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## Relationship between Academic Qualifications and Job Effectiveness of Teachers in Public Senior Secondary Schools

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### Abstract

This paper examined the relationship between academic qualifications and job effectiveness of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo State. Two research questions were raised and one hypothesis was formulated and tested in the study. The purpose of this study was specifically to determine the qualifications of teachers and find out if there is a relationship between teachers' academic qualifications and their job effectiveness. The correlational research design was employed to carry out the study. The population of this study consisted of the 2994 teachers in the 298 public senior secondary schools in Edo State. Using the multistage sampling technique, a sample of 299 teachers was drawn from 90 schools who responded to the instrument used for the study. It was found that the qualifications of teachers in Edo State are high; and there is a significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and their job effectiveness. It was recommended that a scholarship scheme be put in place for exceptionally intelligent teachers to enhance their academic qualifications, among others.

**Keywords:** Relationship, Academic, Qualification, Effectiveness, Teachers, Job

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### Introduction

Education is a means of empowering an individual through the acquisition of knowledge and skills in order to become useful to himself in the community. According to Nwadiani (2000), education is acclaimed to be the magic wand for the solution to all problems that plague mankind. Education, therefore, is a means through which man can learn and unlearn himself of certain ethics, values, beliefs and principles of life, which will further enlighten the human mind, character and personality.

In the conceptualization of education, the teacher is obviously a prime factor. A teacher is an academic who is able to manipulate and re-engineer the other resources to achieve set goals and in a manner to achieve the inculcation of knowledge. He is an academic catalyst and an intellectual developer, a character molder for acceptable behavior, a role model and a near perfect ideal of human discipline. Therefore, the quality of education is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classroom.

Perhaps, academic qualifications, knowledge of the subject matter, competence, and skills of teaching and the

commitment of the teacher have effective impacts on the teaching and learning process. Quality improvement in education depends upon proper training of teachers. The teachers cannot play any of the roles expected of them unless they are properly trained. Teaching, as a human endeavor, can be refined by training and practice.

Attracting and retaining high quality and dedicated teachers is expensive, vital to their image and success, and an ongoing major professional issue for school administrators, parents and stakeholders of education (Akturk, & Saka Ozturk, 2019; Alemdar et al., 2018; Chapagain, 2021; Ehiaguina, 2014; Grohs et al., 2018; Johnson & Westbrook, 2021; Kaleli, 2020; Koyuncuoğlu, 2021; Ozkale & Koc, 2020; Talan, 2021). Many frequently debated reasons why recruitment of highly talented college graduates to the teaching profession is difficult and retention of many young teachers is problematic have been suggested by former teachers, union leaders, education critics, school administrators and press pundits, in a study carried out by Ehiaguina (2014). These reasons include low teacher pay rates, lowered teachers' respect by students, parents and administrators, failure or refusal by unions and administrators to weed out incompetent or burnout teachers, overcrowded classrooms, too many non-teaching duties assigned to teachers, a growing tendency for non-qualified teachers instructing certain classes where teacher shortages seem chronic, the increased pressure of drugs, alcohol and violence in a growing number of classrooms, among others.

In public secondary schools in Edo State, the minimum teaching qualification is the National Certificate in Education (NCE), and the holders are to teach in the Junior Secondary Schools. However, qualifications of the teachers found in schools vary from one individual to the other. An unprofessional practice that is observed in schools is the use of unqualified teachers to teach subjects outside their areas of specialization. The reason often adduced by teachers and school heads when interviewed is lack of qualified teachers to teach the subjects. Mathematics and English Language are the noticeable subjects that teachers are drafted from the other subject areas to teach under the principle of "one-cap-fits all" (Oladunjoye, 2005).

Not all schools, administrators or teachers face the same problems. However, the panoply of difficulties is great enough to create difficulties for most educators. Greater cooperation among teachers of the same qualification, school systems and government agencies would likely aid in overcoming some problems and more creativity and harmoniously resolving other difficulties. Deep understanding of the subject matter is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for teachers' effectiveness (Australian Science Teachers Association, 2002). In this study, certificated teachers not only know their subject matter, they also understand their educational indices needed to translate and transmit the subject matters content to the recipients called learners (Famro, 2018). A highly accomplished teacher of mathematics at the senior secondary school level not only knows about solving equations, he also knows many ways to other important ideas and to real world context.

