

## SCHOOL VARIABLES AS PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN BUSINESS STUDIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BAUCHI STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

The study examined school's variables as predictors of business students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study had four specific objectives. In line with the specific objectives, four research questions and hypotheses were raised. Ex-post facto research design was used. The population of the study comprises of all Business studies final year junior secondary school students (JSS. 3) in private and public secondary schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria and 21 junior secondary schools were purposively selected comprising of 3157 students were used as the sample for the study. One research question and one hypotheses guided the study. The data for this study were obtained from the selected school authorities/examination office. Frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used for the descriptive statistics in order to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05% level of significance. The findings revealed that school size, was found to be the school variable that predict students' academic achievement in Business studies in Bauchi States. The study concluded that, increase in the number of enrollment increase students' academic achievement. The study recommends government should put more effort and input into the students who are enrolled in large schools so that they could meet up with their counterpart who are enrolled in small size and thus having a positive impact on their academic performance, they should try and do more by making school fees affordable for the less privilege.

**Keywords:** School variables, students' academic performance

### INTRODUCTION

Education is the greatest instrument for growth and development of any society or individual. In its true sense, education has existed from time immemorial, with each human society having its peculiar world view (Moye, 2014). This world view and the constellation of shared values, influence the patterns of relationships within the community, the organization and the conduct of human affairs (Obanya, 2014). To this end, an educational system in any country is established as a result of the determination of the broader goals of education which are in line with the aspirations of the country (Kimutai, Mbeche, & Obae, 2014). Through education, people are able to develop their knowledge and skills, adapt new behavior and be able to survive in the society.

According to Onyukwu, Clark and Ausukuya(2017) education is administered at Federal, State and Local Government in Nigeria. This has indicated that, the school is a social and learning agent that provides the environment upon which a child may be formally educated to attain educational goals. Human beings, have unlimited capacity to learn, but may however be limited by the behavior patterns and facilities that the immediate environment offers (Sunday, 2019). On the other hand, Oredein (2016) stated that, the school system has a lot of impact on the student, with particular references to ensuring that students are well developed to increase in their academic performance. In line with this, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) (2013) provided that Nigeria education system encompasses three different sectors that include basic secondary and tertiary education. More so, Oredein (2016) stated that, the secondary school system has a lot of impact on the studies with particular reference of ensuring that students are well developed to increase in their academic achievement which school variables serves as indicators for such achievement.

The National Policy on Education [NPE] (2013) provided that, all the secondary especially junior secondary level, students are expected to attain the basic subjects as stipulated in the curriculum of which business studies formed part (Ejike, &Oke 2018).In this regard, Business Studies is one of the pre-vocational elective subjects which is offered at the Upper Basic level in the Basic Education programme in Nigeria. Business Studies has five components which comprises of Keyboarding, Shorthand, Office Practice, Commerce and Book-Keeping and most of these components are taught at the Upper Basic level in secondary schools in Nigeria. The main objective of Business Studies is to enable students appreciate the five components that make up the subject and to help to prepare students for the business world (Imeokparia, 2018a). Business Studies which is taught in Upper Basic (7-9) level, forms the basis for other business-related courses taught in Senior Secondary Schools and Post-Secondary Schools and experts have emphasized its usefulness. Imeokparia (2018) observed that, Business Studies helps youths to learn career opportunities like Accounting, Secretarial Studies, Private and Public Office management. Considering the importance of Business Studies, stakeholders are continuously encouraged to put the necessary machinery in place in order to improve students' academic performance in the subject.

Moreover, school variables are the factor that can impact positively or negatively on student's academic achievement. To Jack (2013) school variables could be defined as all the relevant aspect of the school system that could promote and sustain academic activities of the students. The school variables include the location of the school, school size, school type, structure and ownership. Arian (2012), revealed that no nation can rise to a high level of development without considering the school variables. School variables is also defined as the factors that can impact positively or negatively on student academic performance (Sunday, 2019). The school variable remains an important area that should be studied and well managed to enhance student's academic performance.

In line with the above, Omirin and Ayesinwoju (2016) argued that researchers have been interested in exploring numerous variables that are associated with the quality of learners' achievement. The authors further emphasized that, school variables may be grouped as either within or outside the school system, which encompasses student's factors, family factors, school factors and peer factors. Ezike (2018) found that, socio-economic status and parent's education

have a significant effect on students' overall academic achievement. Ezike continued that, other factors include study habit, attitude, self-efficacy, teacher quality, and academic interest, age learning styles, teaching and learning facilities and so on.

