



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' COMPETENCE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN JALINGO EDUCATION ZONE OF TARABA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in

Keywords: Teacher's competence, SSII student, academic achievement, gender, school location

Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State. It was a descriptive survey design and simple random sampling method was used to select one hundred and eighty (180) sampled respondents from

one thousand one hundred and ninety-five (1,195) total population. Three (3) research questions and three (3) research hypotheses guided the study, while two (2) instruments- Teachers' Competence in relation to Academic Achievement of Student Questionnaire (TCAASQ) and Students Achievement Test (SAT) were employed for data collection. In order to ascertain the reliability coefficient of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted with the aid of

INTRODUCTION

The quality of students is adjudged by academic performance attained in the course of teaching-learning process. Though it is largely believed that quality of students is dependent on the quality of teachers. Perhaps this explains why the National Policy on Education emphasizes that the quality of education of a nation depends on the quality of her teachers (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). In other words, teachers play a very significant role in determining the quality of education that children receive. Simply put, teachers are great determinant in ensuring good academic performance in public examinations. No wonder scholars like Aina, Ogundele and Olanipekun (2013) maintained that teacher is a very important resource in any educational system. Stressing further that of all the resources in the educational system, the most vital educational resources is the teacher. For Obadara (2015), teachers are highly essential for the successful operation of the educational system and serve as a key to the educational development. Though

Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis which yielded 0.83% and 0.79% coefficients for TCAASQ and SAT respectively. Descriptive statistics was employed for answering research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) Analysis was used for testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed significant impact of teachers' competence on academic achievement of secondary school students; significant impact of teachers' competence on academic achievement of secondary school students by gender; as well as significant impact of teachers' competence on

academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State. Therefore, it was concluded that as far as Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State is concerned, teachers' competence positively and significantly impact on academic achievement of male and female students as well as secondary schools cited in urban and rural areas in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that the Government through State Ministry of Education should pay adequate attention to issues of teachers' training

and retraining exercise so as to improve on their competence, and by extension enhance on academic achievement of secondary school students in the area; and that recruitment of experienced teachers should be prioritized and evenly posted across secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone and Taraba State as a whole. This is to ensure that both schools in rural and urban areas have a taste of experienced teachers to facilitate effective teaching-learning process in the school; and subsequently improve on academic performance of students in both rural and urban schools.

Adedeji (2018) observed that students' academic performance is a major indices by which the effectiveness and success of any educational institution could be ascertained. In other words, teachers' efficiency and effectiveness can be ascertained through academic success attained by the students.

Of course, many scholars and researchers are of the view that the poor academic performance at the secondary education level is a product of the teacher factor, school factor, home factor, institutional factor and so on. There is a consensus among educationists and researchers such as Owoye (2016) and Ajayi (2018) about secondary school students' poor performance in public examination such as West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) in Nigeria. Also, opinion leaders, commentators, professionals and educationists are always in agreement as to the fact that indeed there is a decline in the academic performance of secondary school students in public examinations in Nigeria.

However, it should be noted that the students' academic performance is dependent on a number of factors among which is the teachers' professional competence. That is, effective learning in schools would require effective teaching to accompany the efforts of the learners. Little wonder, Segun (2016) observed that teacher competence needs to be very high in order for meaningful teaching learning to take place. By implication, teacher's competencies cut across academic and professional preparation, professional growth, classroom interaction and evaluation (Macaulay, 2016). For Akpan (2012), competent teacher possesses the skills of teaching in his area with observance to the principles of teaching from known to unknown, concrete to abstract and from simple to complex. Simply put, competent teacher possesses and internalizes in-depth knowledge of his/her subject area.

In support of the statement above, Ikwa and Onwioduokit (2015) maintained that competency of teacher is the main aid to learning as being demonstrated in methods, styles and techniques of teaching with the aim of making students to participate in experimental procedures. To this end, a competent teacher is professionally qualified and trained to teach and possess the necessary qualities with adequate skills in the teaching process (Osaat, 2014). For this author, other competencies required of teachers include knowledge of subject-matter, pedagogy, skill processes, resourcefulness, behaviour motivation and evaluation. Hence, a competent teacher attends conferences, workshops and seminars and has a good classroom control, effective communicative skills, adequate knowledge of the subject, utilize a variety of teaching methods or strategies and show enthusiasm for teaching.

