



## **School Location, Class Size and Teaching Experience as Determinants of Academic Achievement of Students' in Lagos State.**

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**Abstract.** This study examined school location, class size and teaching experience as determinants of academic achievements in Business Studies. This study adopted a survey research design of ex-post facto. Forty (40) Business studies teachers and four hundred (400) junior secondary school students (JS 3) formed the sample of the study. The sample were drawn from private and public secondary schools in Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. Two instruments were used for data collection. They are: (i) Questionnaire for Business Studies teachers' demographic data has items such as school location, years of teaching experience, area of specialization, sex, age and so on. (ii) Business Studies Achievement test questionnaire. Data were analysed using Multiple Regression, Analysis Coefficient. In carrying out the study, three hypotheses were formulated and tested. The results obtained were tested for significance at 0.05 level of confidence. Findings revealed that school location, class size and teaching experience significantly predict students' achievement in Business Studies. Class size was more potent predictor of academic achievement, followed by school location, while teaching experience was not a good predictor of academic achievement. There was also a significant relationship between the three predictor variables and academic achievement. Based on this, it was recommended among others, that critical

efforts should be made by stakeholders to improve the school location and environment, while the class size should be made moderate and manageable. Also, teachers' professional experience should be considered in reward system so to encourage the teachers to be more productive and committed to the teaching profession.

**Keywords:** School location, class size, teaching experience, academic achievement, business studies.

### **1. Introduction**

Education is seen as a social process used for capacity building and for sustaining the society. The attainment of this goal, therefore, rests on good academic achievement of students who need to make use of the knowledge and skills acquired to investigate, interpret and in making decisions in their daily activities and to boast the manpower requirements of the Nation. Unfortunately, many of these students are experiencing or recording poor academic achievement thereby limiting their career prospects, and sustainable development. For instance, only very few students who sat for the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) from 2010- 2014 demonstrated adequate or good performance in Mathematics

and English Language, having the pass rate of 24.94%, 29.17%, 31.28%, 29.17% and 31.28% respectively (School Forum, 2017).

Poor academic achievement has reaching effects on the future choices of students as they would be denied the opportunity for the optimal development of their potentials; and Nigeria may never attain her goal of developing great and dynamic economy using her own human resources. Levin, Wasanga and Somerset (2011) noted that the academic achievement of students at secondary school level is not only a pointer of the effectiveness of schools but also a major determinant of the well-being of youths in particular and the nation in general. However, it is sad to note that in the world over, there has been a continuous increase in the percentage of secondary school students who experience poor academic achievement. Yahya (2015) observed that secondary schools have derailed in the provision of qualitative education expected of them by achieving lower students' academic achievement. He further explained that, a lot of problems seem to bedevil the system.

Quite a lot of researches have been conducted to identify a variety of factors that determine individuals' ability to learn and the speed of acquiring relevant skills and knowledge. In fact, if we begin to think about the various reasons why some students perform better than others, many ideas will readily come to our mind: is it because they have a higher capacity/capability to learn? Or maybe, the personal-causal factors, that is, students' personal background, way of life or socio-economic status of their, parents and environment (school location, class size causal factors) can also influence students' performance (Urien, 2003). The factors behind the performance of students in schools have been variously analysed. First, it is an essential instrument for the school authorities in charge of the definition of optimal and efficient education policies. Second, this kind of

analysis can help the educational institutions to improve the quality of their programmes. Also, some authors have come up with the idea that there is a relationship between the performance of students during their study period and their future earnings.

Undoubtedly, students' academic achievement will necessarily affect their educational progression and the human capital base of the nation anytime. Many of the researches on academic achievement focused on gender, age, faculty of study, socio-economic status, residential area, medium of schooling, tuition trend, daily study hours and accommodation, (Ali, Shoukat, et al., 2013); Mothers' Employment, Marital Status and Educational level (Abosede & Akintola, 2016); students' general mental Ability, Interest and home environment (Meenu, 2016); students' admission points, previous school background, residence outside the school community, transportation problems, educational factors, change of instructional language, academic qualifications, and Faculty members' skills (Al Shehry & Awad Youssif, 2017). However, these variables and many more according to Akindele-Oscar (2007) were found to account for relatively small amount of the variability in academic success. Other variables of interest in finding the variation in academic achievement for secondary school students are class size, school location and teaching experience, which are the focus of this present study.