A qualified teacher in the secondary school is likely to display a good mastery of the subject matter, use appropriate methods of teaching at various times, know how to achieve good class management control and achieve the stated objectives of the lesson. Many teachers seem to have a good mastery of their subject areas, but there is a greater need to know what, how and when to do what with a view to achieving set goals. In a study carried out in Tennessee to ascertain the effect of students' exposure to highly qualified teachers, Osadolor

(2020) found the relationship to be additive and cumulative. The study used student performance to categories teachers into “quintiles” (five groups) representing levels of effectiveness. After tracking the progress of found achievement gains – 83% for students assigned to the most effective teachers, while students assigned to less effective teachers demonstrated a 29% gain in learning. Students demonstrated greater gains in learning with mathematics and science teachers holding a major in the subject area. Osadolor (2020) found a significant relationship between students’ achievement and teachers’ cognitive and verbal abilities.

A review of the research carried out by the Education Commission of the states in America, the findings lended credence to moderate support for the government that teachers should be well versed in their subject areas so as to be able to display a mastery of the subject matter when inculcating knowledge in the classroom (Oxford, 2019). Oladele (2018) corroborated this finding by observing that teachers should be experts in some defined areas or body of knowledge. These defined areas or body of knowledge will not only make teachers knowledgeable and well-grounded in their subject areas, but it will also enable them appreciate and envisage probable impediments in the teaching and learning situation, teaching methodology and effective classroom management. Azuka (2020) found that highly professional teachers are more likely to use a range of teaching strategies and interaction style that respond to students’ needs and learning styles; and to emphasize conceptual applications of ideas than those with less more professional qualifications who will place more emphasis on a single rigid approach or method.

Sherin (2002) posited an empirical framework for understanding what effective teachers are expected to do in the classroom and in times of change. He found that learning, in the course of teaching, occurs as teachers negotiate among three areas of their content knowledge; their understanding of the subject matter, view of curriculum materials, and knowledge of students’ learning. Hattie (2002) found that effective teachers draw from an array of laid down routines for thinking about and teaching particular subject matter. Khurshid (2006) found effective teaching as a mode that produces inquiring, considering and seeking out at correct or incorrect results and ability in teaching.

Measuring effectiveness at the classroom level, rather than at the school level, is increasingly the focus of effectiveness research. Researchers have focused on trying to determine teachers’ effectiveness by examining teachers’ contribution to students’ achievement gains for many years, but a lack of valid measures and instrumentation has hampered the process (Oyekan, 2000; Paige, 2002, Woolsey, 2006). The value-added models are promising, controversial, and increasingly common as a method of determining teacher effectiveness (when effectiveness is construed as teachers’ contributions to achievement).

Many researchers have found that there is great relationship between the qualifications of teachers and their effectiveness; and consequently an impact on student’s achievements. The researchers include Rice (2004); Woolsey (2006); Paige (2002); and Young (2002). Research carried out by Hanshek (2005) correlated teacher tests scores in their subject areas of specialization with the scores of their students on standardized tests. Results showed that high scoring teachers were more likely to elicit significant gains in students’ achievements than their low scoring counterparts. This argument was corroborated by Eduese (2009) whose findings showed that

teachers who have earned degrees have a positive impact on high school Mathematics and Science achievement when the degree earned were in these subjects.

In a review of 21 studies on the relationship between students' achievement and teachers' characteristics in four categories thus: test scores, college ratings, degrees and course work and certification status; Wayne and Young (2003), observed that the strongest connection between students' achievement and teachers with advanced degree existed in mathematics at the high school level. Teachers' coursework and areas of certification which invariably infer teachers' qualifications also revealed a strong relationship with students' achievements, but only in the area of high school mathematics.

According to Imogie (2008), there is no significant relationship between teachers' academic qualifications and students' learning outcomes or achievements. This finding was supported by Ofuegbu (2010) when he reported that there was no significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' achievement. Both studies believed that students' achievement is often predicated on the level of preparedness and commitment by the teacher, rather than his qualifications. Kirkpatrick (2002) observed that a reasonable number of lower levels of achievement were associated with teachers holding higher qualifications. To Ponder (2001), there was no significant difference between students' achievement and the level of teachers' certification. In this study, the certification of a teacher does not have any relationship or effect on the students' achievement.

Wenglingsky (2002) found in a study to determine the relationship between teachers' classroom qualities and students' achievement scores in different subject areas that there was no relationship between teachers' qualifications and teachers' effectiveness. Teachers' educational performance (effectiveness), teaching experience, teachers' qualifications and scores on vocabulary test were used as variables; and only teaching experience was found to be consistently related to students' achievement in the study. In the same vein, Isang and Stack (2008) in their study found that there was no significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and their effectiveness in the classroom.

