

## An appraisal of academic performance of different school categories in Kwara State, Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

*This study considered the performance of students in different secondary school categories in Kwara State. The study randomly selected 240 different schools stratified into public and private, day and boarding as well as single sex or mixed sex schools out of over 560 registered public and private secondary schools in the State. A self-designed Academic Performance Checklist was used to collect students' results while School Categories Questionnaire was administered to harvest information on the characteristics of the different school types. One research question was formulated for the study it was answered using percentages while three research hypotheses were tested using Chi square test. The study found a prevalence of performance differentials between public and private secondary schools as well as between day and boarding schools while differences in performance between mixed gender schools and single gender schools was found to be low. The study found out significant difference between the performances of Public and Private secondary schools in Kwara State (  $\chi^2 = 2.63 > \text{critical } \chi^2 = 1.96$ ). A significant difference also existed between the performance of Day students and Boarding students ( $\chi^2 = 2.64 > \text{critical } \chi^2 = 1.96$ ) while the study found out no significant difference between the performance of Single gender schools and Mixed gender schools ( $\chi^2 = 0.84 < \text{critical } \chi^2 = 1.96$ ). The study concluded that school categories and types have a significant influence on the academic performance of students as students from private secondary schools performed better than their counterparts from public secondary schools. Also this influence was significant for boarding and day schools. The study recommended the re-introduction of boarding system in public secondary schools to bridge the performance gap.*

**Keywords:** School categories, Single sex schools, Mixed sex schools, Public schools and Private schools

### **Introduction**

Academic performance of students is a product of several factors: the student, the school, and the system impacts on student learning and on the outcome of learning activities. Academic performance of students has been a matter of great concern to all stakeholders in education because of the substantial amount of resources(financial, physical and human) expended by government and private school owners on the sector. According to the Federal Government of Nigeria (2004), secondary education occupies a unique position in the educational system of Nigeria. It serves as a link between primary and higher education by absorbing the products of the former and supplying input into the latter.

There are different categories of secondary education: we have single sex schools where the school population is made up of either male or female students and mixed sex school where the school is made up of both male and female students. There are also Day schools where students come from their various homes to the school every

day, and Boarding schools where students live within the school premises in dormitory. Private schools are owned and operated by private individuals and organizations while public schools are owned and operated by various government arms and agencies.

The goal of each school type varies and efforts are always geared towards meeting these goals. The major idea behind mixed gender schools is to promote harmonious, healthy learning environment among different sexes of students and to encourage healthy competition which could motivate the female students for greater academic accomplishments, especially in male dominated societies. Most of the time, the purpose of boarding schools centered around the need for students to concentrate on their studies and be insulated from home and family environments distractions. Public schools are mostly set up to promote access to education by citizens and as a weapon to fight poverty and promote development, most private schools are set up to meet double goals of providing alternatives to public education and also widen access to education where limited opportunities abounds in public schools.

As school population continues to increase the influence of school type, sex and location on academic performance is generating much research interest. Bolade (2009) for instance, has demonstrated that school type did not make a contribution to the academic achievement of a sample of secondary school students in Ogun state independently of the influence of their home backgrounds. Ayodele (2000) revealed that other things being equal, students attending private or other independent school had higher levels of achievement than students from government schools. However, Bolade (2009) acceded that type of school did not make a contribution to academic performance while Ajayi (2006) in his study revealed that school type make a difference in students' academic performance. According to Alimi, Ehinola, and Alabi (2011), the mean performance of students in private schools was slightly higher than that of their counterparts in the public schools. However, some studies have examined location planning and their attendance consequence on examined performance of students in various states of the Federation. Delana(2009) in Doyle (2008) reported that rural schools were inferior and lacking in the range of facilities with high staff turnover and suffered from lack of continuity in their curriculum. Obe (1984) observed a significant difference in rural-urban academic performance of 480 primary six school finalist on the aptitude subtests of the National Common Entrance Examination into Secondary Schools. The researcher concluded that children from urban schools were superior to their rural counterparts.

Gana (2001) studied relationship between academic performance and school location. The study revealed that, there was no significant difference between academic performance of students in urban and rural schools. Ajayi (2006) also found out that school type makes a difference on students' academic achievement. Keeves (1978) found out that the type of school, classified as public or private did not make any difference on students' academic performance. However, Eme(2014) found that children who attended private schools generally perform better in mathematics than did their public school counterparts. He concluded that there is a significant disparity in the mean score of students in private schools and those of public schools. Students from private schools had an average score of 54.72 while their peers in public schools had a low mean score of 29.13. The notion that pupils in private primary schools are better academic achievers' than their counterparts in public primary schools is dependent on the assumption that private schools are adequately equipped with human and material resources and that those resources are channeled towards a purposeful educational objectives authoritatively. However, the private schools also have economic goals to meet. The common interest of all school types centre around good education, exemplified by good academic performance at the end of the schooling programme.