Class size is an important factor with respect to students' academic achievement. Jacob, Olawuyi and Jacob (2016) noted that class size has become a phenomenon often mentioned in the educational literature as an influence on students' socializing pattern and achievement, quality of instruction, administration and school budgets. It is purely administrative decision of the educational managers in the school which teachers have little or no control. There are divergent opinions on the influence of class size on academic achievement. For instance, large class size schools among other

variables have been advertised as providing a more comprehensive curriculum than small class size schools and also reduce per student operating costs. It has also been argued, that large class size schools provide better academic out-comes and are less expensive to operate.

In the view of Jepsen (2015), smaller classes are associated with increased student achievement. It was reported that the positive relationship between smaller class size and student achievement holds for students in different grades as well as in different countries and across continents. Several high-quality studies find no relationship between class size and student achievement, while reducing class size in many schools in developing countries is unlikely to improve achievement as these schools have more fundamental challenges, such as high teacher absenteeism (Jepsen, 2015). Muraina & Muraina (2014) supported that there is a significant relationship between the class size and secondary school students' scholastic achievement. On the contrary, Owoeye (2011) reported that there was no significant difference in the academic achievement of students in small and large classes from urban schools; and there is no significant difference between performance of students from rural large and rural small classes. Mahlo (2015) concluded that there is no significant difference in class size exists between low and high achieving schools indicating that the class has no significant relationship with academic achievement.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria in its policy document recommends that the highest number of pupils/students per class in pre-primary schools, primary schools, junior secondary, senior secondary, 25, 35, 35, and 40 respectively; while the number in technical colleges is 20, due to the technical nature of the instructions (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013).

Although, class size is seen as one variable in the complex culture of school life; other related factor like the school location must be considered. School location describes the school psychological environment or what others refer as school ethos, school cultures or the school climate. The school psychological environment could be seen from two perspectives: the goal and relationship dimensions. There is increasing evidence that the students' perception of achievement goal structures both within the classroom and the school generally are related to their self-perception and use of effective learning strategies. Onuoha (2010) noted that school location is one of the potent factors that influence the distribution of educational resources and academic achievement. In addition, Frederick (2011) views school location as one of the major factors that influence students' academic achievement in some subject areas. It was also noted that many parents look at factor such as the location of schools (urban or rural) and the distance to the school before enrolling their wards. Schools are basically located in rural and urban areas. The school environment seems to affect the behaviour and development of both the students and teachers who function within it.

In the words of Owoeye and Yara (2011), many parents prefer their children to attend schools in urban areas because they believe that students from urban schools perform better than their counterparts from rural schools. Orji (2013) asserts that many students in the interior villages struggle with the challenge of walking a long distance to school. Low level of development arising from lack or insufficient basic infrastructural facilities is seriously affecting the rural school students, which invariably has resulted in their low or poor academic achievements. This problem has prevented many quality and experienced teachers from teaching in rural schools and this could result into the poor academic achievement of students in rural schools.

Teachers are essential in the entire educational system of any nation and are pivots on which education wheels revolve. Ashimole (2011) emphasized that teaching and learning depends largely on teachers, and that it is on teachers' foremost quality (experience) and devotion that the effectiveness of all educational arrangements, development and growth hinged. Teaching experience is predominately the professional knowledge gathered in the course practice over the years. This knowledge according to Eggen and Kauchak (2001) can be grouped into the knowledge of content; pedagogical content knowledge; and general pedagogical knowledge.

Rivkin and Kain (2003) cited in Omotayo (2014) are of the opinion that teachers with three or less years of teaching experience are not as effective as teachers with more years of teaching experience, while rookie-teachers typically being the least effective teachers. It was discovered that rookie teachers make important gains in teaching quality in the first year and smaller gains over the next few career years. However, there is no consistent linear relationship between the teachers' years of experience and students achievement after the initial three years of teaching, making it difficult to say whether there are any discernible differences among more veteran teachers with 7-10 years of experience.