It is important to note here that, numerous existing studies such as (Oredein, 2016; Ezeagba, 2014; Sunday, 2019; Kimutai, Mbeche, &Obae, 2014; Onyukwu, Clark &Ausukuya, 2017 and Mansur et al., 2017) have established that poor academic achievement of Business studies student is associated with school variable such as school size in relation to student academic achievement in senior secondary schools.

According to Oredein, (2016), there is a strong relationship between School Size and student academic performance. The environment in which student carryout their academic goes a long way to affect the academic performance. Students` do well in an environment that is conducive than the environment that is polluted or not conducive, for instance, Gray (as cited in Oredein, 2016), opined that a filthy and on conducive environment usually do encourage good teaching and learning activities,

Most students do well in academics when they are provided with good and better learning facilities (Serpiovani 2010). Students are better off in their studies in good and cozy environment. Student's motivation to academic work has become an important issue given its importance and how it could assist to impact academic knowledge and skills. It is however argued that satisfied students are generally more productive and can influence student achievement. Student that have more population with little or no human and material resources produce students with poor academic background. In work and other context therefore, School Size and students' academic performance is often described as an indispensable factors deriving from the positive effects it has on student's academic performance and teacher's job satisfaction.

Although educational researchers and policy-makers consider a number of variables in operating school effectiveness, the community holds schools most accountable for students' academic achievement, Mohammad (2011). Thus, the ultimate criterion for assessing the effectiveness of any school reform is the extent to which it improves the actual academic achievement of students.

An optimized sized school will enjoy economies of scale on its student population and thus enable such school to have a lower cost per student with the excess cost to be invested in other curricular activities which will increase the student academic performance

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The study of business is quite important for growth and development of any country as the prosperity of a country largely depends on the number of different scale of businesses operating successfully in it (Briggs, 2019). Academic achievement is an important parameter in measuring success in student's academic achievement. In recent times, government have invented and provided necessary resources toward giving quality education and improvement in student's academic achievement in secondary school (Masino, & Nino-Zarazua, 2016). Despite the huge resources expended by government, results in the required quantum and quality are not forthcoming (Moredeyo, & Babatunde 2014).However, parents, teachers and

government as well as non-governmental organizations are in total conformity that part of their investment on education is not generating the desired result due to poor academic performance among students (Mansur, Jibrin, Lukman, Buba, Sabo, & Suleiman, 2017). Teachers also grumble of students' low performance at both internal and external examination.

According to the report from Bauchi state Universal Basic Education Board [SUBEB] (2021), JSSCE Business studies results of Business studies Students from 2018, 2019 and 2020 has been discouraging. The chief examiner in SUBEB asserted that, though there are qualified teachers of Business studies, but the excessive failure has been linked to school variables as factors responsible for student's poor academic achievement in the subject (see also Ezeagba, 2014; Mansur et al., 2017). Furthermore, looking at Secondary Schools today it is obvious that the number of student enrolment has grown up significantly (Mamman, Chadi, & Jirgi, 2015). The average class ranges from 80-90 students per class while large class size were having a population that ranges from 100 students and above per class of one teacher in Nigeria (Bauchi state inclusive). Thus, Sunday (2018) argued that the variables that affects students' academic performance could be: location of the school, school size, school type, structure and ownership. But to the best of the researchers' knowledge, there are little or no studies on this topic in secondary schools in Bauchi State, particularly in junior secondary schools because of this reason, the researcher find it important to investigate school variables as predictor of student's achievement in Business Studies in junior secondary schools in Bauchi State.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The main purpose of the study was to determine school variables as predictors on students' academic achievement in Business studies in Junior Secondary Schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

1. Determine the influence of school size on student's academic achievement in Business studies.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research question is formulated based on the problem statement of this study:

1. What is the influence of school size on students' academic achievement in business studies in Bauchi state, Nigeria?

### **HYPOTHESES**

The following null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H<sub>01</sub>: School size has no significant influence on student's academic performance in business studies in Bauchi state.

## METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted in this research is the ex-post facto research design. The results of 3157 JSS 3 Business education students were used for the research. The results were collected from 21 schools which were selected using stratified sampling.

Table 1: Sample Size of the study

Variable	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
School Size	Large	2150	68.1
	Small	1007	31.9

Source: Computed by the Researcher Using SPSS v.23

In analyzing the data, frequency count, percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation was used to present the descriptive analysis of the data, and independent t-test was used to test whether a significant difference exist between the school variables and academic performance of the students. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 was used to aid the analysis. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 (5%) level of significance, in taking decision, when the p-value is  $\leq 0.05$ , the null hypothesis was rejected while alternative hypothesis was accepted. However, when the p-value was  $> 0.05$ , the null hypothesis was accepted while alternative hypothesis was rejected.