Definitely, competency is a potential factor that positively influences on academic performance of students, just as professional attitudes of a teacher go a long way in bringing about better academic achievement on the part of students. Students' academic achievement in this context, it is the information retrieved about students' academic progress. Babayomi (2014) argued that competence of a teacher which includes knowledge and skill is critical to a teacher's duty as educator influencing academic achievement of students.

Several studies have been conducted to determine the extent at which teachers' competence influence on academic performance of students. For example, Ugbe (2015) carried out a research on the influence of teachers' competence on students' academic performance in senior secondary school chemistry in Cross River State. The study revealed that there is significant difference between the performance of students taught by a qualified teacher and students taught by unqualified chemistry teacher. Also there is significant difference between the performance of students taught by experienced teacher and students taught by inexperienced teacher. Similarly, Duncan (2013) investigated the influence of teacher's competence on student's academic achievement in mathematics. The findings revealed that teacher's competence greatly influences the performance of mathematics students.

Concerning gender and academic performance, Babatope and Omowunmi (2014) in a study on gender role stereotypes and career choice of secondary school students observed that boys showed interest in brain tasking careers while girls were more interested on courses that do not require much brain work. Perhaps this explains why Filgona (2016) and Nwona (2013) reported imbalance against female students in Science, Technology and Mathematics as these courses are considered as masculine-inclined. However, Suleiman (2014) confirmed that gender inequalities are interwoven with social class, ethnicity, sexuality and disability as his findings revealed that the proportion of students enrolling in preparatory schools before they pass English language tests is 74.5% and 25.5% for males and females respectively. The study further established significant difference in the academic performance of male and female students in favour of female in terms of comprehension of information, evaluation of arguments and CGPA. For Hyde (2018), female students surpass their male counterparts in basic computation and understanding of mathematical concepts while male students exceed female in complex problem-solving skills. Moreover, the studies by Lee (2015) and Kinzel (2016) revealed that improvement in performance do not significantly differ between male and female students in environmental education assessment. Whereas the study showed higher overall performance of female students group over male students in environmental education assessment on the basis of teacher's competency. That is, competence does not significantly impact academic performance of male and female students in environmental education.

Equally, in a study conducted by Joseph (2014) on the effects of school location on academic achievement of students revealed 40 out of 65 schools considered to be poorly performing in the national examinations were located in the rural area. In a study carried out by Ebhomein (2014), it was discovered that teachers' qualification and experience (indices of competence) in teaching field may negatively or positively affect academic performance of students. Stressing further that unqualified and inexperienced teachers negatively impact on academic performance of students while qualified and experienced teachers positively impact on students' academic performance. For Egwu (2016), teachers' poor qualification and experience adversely affects the implementation of some aspects of the school curriculum in which students' subject content gained is seriously affected thereby dampening on academic success of the students.

From the foregoing, it is evident that teachers' competence is crucial to effective academic performance of secondary school students. Although it has been observed that many teachers do not display competency as required in teaching profession. Of course, some of the teachers are not professionally trained coupled with the fact that there are no training and retraining programmes for in-service teacher (Austin, 2014); thereby leading to poor academic performance of secondary school students. The statement above justifies why many public secondary school students in Taraba State perform awfully in science and other subjects. But there seems to be paucity of study to prove whether or not teachers' competence impact on academic performance of students. Therefore, the current study investigated the relationship between teachers' competence and academic performance of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Statement of the Problem

Scholars and researchers in the field of education have conducted series of studies on the causes of poor academic performance of secondary students in public examinations in Nigeria but the results are inconclusive. For scholars like Oluremi (2013), low academic performance of students in Nigeria could be attributed to low quality of teachers employed in public secondary schools. In fact, studies have shown a lot of teacher-related factors as the causes of poor students' academic performance such as teachers' communicative skills, classroom management skills, pedagogical strategies and poor mastery of subject matter by teachers. Simply put, many teachers are not qualified and lack competency required in teaching profession, thereby affecting academic achievement of students. But the extent at which teachers' competence negatively impact on academic performance of students in Jalingo Education of Taraba State is not yet established. Therefore, this study dug into the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State, Nigeria.