Thus, the ability to teach effectively depends on the teacher's knowledge and experience, and this occurs in a variety of forms. Teacher effectiveness is impeded if the teacher is not familiar with the body of knowledge being imparted. The way the students perceive the teachers in terms of their (teachers') knowledge and experience of the content subject matter may significantly affect students' academic performance. Based on the review of literature above, it could be seen that there are mixed research findings on the influence of the independent variables - school environment - related factors (class size, school location) and teacher factor (teaching experience) on

students' academic achievement. Also, most of these researchers in this area were mainly conducted science related subjects.

It is in view of this that this current study is aimed at investigating if these variables predict the academic achievement of students with emphasis on Business studies bearing in mind the importance of the subject to the development of human resources of the Nation.

## 2. Hypotheses

In line with this, three hypotheses were formulated to guide this study:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship among school location, class size, teaching experience and students' academic achievements in Business studies..

Ho2: There is no significant relative contribution of school location, class size and teaching experience to students' academic achievements in Business studies.

Ho3: There is no significant composite contribution of school location, class size and teaching experience on students' academic achievements in Business studies

## 3. Methodology

### Design

The descriptive survey research design of ex-post facto was adopted for this study. The design was considered useful as the researcher is interested in investigating whether school location, class size and teaching experience predict students' academic achievements in Business studies in some selected secondary schools in Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. Also, due to the comparatively dissimilar characteristics of the respondents, it was decided that a survey design would be the best method of collecting useful information that would be needed to establish facts being sought by this study.

### Sample

The population for this study comprised all Business studies teachers and final year junior secondary school students (JS. 3) in private and public secondary schools in Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. The sample for the study comprised four hundred (400) junior secondary school students (JS. 3) and forty (40) Business Studies teachers drawn from the secondary schools in Ikorodu Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. The researcher adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure. The stratified technique was used in selecting twenty (20) secondary school (10 private and 10 public) for the study, while simple random sampling was used in selecting the participants for the study in each school.

### Instrumentation

Data collection involved the use of two (2) self designed instruments. The first instrument which was for Business Studies teachers consisted of twelve (12) items on demographic data of the teachers. Items such as name, nature and type of school, school location, sex, age, highest educational qualification, years of teaching experience, subject taught, area of specialization, number of students in the class they teach were included in the instrument. The second instrument was a multi-choice questionnaire designed for a randomly selected sample of JS. 3 students of Business Studies in the selected schools. This instrument, which was titled Business Studies Achievement Test Questionnaire contained two sections. Section A sought the objective test, which consisted of 40 multiple-choice test items with options a-d. The objective test covered topics on book-keeping, communication, secretarial studies as contained in the scheme of work/syllabus for

behavioural objectives: Knowledge, understanding and thinking (application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation). The instruments were validated by giving it to colleagues and test construction experts for face and content validity. The instruments were also pilot tested to determine its reliability by administering it to 4 teachers and 40 students at two intervals. The test-retest reliability coefficient using cronbach alpha was 0.72, which indicated that the instruments, consistently measure what they purport to measure.

### Procedure

The instruments were personally administered to the respondents in their various schools. This was done with the assistance of the teachers, after the permission of the principal was sought. The questionnaires were immediately collected back after completion and the response rate was 100%.

### Data Analysis

The data ensuing from the scoring of the instrument and the coding of the demographic variables were subjected to statistical analysis to test the hypotheses. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Multiple Regression Analysis were used for test of significance at 0.05 level of confidence.

## 4. Results

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship among school location, class size, teaching experience and students' academic achievement in Business studies.

**Table 1: Correlation Matrix of the Relationship between School Location, Class Size, Teaching Experience and Students' Academic Achievement in Business Studies.**

	Academic Achievement	School Location	Class Size	Teaching Experience
Academic Achievement Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 400	.189( ** ) .000 400	-.329( ** ) .000 400	-.127 .011 400
School Location Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.189( ** ) .000 400	1 400	.104( * ) .038 400	.117( * ) .019 400
Class Size Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.329( ** ) .000 400	-.104( * ) .038 400	1 400	.539( ** ) .000 400
Teaching Experience Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.127( * ) .011 400	.117( * ) .019 400	.539( ** ) .000 400	1 400

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Result in table 1 shows a significant and positive relationship between school and achievement ( $r=.189$ ;  $p < .05$ ). School location and teaching experience were significantly and positively related ( $r=.117$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Also, class size and teaching experience were significantly and positively related ( $r=.539$ ;  $p < .05$ ). However, a significant but negative relationship exists between class size and academic achievement ( $r=-.329$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Also, a significant negative relation exist between teaching experience and academic achievement ( $r=-.127$ ;  $p < .05$ ). In addition, school location and class size are negatively related ( $r=-.104$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between school location, class size, teaching experience and students' academic achievement was therefore rejected by the findings of this study. By implication academic achievement of students is related to the three predictor variables.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relative contribution of school location, class size and teaching experience to students' academic achievements in Business studies.