Ericksen (2020) observed that "some of the worst teachers I have seen are highly certified. Look at our public schools. They are full of certified teachers. What kind of magic is that accomplishing?. But I can take you to the best teachers I have ever seen, and most of them are uncertified... we don't have evidence at all what we do in schools of education makes much difference in teachers competence". It appears that only Teachers Association and some of the other members of the educational establishment who contributed to defend teacher certifications and high qualification standards for teachers in spite of the seeming overwhelming research against the need for such teaching standard. One of the most significant studies in this area of teacher qualification and effectiveness was performed by Hanushek (2019). Hanushek (2019) surveyed the results of 113 studies on the impact of teachers' qualifications on their effectiveness and students' achievements. 85% of the studies found no positive correlation between teachers' qualification and their teaching effectiveness. Although 7% of the studies found a positive correlation, 5% found a negative impact. The results of these 113 studies are certainly an indictment on proponents of certain teachers' standards or certification for higher teachers' effectiveness.

Bakker (2004) discovered that teachers' qualifications and strong direct leadership in developing school goals by the head teacher are prerequisites for teachers' effectiveness. There is a high correlation between the principals' leadership style and the effectiveness of qualified teachers in schools (Oyekan, 2000). A very strong association has been found between qualification, organizational climate and organizational commitment (teaching effectiveness). The effect of teachers' qualifications on their effectiveness and students' outcome, therefore, appear to be cumulative and additive, and generally not compensatory (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Thus, with changing trends in the teaching learning process, result in particular, must be a criterion for a successful language teacher (as it is also applicable to other subject areas). Hence, Ponder (2001) observed that effective teaching is necessary for effective learning and that effective teaching is a mode that produces inquiring, considering and seeking out at the correct or incorrect results and ability in teaching, as the mode of effective teaching is a function of a large number of variables.

### **The Problem**

In spite of the huge capital out lay by the government on human capital formation and capacity building for increased job performance, as well as the incentives put in place for teachers (like car loan, promotion to salary grade level 17, bonded study leave with pay for post graduate students, etc) at the secondary school level, the expected effectiveness seems elusive. From personal interview with some teachers, majority of them allege that disparity in teaching qualifications and mastery of subject matter constitute a bane in teachers' effectiveness. From personal observation, there is dearth of qualified teachers in public secondary schools in the study area. This is sequel to the non-recruitment of teachers in the state for over ten (10) years now. The available qualified teachers are allegedly drafted to teacher subjects outside their areas of specialization. The questions that readily come to mind are; do we have adequate qualified teachers in Edo State public secondary schools? Is there any significant relationship between teachers' academic qualifications and their job effectiveness? It is the concerted efforts to provide answers to these questions that motivated the study.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the level of academic qualifications of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo State?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' academic qualifications and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo State?

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant relationship between academic qualifications and teachers' effectiveness in Edo State secondary schools.

### **Method**

This study is a correlation research design intended to examine the relationship between academic qualifications

as they relate to teacher' job effectiveness. The population consisted of all the 2994 teachers in the 298 public senior secondary schools in Edo State. The multistage sampling technique was employed to select 10% of the population which amounted to 299 teachers as respondents drawn from 90 senior public secondary schools.

Data for the study were obtained through a questionnaire titled "Teachers' Qualifications Questionnaire" (TEQUAQ) which was made up of two parts. Part A was made up of demographic variables of respondents; while Part B contained the Teachers Effectiveness Rating Scale that was made up of 16 items raised on four point scale of 'Very Good (VG), "Good (G), "Fair (F) and "Poor" (P) on which the principals used in scoring the teachers. The instrument was content validated and was subjected to a reliability test by administering it to a trial group of 50 teachers outside the study area. After analysis, the reliability index was 0.87 which was considered adequate for the study. The research question was answered with the aid of percentage, while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistics was used to test the hypothesis formulated for the study. Alpha level for the hypothesis was set at 0.05.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Research Question One: What is the level of academic qualifications of teachers in public secondary schools in Edo State?**

To answer this question, the qualifications of the respondents were recorded and analyzed. The summary of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Analysis of Teachers Qualifications in Public Secondary Schools

| <b>Highest qualification obtained</b> | <b>N</b>   | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|---------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|
| NCE                                   | 65         | 22                    |
| HND/PGDE                              | 30         | 10                    |
| B.Ed/B.A(Ed)/ B.Sc(Ed)                | 102        | 34                    |
| B.SC/B.A                              | 84         | 28                    |
| M.A./M.Sc                             | 18         | 6                     |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>299</b> | <b>100</b>            |

As shown in Table 1, out of 299 respondents, 65 representing 22% had NCE, 30 of them representing 10% had HND, 102 representing 34% were graduates in Education 84(28%0 had Bachelor's Degree outside the field of Education; while 18 respondents representing 6% had master's Degree in Arts and Sciences. From the interpretation of Table 1, respondents with bachelor's degree were 186 representing 62%. By this analysis, the qualifications of teachers in public secondary school in Edo State are high.