Objectives

Generally, this study investigated the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Investigate the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.
2. Investigate the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

3. Investigate the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:-

1. What is the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State?
3. What is the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:-

- Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.
- Ho₂:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.
- Ho₃:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo education zone of Taraba State.

Methodology:

Design

Descriptive survey research method was used for this. This is deemed appropriate for a study that investigated the opinions of study population about competence of teachers in respect to academic performance of secondary school students.

Population

The study involved one thousand one hundred and ninety-five (1,195) SSII students across fifty-three (53) secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of one hundred and eighty (180) SSII students were selected from the study population while simple random sampling technique of balloting without replacement was used to select three (3) secondary schools from each local government in Jalingo Education Zone, Taraba State. Also, purposive sampling technique was used to select only twenty (20) SSII students from each selected school. On the whole, nine (9) schools and one hundred and eighty (180) respondents participated in the study.

Instruments

Two instruments that is, Questionnaire titled 'Teachers' Competence in relation to Academic Achievement of Students Questionnaire- TCAASQ and Student Achievement Test SAT were used for data collection for this study. The questionnaire contained 15-items seeking respondents' opinions and responses on teachers' competence and students' academic achievement. The 4-

likert scale type response pattern was provided to aid the respondents in ticking the appropriate box [√] that most describe their opinions and scored in the following order 4= Strongly Agree – SA; 3= Agree – A; 2= Disagree – D; and 1= Strongly Disagree – SD.

Validity and Reliability

The research instruments were given to three experts for face and content validity. The three experts in the Faculty of Education, Taraba State University ascertained the instruments in terms of structure and language accuracy to measure the variables of interest in the study. In order to obtain reliability coefficient, pilot study was conducted on twenty (20) SSII students that shared same traits with the target population and Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis was employed to determine the reliability coefficient of the instruments, which yielded 0.83% and 0.79% for TCAASQ and SAT respectively (*using Statistical Package for Social Sciences-SPSS*).

Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency/percentage table, arithmetic mean (average) together with their respective standard deviations as deemed appropriate for answering research questions with acceptance value of 2.50 and above while inferential statistics (i.e. Pearson Product Moment Correlation- PPMC) was utilized for testing the null hypotheses as deemed appropriate at 0.05 level of significance.

Results:

Answering of Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State?

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents with regard to the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students.

S/N	ITEMS ON TEACHERS' COMPETENCE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS	VALID N= 180	MEAN	SD	REMARK
1.	Teachers' competent is linked to his/her academic level.	180	2.70	1.03	Accepted
2.	Teachers' knowledge of subject matter positively impact on students' achievement.	180	2.81	0.88	Accepted
3.	Teachers' appropriate use of instructional materials propels students' knowledge of subject.	180	3.08	0.90	Accepted
4.	Teachers' use of instructional method is essential for enhancing on students' attainment.	180	2.91	0.91	Accepted
5.	Teachers' communicative skill is required for better academic achievement of students.	180	2.86	1.18	Accepted
	Cluster Mean		2.87	0.98	Accepted

Source: Field Study, 2023

Table 1 above indicates the opinions of respondents on the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of

Taraba State. Based on the table, the mean scores of the respondents- 2.70, 2.81, 3.08, 2.91, and 2.86 with their corresponding standard deviation for items 1 to 5 respectively including the grand mean of 2.87 seem to above the criterion mean of 2.50 for acceptance level.

The results from the table indicated that all respondents affirmed that items 1-5 are directly related to teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students. The results revealed that teachers' competent is linked to his/her academic level, teachers' knowledge of subject matter positively impact on students' achievement, teachers' appropriate use of instructional materials propels students' knowledge of subject, teachers' use of instructional method is essential for enhancing on students' attainment as well as teachers' communicative skill is required for better academic achievement of students with mean scores of 2.70, 2.81, 3.08, 2.91, and 2.86 respectively impact on academic achievement of students. The grand mean of 2.87 indicates that there is direct relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State?

