

# Factors Affecting Students' Performance in Higher Institutions of Learning in Gombe State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

*This review is aimed to study factors affecting students' performance in higher institutions of learning in Gombe state, Nigeria. The research is concerned with the following factors; Secondary school education, improper orientation and guidance, Poor communication skills, students' attitude and mentality and Poor objective achievement of courses and its influence on student's performances. Academic performance or achievement in higher schools is something people desired because of its importance to the community in which those who successfully graduated become responsible citizen with experience and skills to manage their life's and contribute to the development of their community.*

**Keywords:** Student, Students performance, Academic, Higher institution.

## INTRODUCTION

Students' performance is described as an outcome of education, the extent to which a student, teacher or institution have achieved their educational goal. It is also seen as a student achievement in school where he/she achieves desired performance (Good grade) or poor performance (poor grade).

Ali *et al* (2009) stated that students' performance plays an important role in producing the best quality graduate who will become great leaders of a country. Students' achievement and leaning performance are affected by numerous factors such as learning facilities, gender, parent socio-

economic status, age, and environment. These factors according to them, differ from one person another and from one country to another.

Pedrosa *et al* (2006) in their study on social and educational background pointed out that students who mostly come from deprived socio-economic and educational background performed relatively better than those coming from higher socio-economic and educational background.

Aronso *et al* (1998) observed that expectations, content and time are key issues in student's performance. This is to say that, what a student performs in school depends on his /her expectations of the education or subject area in question. According to them, students are motivated to achieve higher in subject areas they believe promises greater benefit. However, they argue that, the way and manner the content of the subject are planned and presented to the students also affect students' performance. Time management, is also associated with student's achievement in school, those who manage their time efficiently are most likely to be successful in their studies.

This research therefore, identified poor secondary school education as one of the factor affecting student's performance in tertiary institutions in Gombe state, Nigeria. Many factors are linked with this problem but most importantly poor assessment of the secondary education by the examination

bodies such as West Africa Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO), Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) and other related bodies.

The importance of assessment in education cannot be overemphasized as it serves as a quality control and quality assurance module that determine whether students understand what they have been taught and met the standard to be awarded certificate for the program. Ahmed (2018). The above-mentioned examination bodies are responsible for the assessment of the secondary education in the country and issuance of certificates that serve as a student achievement in secondary school which can be used for different purposes for instance, good result can be used to secure admission for a student in higher school for him/her to further his/her education but some factors such as examination malpractice, poor supervision, impersonation, among others are affecting the quality of assessing the students education in secondary schools. It is observed that, most of the students that are struggling with their academic performance in tertiary institutions are those who did not possess the entry-requirement into high school but get admission because of their certificates which were poorly assessed.

The other factor observed that also affects students' performance in high school of learning in Gombe state, Nigeria is improper orientation and guidance for the students particularly the newly admitted students. Guidance is one of the factor through which a student can improve his/her study attitudes and habits and directly proportional to academic achievement (Zajacova *et' al* 2005). However, the organization of orientation and guidance for students in school is a basic element in ensuring good discipline and better academic performance. The orientation program is aim to enlighten students about the school; the rules, structures, dress code, study habit, grade point average (GPA), cumulative grade point average (CGPA) and

so on but at time the exercise lacks some input that help it to be effective and delivered successfully in which it hinders with some challenges such as short of time, lack of enough venue to accommodate the students comfortable, miscommunication gap, among others. These challenges affect students significantly in their studies directly or indirectly for instance, students suffer from courses selection (elective) during registration due their unawareness, and some students fail because of their ways of responding to the questions given to them in examination, test or assignment. Thus, the saying; 'understanding the question, give you half chance of answering the question' these are mistakes students frequently make thereby affecting their performances in school some of which expected to be address during orientation. It was also observed that, students suffer in their academic activities particularly those who lack proper guidance from parents, teachers/lecturers or other people in which they perform less in their studies and did not achieve desired academic performance. Improper orientation and weak counselling for students made them fail to manage their time, affairs and misuse time in non-academic activities and also develop poor self-concept about oneself. Radhika, (2018)