### **Problem of the study**

The performance of these various school types in public examinations has never been uniform; most times performances were tailored towards school types differentiated by ownership, management styles and operational strategies. Public schools performance in external examinations has declined over the years, this have resulted in loss of confidence in the schools by parents. However, private schools have continued to enjoy growth in numbers and enrolment cashing on the loss of confidence in public schools. Many factors accounted

for students' academic performance; prominent among them is what Odinko (2002) referred to as structural variables of the school such as school and teacher characteristics.

It has also been discovered that public secondary schools face problems such as lack of teachers, ineffective school administration, lack of supervision, inadequate funding, poor maintenance lack of good classrooms, tables, libraries, laboratories and over crowded classes and most importantly, eradication of school structures such as the boarding and mixed school systems that are peculiar with public school system in the late 70's and early 80's. These peculiarities hampered public schools performance as shown by consistent poor performance in external examinations. However, private schools enjoy relatively smooth academic programme, tougher and regular administration and control as well as fairly good school infrastructures. Many of them also run boarding systems with mixed student populations which help promote closer student monitoring and discipline, healthy academic competition among various students' sexes and balanced learning environment. Invariably, parents expect private schools to consistently post good results in external examinations.

### **Research Question**

What is the performance of students from different school types in Kwara State?

#### *Research Hypotheses*

- H1: There is no statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students from mixed sex and single sex secondary schools in Kwara State
- H2: There is no statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students from day and boarding schools in Kwara State.
- H3: There is no statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students from public and private secondary schools in Kwara State

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to appraise the performance of different school types and justify whether reasons for having different school types have been met and to what extent good performance have been achieved in the existing different school types. Specifically, the purpose was to examine the influence of school types on the academic performance of students in:

- i. Mixed sex and Single sex schools in Kwara State
- ii. Day and Boarding school in Kwara State
- iii. Public and Private secondary schools in Kwara State

### **Methodology**

The study categorized secondary schools into two groups: the public and the private schools. Four school types were identified within the two groups; viz a-viz mixed and single sex schools, boarding and day schools. In all, 240 schools were selected along public and private categories to answer the research question. In each stratum, equal number of schools was selected for study. The school sample was purposively selected from each category and sub categories. The final year results for five years (2010- 2014) of each school were aggregated to measure students performance.

**Table 1: Distribution of sample from the different school categories**

School Category	Total	School Types			
		Mixed sex	Single sex	Day	Boarding
Public Schools	120	90	30(120)	110	10 (120)
Private Schools	120	105	15(120)	75	45(120)

The study randomly selected 2,350 student results for the study this: includes 1,400 results of public school students and 950 results of private school students. Also 1,500 results from day schools were selected while 850 boarding school students' results were also analyzed. Mixed sex schools had 1,750 students' results and 600

single sex students' results considered. The data generated were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages to answer the research question raised while independent samples chi-square( $X^2$ ) test was used for the three hypotheses raised in the study at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results**

Research Question: *What is the performance of students from different school types in Kwara State?*

**Table 2: Frequency analysis of Academic Performance of Students in Selected Secondary Schools types in Kwara State**

School Types	Level (No)	5 Credits and above No (%)	4Credits above No (%)	Failed(D7-F9) No (%)
Public schools	1400	438(31.3)	402(28.7)	560(40.0)
Private schools	950	616(64.8)	205(21.6)	129(13.6)
Day schools	1500	400(26.7)	554(36.9)	546(36.4)
Boarding Schools	850	302(35.5)	258(30.4)	290(34.1)
Single sex schools	600	332(55.3)	180(30.0)	88(14.7)
Mixed sex school	1750	808(46.2)	412(23.5)	530(30.3)

Source: Kwara State M O H C D

Based on the above results 438(31.3%) of the 1400 students enrolled in public schools had 5 credits and above, 402(28.7%) had 4 credits while 40.0% (560 students) failed compared to 616 (64.8%) who had 5 credits and above among 950 students enrolled in private secondary schools, 205(21.6%) had 4 credits and 129(13.6%) failed.

It can be concluded thus, that students enrolled in private schools performed better than their counterparts in public secondary schools. Findings show that more students (35.5%) passed in boarding school compared to 26.7% that passed with 5 credits and above in day school. The reason for the differences may be attributed to the reading culture among boarding students which may be lacking in day schools. Findings in Table 2 also show higher percentage of the students who enrolled in single gender school performs better in terms of number of credits passed. This implies that single sex academic environment facilitates effective teaching and learning, enhances student concentration and reduces any form of distractions unlike mixed sex school which may encourage distraction among learners.

**Research Hypotheses**

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students from public school and private schools in Kwara State secondary schools.