### **Research Question Two: What is the relationship between teachers' academic qualifications and teachers' effectiveness in public secondary schools in Edo State?**

*Hypothesis:* There is no significant relationship between academic qualifications and teachers' effectiveness in Edo State Secondary Schools.

To test this hypothesis, the correlation between academic qualifications and teachers' effectiveness was determined. The summary of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The Relationship between Academic Qualifications and Teachers' Job Effectiveness

| Groups                   | N   | Pearson Correlation (r) | P Value | Remarks     |
|--------------------------|-----|-------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Teachers' Effectiveness  | 299 | .264                    | .001    | Significant |
| Teachers' Qualifications | 299 |                         |         |             |

\*Correlation Significant at  $\alpha=0.01$  level,  $P>0.001$

Table 2 displays the correlation analysis of the relationship between teachers' qualifications and their job effectiveness. The table indicates a positive and significant ( $\alpha =0.01$ ) relationship of .264 between teachers' qualifications and teachers' effectiveness. This indicates that the higher the qualification of teachers, the more effective the teachers would become. Since the alpha level is 0.01, and the Pearson correlation (r) of .264 was greater than the level of significance, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and their job effectiveness in Edo State public senior secondary schools was rejected.

The result of the study shows that there is a significant positive relationship between academic qualifications and teachers' effectiveness. The reason for the above finding is likely because it is believed that the effectiveness of a teacher in the classroom depends largely on his knowledge of the subject matter and how to impact the acquired knowledge. This is presumably predicated on the body of knowledge acquired from a formal educational institution. Also, the quality of a teacher presumably depends on the quality of his preparation, which borders on training and certification. This finding corroborates the earlier findings of Famro (2018), Oxford (2019) and Osadolor (2020) who in their independent studies found a significant positive correlation between teachers' academic qualifications and their job effectiveness.

In the same vein, the teacher who has spent 3 years in the College of Education and 4 to 5 years in the University would have spent 7 and 8 years in preparation for a Bachelor's Degree in Education. Expectedly, such a teacher would have been tutored in a variety of teaching methods. All things being equal, a teacher with Bachelor's Degree (obtained after 7-8 years) will likely be more effective than an NCE teacher who spent 3 years in the College of Education. In addition, teachers' course work and areas of certification, which invariably infer that teachers' qualifications positively relate to their effectiveness. This is perhaps because they teach subjects in their areas of certification. This finding aligns with that of Wayne and Young (2003) who found that the strongest connection between students' achievement (based on teachers' effectiveness) and teachers with advanced degrees existed at the high school level.

The result of this study also indicated that a negligible percentage of respondents saw an adverse significant relationship between teachers' qualifications and their job effectiveness. This finding is in consonant with the findings of Imogie (2008), Ofegbu (2010), Ponder (2001), Ericksen (2020), and Hanushek (2019) who in their respective studies found no significant relationship between the variables of study. This finding could be



attributed to lack of collegiality, inadequate teaching resources and facilities, low morale, poor condition of services, among others. It must be justifiably asserted here that only 27% of the respondents culminated in the analysis that led to this finding.

In a related study, Paige (2002) observed that the relationship between teachers' qualifications and their effectiveness was highly additive and cumulative. Paige (2002) found a significant relationship between students' achievement and teachers' cognitive and verbal abilities. This could be the reason why students who are taught by teachers with higher qualifications perform better in Standardized tests (Like in WASCE and NECO Exam) in core subjects (Ednese, 2009). Many teachers in senior secondary schools in Edo State have post graduate degrees. This must have influenced their teaching effectiveness.

In contrast, the finding of this study does not corroborate some earlier studies that found negative relationships between teachers' qualification and their effectiveness (Imogie, 2008; Kirkpatrick, 2002; Ponder, 2001). In these studies, the respondents who aligned with this finding were few. These researchers found that "teachers' qualification was a myth". However, research has shown that adequate qualifications and commitment contribute to teaching effectiveness and reduction of withdrawal behavior such as lateness, absenteeism and turnover (Okunumiri, 2002; Oyekan, 2000; Omoifoh & Okaka, 2010).

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that academic qualifications of teachers in Edo State public secondary schools is high and commendable and a significant relationship exists between it and teachers' effectiveness. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Government should put up a scheme to encourage teachers to improve on their qualification e.g. study leave with pay
- ii. Government and other stakeholder in education should partner to organize seminars, workshops and conferences regularly for teachers to equip them with modern trends in education.
- iii. Scholarship scheme should be put in place for teachers who exhibit exceptionally high intellectual sagacity to enhance their academic qualification.

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