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents with regard to the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender

S/N	ITEMS ON TEACHERS' COMPETENCE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS BY GENDER	VALID N= 180	MEAN	SD	REMARK
6.	Competence has no difference on learning outcome of male and female students.	180	2.65	1.01	Accepted
7.	Female students have lower self-efficacy in science compared to male counterparts.	180	2.80	0.89	Accepted
8.	Male students are very active in science class than girl students.	180	3.02	0.94	Accepted
9.	Female students have dominance in arts related subjects than male students.	180	2.94	0.93	Accepted
10.	Teachers' level of education influences on learning process of male than female students.	180	2.70	1.29	Accepted
Cluster Mean			2.82	10.1	Accepted

Source: Field Study, 2023

Table 2 above indicates the opinions of respondents on relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State. Based on the table, the mean scores of the respondents- 2.65, 2.80, 3.02, 2.94, and 2.70 with their corresponding standard deviation for items 6 to 10 respectively including the grand mean of 2.82 seem to above the criterion mean of 2.50 for acceptance level.

The results from the table indicated that all respondents affirmed that items 6-10 are directly related to teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender. The results revealed that competence has no difference on learning outcome of male and

female students, female students have lower self-efficacy in science compared to male counterparts, male students are very active in science class than girl students, female students have dominance in arts subjects than male students as well as teachers' level of education influences on learning process of male than female students with mean scores of 2.65, 2.80, 3.02, 2.94, and 2.70 respectively impact on academic achievement of secondary school students. The grand mean of 2.82 indicates that there is direct relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State?

Table 3: Mean ratings of respondents with regard to the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location.

S/N	ITEMS ON TEACHERS' COMPETENCE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS BY LOCATION.	VALID N= 180	MEAN	SD	REMARK
11.	Schools in urban area have competent teachers than schools in rural area.	180	2.87	1.03	Accepted
12.	School location is essential to academic outcome of learners.	180	2.70	0.97	Accepted
13.	Long distance to school affects activeness of students in the class.	180	2.75	0.79	Accepted
14.	Short distance to learning environment encourages regular attendance on the part of learners.	180	3.15	0.91	Accepted
15.	School location may lead to students' absenteeism.	180	2.95	0.95	Accepted
	Cluster Mean		2.88	0.93	Accepted

Source: Field Study, 2023

Table 3 above indicates the opinions of respondents on the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State. Based on the table, the mean scores of the respondents- 2.87, 2.70, 2.75, 3.15, and 2.95 with their corresponding standard deviation for items 10 to 15 respectively including the grand mean of 2.88 seem to above the criterion mean of 2.50 for acceptance level.

The results from the table indicated that all respondents affirmed that items 10-15 are directly related to teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location. The results revealed that schools in urban area have competent teachers than schools in rural area, school location is essential to academic outcome of learners, long distance to school affects activeness of students in the class, short distance to learning environment encourages regular attendance on the part of learners as well as school location may lead to students absenteeism with mean scores of 2.87, 2.70, 2.75, 3.15, and 2.95 respectively impact on academic

achievement of students. The grand mean of 2.88 indicates that there is direct relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Testing of Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Table 4: An “r” statistical table showing the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of students

VARIABLES	N	MEAN	SD	DF	R-CAL	SIG. VALUE(P)	DECISION
Teachers' Competence	180	103.9	10.8				
Academic Achievement	180	31.6	5.24	396	0.321*	0.05	Reject H ₀

Source: Field Study, 2023

From table 4 above, it is noteworthy to state that a direct relationship was observed between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students. This was evidenced with a yield of the calculated r- cal. of 0.321 at 396 degrees of freedom given that the obtained level of significance (p-value) is 0.05 (*statistical benchmark*). By implication, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students is therefore rejected. Hence, there is significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Null Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Table 5: An “r” statistical table showing the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of students by gender

VARIABLES		N	MEAN	SD	DF	R-CAL	SIG. VALUE(P)	DECISION
Achievement by Gender	Male	71	115.9		10.0			
	Female	109	38.6	4.34	340	0.312*	0.05	Reject H ₀

Source: Field Study, 2023

Based on table 5, there exists a positive relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students of both genders. This was evidenced with a yield of the calculated r- cal. of 0.312 at 340 degrees of freedom given that the obtained level of significance (p-value) is 0.05 (*statistical benchmark*). In this wise, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender is rejected. Therefore, there is significant

relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Null Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo education zone of Taraba State.