Poor communication skills are found as another factor influencing student's performances in schools. El-Shaarwi (2006). Students who are competence in English perform well in their academic studies and improve the performance of their teachers/lectures. Poor English among students hinder them to understand the concepts, make sentence, understand terminologies in various courses and find it difficult in understanding what the question demands are during examinations, tests or assignment. Radhika (2018)

Ability to write, read and understand the content is very vital that Institutions should take into account in admitting students into school thus, tests are given in some schools but is not enough to satisfy the student's communication skills. The

teachers suffer a lot from student's poor communication and find it difficult to improve the students because of time factor, number of students and other reason associated with the challenge.

The other challenge that is associated with student's performance in higher institutions of learning in Gombe state, Nigeria is student's attitude and mentality toward their academic studies. Some students find it very difficult to distinguish between their personal life and studies. Aronso (1998). They tend to relax in the beginning of the semester by not attending lectures, writing assignment or tutorial rather they prefer attending to social activities like parties, night clubs, birthday celebration, football matches, games, and watching movies among others and they prefer to be serious in their studies when the semester come and end (preparation for the examination). However, some students think of their relationships with their course-lecturers help them to achieve grade result and they tend to be reluctant in studies. DiLalla (2004). Students with this attitude or mentality feel the disappointment of academic performances and suffer from uncertainty, bad grade as well as possess great challenge to their school achievement.

Teachers/lecturers are made to teach, guide, develop, students with good study habits to boost their performances. Temel (1988). The teacher's personality which includes interest in the job, mastering the subject matter, presentation, methodology, relationship, emotion stability among others are critical in students behavior and interest in their studies. When the teachers personality is encourage, it boosts the performance of the students and vice-versa. It is also observed that, some teachers did not attend to the students in the right time rather they leave lately and rush to cover within short-period not concern to achieve the specific objective of course while the students find it difficult to question their teachers attitudes because they believed teachers have the basic authority and know the best for the student. Tanner (1990). This

attitude significantly affects student's performance and achievement in school.

It also found that Social-economic status of the family of a student as another factor articulates with students' performance in school. Students' failures are also associated with lack of access to personal reading materials such as textbooks, internet, journals, magazines, and library facilities. Karemera (2003)

It is very important to address these challenges or factors which are obviously associated with the students' achievement in schools as well and helps educational institutions in achieving their objectives by producing competence students who can be self-sufficient and responsible citizen in societies. This study suggests that, to improve student's performance and achievement in school, the school management should improve their performance in different areas especially in the process of admission into the school; they should ensure that the applicants have the requirement and competence enough to get the admission, this will help in disqualifying incompetence and indiscipline applicant who cannot meet the standard of the school. Proper orientation and counselling should be conducted in schools to help students to face the life challenges and become responsible and committed to their studies. The departmental orientation should also encouraged and in case of high number of the students, the exercise should broke into groups so as to achieve efficient delivery.

Teachers/lecturers should be professional in all duties. They should behave in accordance with teaching profession behaviors' and bestow with the school authorities to direct all academic activities. The school management also needs to organize trainings for its academic staffs with a view to improving their performances and professionalism in their conducts, this will also help in uplifting student's performance in school. The stakeholders in Nigerian educational system ranging from parents, guardians, lecturers,

Family members, counsellors and many others, are so much concerned about students' achievement and academic standard. Akomolafe and Olabisi (2011).

## CONCLUSION

There are number of factors affecting students' achievement in school which some can be addressed within school such as admission processes, staffs professionalism, guidance and counselling, provision of reading materials among others while other factors influencing the academic performance of students are outside the school these include financial status of family, parents education, environment, peer influence and so on

Student's performance or achievement can only be proved effective when they are accountable in their performance in terms of what they can do in various courses. It is vital to address student's challenges in schools and elevate their performance in order to achieve the educational goal that is, to bring about improvement in all aspects of people, communities as well as the nation. Hence, the issue of improving student's achievement in school remains a serious concern for government, communities, institutions and individuals that need more academic research in order to move our schools forward.

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