**Table 3: Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) Analysis of academic performance of students from public and private schools in Kwara State.**

Variable	N	Mean (x)	SD	DF	Cal. $X^2$ value	Crit. $X^2$ value	Level of Sig $P \leq 0.05$
School types (public/private)	240	67.14	7.16				Not Sig.
Academic Performance	240	67.58	7.24	238	2.63	1.96	H <sub>1</sub> Rejected

The result in Table 3 shows that the calculated  $X^2$ -value of (2.63) obtained is greater than the critical  $X^2$ -value (1.96) with df = 238 at  $p \leq 0.05$  level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected which

implies that there is a significant difference in the academic performance of students in private and public secondary schools in Kwara State.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There is no statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students from mixed sex and single sex secondary schools in Kwara State

**Table 4: Chi-Square analysis of academic performance of students from mixed gender and single gender schools in Kwara State.**

Variable	N	Mean (x)	SD	DF	Cal.X <sup>2</sup> value	Crit.X <sup>2</sup> value	Level of Sig P≤0.05
School types (Mixed/Single)	240	76.56	8.41	238	0.84	1.96	Not Sig. H <sub>2</sub> Rejected
Academic Performance	240	74.03	7.36				

From Table 4, the calculated X<sup>2</sup>-value of 0.84 obtained is less than the critical X<sup>2</sup>-value of 1.96 with the df = 238 at p≤ 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of students in both mixed and single schools.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There is no statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students of Day and boarding schools in Kwara State secondary schools.

**Table 5: Chi-square (X<sup>2</sup>) analysis of academic performance of Day and Boarding schools in Kwara State.**

Variable	N	Mean (x)	SD	DF	Cal.X <sup>2</sup> value	Crit.X <sup>2</sup> value	Level of Sig P≤0.05
School types (Day/Boarding)	240	63.11	7.12	238	2.64	1.96	Not Sig. H <sub>3</sub> Rejected
Academic Performance	240	60.42	7.59				

The result in Table 5 showed that the calculated X<sup>2</sup>-test value (2.64) obtained is greater than the critical X<sup>2</sup>-value (1.96) with the df= 238 at p≤ 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) was rejected. This shows that there is significant difference in the academic performance of students from day and boarding school.

**Discussion of findings**

The result in Table 2 shows the analysis of student’s academic performance based on school types. The percentage of the student that had 5 credits and above from private school is better of the percentage of those that passes with the same credit in public secondary school. This finding was supported by the findings of Ajayi (2006) in a study of student’s performance in private and public schools. His finding shows that the means scores of student in private schools outweigh that of their counterpart from public schools.

Table 2 shows further that student enrolled in a single sex school perform better than their counterpart enrolled in mixed sex school. It revealed in the table that 55.3% of the students enrolled in a single sex school passed with 5 credits and above compared with 47.2% that passed with 4 credits and above in mixed sex schools.

Table 3 shows a significant difference in the academic performance of students from public and private secondary schools in Kwara State. This might be a result of many academically unhelpful factors that pervades the public school sector which was earlier highlighted in this paper. Private schools, because of their unique management and administration styles have been able to forge an effective and efficient co-ordination of human and material resources for teaching and learning. It agreed with the finding of Alimi, et al (2011) which found a significant difference in facilities between private and public secondary schools in Ondo State.

Table 4 shows a statistically significant difference in the academic performance of students in single sex schools and mixed sex schools. Students in single sex schools perform better than their counterparts in mixed sex schools. The finding confirms the work of Tafa (2011). Table 5 shows that student enrolled in boarding school performs better than their counterpart enrolled in day schools. The findings reveal that close monitoring and proper supervision of activities justified the reason for better academic performance exhibited by student enrolled in private schools.

### **Conclusions**

From the findings, it is concluded that there are significant difference in the performance of students in different school types: specifically in public/private, mixed sex/single sex, and boarding/day schools. The study concluded that:

- Students in private secondary schools in Kwara State perform better than their counterparts in public secondary schools.
- Performance of students in Day was significantly lower than the performance of students in Boarding schools in Kwara State.
- There was a significance difference in the academic performance of students Single sex schools when compared with performance of students in Mixed sex schools in Kwara State.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the conclusion and findings, it was recommended that;

- Government and public school administrators in the State should embark on study of how private school owners have been running their schools so well that consistent good performance of students are almost guaranteed.
- The government and public schools should embark on the policy of sharing experience with private school owners on how they manage to get good performance for their students. There is a need for synergy between the two school groups.
- By networking and sharing experience with the private school sector owners, government should come up with needs assessment of public schools that will make them come at par with the private schools performance.
- Government should re – introduce boarding system to public secondary school in the state since it is evident that boarding schools had been performing better than their day school counterparts.

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