Table 6: An "r" statistical table showing the relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of students by location

VARIABLES	N	MEAN	SD	DF	R-CAL	SIG. VALUE(P)	DECISION
Performance by Urban	6	115.9	10.0	372	0.310*	0.05	Reject H₀
Location Rural	3	38.6	4.34				

Source: Field Study, 2023

Based on table 6, there exists a positive relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location. This was evidenced with a yield of the calculated r-cal. of 0.310 at 372 degrees of freedom given that the obtained level of significance (p-value) is 0.05 (*statistical benchmark*). To this end, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location is rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo education zone of Taraba State.

Evidences from table 4 revealed that r-cal values greater than 0.05 obtained level of significance at 396 degrees of freedom. To this end, the hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students is rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

This is in agreement with Ugbe's report that there is significant difference between the performance of students taught by a qualified teacher and students taught by unqualified teacher in chemistry as well as significant difference between the performance of students taught by experienced teacher and students taught by inexperience teacher (Ugbe, 2015). Similarly, the findings of the current study concurred with Duncan (2013) that teacher's competence greatly influences the performance of mathematics students.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo education zone of Taraba State.

Evidences from table 5 indicated that 0.312 of r-cal value is greater than 0.05 statistical benchmark of significance level at 340 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender is hereby rejected. Thus, there is significant relationship

between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by gender in Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State.

The current study disagreed with the report of Filgona (2016) and Nwona (2013) against female students in Science, Technology and Mathematics that the courses are considered as masculine-inclined. Also, the findings against Suleiman (2014) report that gender inequalities are interwoven with social class, ethnicity, sexuality and disability since findings revealed that the proportion of students enrolling in preparatory schools before they pass English language tests is 74.5% and 25.5% for males and females respectively. The author further established significant difference in the academic performance of male and female students in favour of female in terms of comprehension of information, evaluation of arguments and CGPA. Moreover, the current study disagreed with Hyde (2018) that female students surpass their male counterparts in basic computation and understanding of mathematical concepts while male students exceed female in complex problem-solving skills. However, the findings of this study agreed with Lee (2015) and Kinzel (2016) that improvement in academic performance do not significantly differ between male and female students in environmental education assessment.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo education zone of Taraba State.

Evidences from table 6 showed that r -cal values (0.310) is greater than 0.05 obtained level of significance at 372 degrees of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis that says there is no significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location is hereby rejected. By implication, there is significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students by location in Jalingo education zone of Taraba State.

This is in alignment with Ebhomein (2014) that reported indices of competence such as teachers' qualification and experience in teaching field as potential factors negatively or positively impacting academic performance of students. The author further established that unqualified and inexperienced teachers negatively impact on academic performance of students while qualified and experienced teachers positively impact on students' academic performance. This is supported by Egwu (2016) that teachers' poor qualification and experience adversely affects the implementation of some aspects of the school curriculum in which students' subject content gained is seriously affected thereby dampening on academic success of the students.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it could be inferred that as far as Jalingo Education Zone of Taraba State is concerned, there is a direct significant relationship between teachers' competence and academic achievement of secondary school students. In the course of this study, it was discovered that teachers' competence has a positive significant relationship with academic achievement of secondary school students by gender and location in the study area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government through State Ministry of Education should pay adequate attention to issues of teachers' training and retraining exercise so as to improve on their competence, and by extension enhance on academic achievement of secondary school students in the area.
2. Again, teachers' competence is usually judged by their educational qualification whereby sub-degree (NCE/Diploma) teachers are mostly considered incompetent especially in teaching senior secondary class. Therefore, relevant Education Agencies and Officials should ensure engagement of more qualified teachers for effective teaching-learning

process and better academic achievement of senior secondary school students in the study area.

3. Lastly, recruitment of experienced teachers should be prioritized and evenly posted across secondary schools in Jalingo Education Zone and Taraba State as a whole. This is to ensure that both schools in rural and urban areas have a taste of experienced teachers to facilitate effective teaching-learning process in the school; and subsequently improve on academic performance of students in both rural and urban schools.

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