**Table 2: Beta Coefficient and t-Ratio of Relative Contribution of School Location, Class Size and Teaching Experience to Students' Academic Achievements**

	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t-Ratio	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	26.620	1.124		23.682	.000
School location	1.121	.359	.150	3.126	.002
Class size	-1643	.281	-.332	-5.848	.000
Teaching experience	.210	.352	.034	.598	.550

Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

The results in Table 3 indicates that only two out of the three predictor variables made significant relative contributions to the prediction of students' academic achievement. Class size was more potent predictor of academic achievement ( $\beta = -.332$ ;  $t = -5.848$ ;  $p < .05$ ) followed by school location ( $\beta = .150$ ;  $t = 3.126$ ;  $p < .05$ ), while teaching experience was not a good predictor of academic achievement ( $\beta = .034$ ;  $t = .598$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant composite contribution of school location, class size and teaching experience on students’ academic achievements in Business studies

**Table 3: Model Summary of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Combined Contributions of School Location, Class Size and Teaching Experience in Predicting Students’ Academic Achievement.**

REGRESSION						
Model	Source of Square	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Multiple R = .365 R Square = .133 Adjusted R Square = .126	Regression	1894.552	3	631.517	20.256	.000(a)
	Residual	12345.838	396	31.176		
	Total	14240.390	399			

Predictors: (Constant), School location, class size and teaching experience

Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

The results in Table 2 indicates that school location, class size and teaching experience significantly predict students’ academic achievement  $R = .365$ ;  $R^2 = .133$ ; (adj) = .126. ANOVA value of  $F_{(3,396)} = 20.256$ ;  $p < .05$  further confirmed the result. This reveals that 13.3% of the variance in the students’ academic achievement in Business studies was accounted for by the combination of the school location, class size and teaching experience.

**5. Discussion**

Table 1 revealed a significant relationship between school location, class size, teaching experience and students’ academic achievement, which by implication, means that academic achievement of students is related to the three predictor variables. This position corroborates the finding of Akpo (2012) that teacher educational qualifications, teaching experience, subject specialization, standards-based professional development, standard-based classroom activities, and classroom management are related to students’ academic achievement in JSC Mathematics.

However, it was revealed in the result of the analysis in Table 2 that students’ academic achievement has a close interaction with class size than with school location. The finding negates that of Owoeye (2011) that was no significant difference in the academic achievement of students in small and large classes from urban schools; there is no significant difference between performance of

students from rural large and rural small classes. Also, it was revealed in Table 2, that teaching experience was not a good predictor of academic achievement. The finding corroborates the outcome of Kimani, Kara and Njagi (2013) that teachers’ age, gender, professional qualifications and teaching experience were not significantly related to academic achievement. The result negates the finding of Yala and Wanjohi (2011) that teachers’ experience and professional qualifications were the prime predictors of students’ academic achievement

The result of Table 3 showed that school location, class size and teaching experience significantly predict students’ academic achievement. The result is in line with the findings Babatunde (2015) that there is a significant difference in the academic performance of secondary school students based on class size with students in large classes performing better than their counterparts in smaller classes, there is a significant difference in the academic performance of students taught by more experienced teacher and those taught by inexperienced teacher and also, students located in the urban areas perform better than their counterparts in rural area of Kaduna State.

**6. Conclusion**

The results of this revealed that school location, class size and teaching experience made relative contributions to predicting

students' academic achievement in Business Studies. Based on this, there is the need for educational reforms demand greater performance and commitment of all the stakeholders, most especially the teachers who have direct contact in imparting knowledge to students, for quality output in secondary schools.

## 7. Recommendations

The following recommendations are poignant from these findings:

- Critical efforts should be made by stakeholders to improve the school location and environment, while the class size should be made moderate and manageable.
- Teachers' professional experience should be considered in reward system so to encourage the teachers to be more productive and committed to the teaching profession.

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