This finding is in line with Ehiamentor (2005) who discovered that public schools are characterized by failing structures, dilapidated building, teachers with outdated information, lack of planning and non-motivated teachers that have a negative effect on students' academic performance as they may not be able to compete with their counterparts in private schools. As a result of the aforementioned factors, it is clearly

seen that with these inadequacies and inconveniences, most public schools are characterized by bad learning atmosphere for the students.

Finding of this study showed that school type does not influence the academic performance of students in Social Studies. The finding is inconsistent with finding of Sadker, Sadker, and Zittleman (2009) reported that many proponents of single-sex education believed that separating boys and girls increases students' achievement and academic interest. This report has been proved wrong in Ilorin metropolis as school type does not influence academic performance of students in Social Studies in Kwara State. That is, whether it is single-sex or mixed schooling, students falling in this category has no reason at all not to do well academically except for reasons that are not associated with the type of school that they attends.

Finding of the study also revealed that school structure does not significantly influence students' performance in Social Studies in Ilorin. It is in line with



the finding of Bahadar, Mahnaz and Jadoon, (2014) that the academic performance of both day and boarding school are not different as successful students emerge from both schools. It is therefore a fact that both day school and boarding schools as sub-variables under school structure do not constitute a significant influence on the academic performance of students in Social Studies in upper basic schools.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that school ownership is a very vital variable in determining the academic performance of students in Ilorin, in which private school students performed better than their counterparts in public schools while school type as well as school structure do not have significant influence on students' academic performance in Social Studies in upper basic schools.

In the light of the conclusions made in this study, it was recommended that quality and standard of teaching and learning in public schools should be given priority by all stakeholders in education. There should be regular comparative analysis of public and private students' performance in various subjects. Academic competition and cooperation should be encouraged among students in public and private schools. School authorities should also provide avenue for academic interaction and cooperation among staff, students and schools in the communities for academic excellence.

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