## RESULT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The results of this study are summarized below followed by some discussions.

Research Question One: What is the influence of school size on students' academic achievement in Business studies in Bauchi State.

The result showed a difference in the mean performance between students who were enrolled in large size schools (M=65.4053, S.D=13.11269) and students who were enrolled in small size schools (M=67.5759, S.D= 9.97485) which is -2.1706. The mean of the students who were enrolled in small size schools is greater than the mean of the students who were enrolled in large size schools. The mean difference is in favour of students in small school size.

Table : Result showing the mean scores of students in large school size and students in small school size.

	Classification	Frequency	Mean	S.D	%	Influence
School Size	Large	2150	65.4053	13.11269	68.1	No Sig. Influence
	Small	1007	67.5759	9.97485	31.9	Sig. influence
Total		3157			100%	

Source: Computed by the Researcher Using SPSS v.23

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H<sub>01</sub>: School size has no significant influence on student's academic performance in Business Studies in Bauchi state.

The result of the independent t-test showed that there was significant difference between the students who were enrolled in large size schools and the students who were enrolled in small size school in terms of their academic performance in Business Studies in Bauchi State. Going

by the decision rule, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted since  $p < 0.05$ . Therefore, it can be concluded that school size has a significant influence on students' academic performance in Business Studies in Bauchi State.

Table: Result of t-test showing the influence of school size on students' academic performance in Business Studies in Bauchi State.

Location	N	Mean	SD	t	df	P-value	Decision
Large size	2150	65.4053	13.11269	-3.347	3155	.001	Significant
Small size	1007	67.5759	9.9748				

Decision rule: reject null hypothesis if  $p < 0.05$  otherwise accept.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study investigates the influence of school variable as a predictor of student academic achievement in business studies in secondary schools in Bauchi state.

The variable investigated upon are the school size, school ownership, school location and school structure respectively.

Hypothesis one was aimed at determining whether there is a statistical influence between school size and student performance in business studies in Bauchi state. The result of the independent t-test conducted revealed that there is a significant difference between the academic performance of students who were controlled in large school size and their counterpart who were enrolled in small school size ( $p < 0.001$ ) which is in favor of students who were enrolled in small school size. The finding is similar to the findings of Serpiovani (2010) who also agreed that students who were controlled in small school size perform better than those who were enrolled in large school size.

This finding is also similar to the findings of Oredein, (2016), who found out that there is a strong relationship between School Size and student academic performance. He is of the opinion that environment in which student carryout their academic goes a long way to affect the academic performance. He added that students` do well in an environment that is conducive than the environment that is polluted or not conducive, for instance, Gray cited in Oredein, (2016), opined that a conducive environment usually do encourage good teaching and learning activities also, satisfied students are generally more productive and can influence student achievement.

In another studies conducted by Mohammad (2011) who found that School Size and students' academic performance is often described as an indispensable factors deriving from the positive effects it has on student's academic performance and teacher's job satisfaction. He added that an optimized sized school will enjoy economies of scale on its student population and thus enable such school to have a lower cost per student with the excess cost to be invested in other curricular activities which will increase the student academic performance.

On the contrary Oredein (2016) found out that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students in large school size and their counterparts who are in small school size. This may be that the small school size performs better than the large school size because of small class enrollment and the teachers have close interaction with learners, thereby helping

them to disclose the weakness of the learners and devise a means of meeting the identified weak point of students.

### CONCLUSION

This study investigates school variable as predictors of students' academic achievement in business studies in Secondary Schools in Bauchi State, Nigeria.

The study found that school size is the school variable that predicts students' academic achievement in business studies in Bauchi State.

The fundamental purpose for introducing business studies in secondary school curriculum was to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to achieve success in secondary school, workplace, post-secondary education or training, and dairy life.

The student (input) are admitted into the school with different intelligence, family and educational background; when they get into the school system, the school through its resources (both human and capital) process such students through the learning process which is aided or made easier through the resources/variables attributed to such school. The effectiveness of such variables is measured through the output of the student which is measured in term of their academic performance. System such as school use four kinds of inputs or resources from the environment; human resources, financial resources, physical resources and information resources.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations were put forward:

1. Government should put more effort and input into the students who are enrolled in large schools so that they could meet up with their counterpart who are enrolled in small size. This is because it has been confirmed that small size enrolls students perform better than large sized enroll student within a class. There should also be a strong relationship between School Size and student academic performance because small school size performs better than the large school size and the teachers have close interaction with learners, thereby helping them to disclose the weakness of the learners and devise a means of meeting the identified weak point of students.

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