

# ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN BUSINESS STUDIES IN DELTA CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

## Abstract

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The study was aimed at assessing the academic performance of junior secondary school students in business studies in Delta Central Senatorial District of Delta State. Eight secondary schools in eight different Local Government Areas of the senatorial district were selected through the stratified random sampling technique. A total of three hundred and twenty (320) JSS III students were administered questionnaire. Instrument also involved one thousand two hundred (1,200) junior secondary school examination results for 2005, 2006 and 2007 sessions. Statistical analysis using simple percentage and two-tail t-test revealed that the general performance of junior secondary school students in Delta Central Senatorial District in business studies is poor, with a mean score of 41.39. There was no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female students in business studies. There was also no significant difference in the mean performance scores of urban and rural students in business studies. Recommendations were made.

## Introduction

Business studies has not been popular in the Nigerian secondary schools because of the bias against vocational education. The public perception of business studies which form part of vocational education is education for the dropouts. This is further reinforced by the attitude of Nigerian parents who prefer the conventional grammar schools to business schools whose curricular were directed at the training of secretarial and clerical personnel. This erroneous impression was corrected by the release of the National Policy of Education (2004). The policy, which recommended the 6-3-3-4 system of education was instrumental to the inclusion of business studies in the secondary school curriculum.

Osuala (1998) noted that a research for a means of providing the youths with the educational experience which can equip them with saleable skills and competencies is the main goals of the 6-3-3-4 system of education introduced in Nigeria. The National Policy, according to Osuala is capable of providing secondary school students with the necessary pre-vocational skills that will enable them to be useful to the society themselves and to the community in which they live.

The FRN (2004) emphasized the inclusion of vocational and technical education subjects in the curriculum in order to make the recipients immediately employable on leaving school. To this end, the secondary school system is provided in two stages, namely the junior secondary school (JSS) and the senior secondary school (SSS). The broad aims of the secondary education are (a) the preparation of the students for useful living in the society and (b) the preparation of students for higher education.

Under the secondary system of education, the following business subjects are offered typewriting, shorthand, book-keeping and financial accounting, office practice, commerce and economics. The pre-vocational business studies include typewriting, shorthand, book-keeping, office practice and commerce are offered at the junior secondary school level. At the senior secondary school level, typewriting, shorthand, financial accounting, commerce and economics are offered. These business subjects consist of skill and non-skill business subjects.

The Comparative education Study and Adaptation Centre (CESAC) revised 2001 listed the objectives of business subjects as follows:

1. To enable the students to acquire the basic knowledge of business studies.
2. To develop the basic skills in office occupations
3. To prepare students for further training in business studies
4. To provide orientation and basic skills with which to start a life of work for those who may not undergo further training,
5. To provide basic skills for personal use in the future
6. To relate the knowledge and skills to national economy

Business laboratories with relevant instructional materials and equipment are needed to enable the students acquire practical knowledge, skills and competencies. To that extent, CESAC (2001) prescribed materials and teaching equipment for use in teaching and learning processes. Teachers are of the utmost importance in inculcating the relevant skills in the students. For students to acquire the necessary skills and abilities, secondary school business teachers should be academically and professionally qualified.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The introduction of business studies at the junior and senior secondary school levels in Nigeria is principally aimed at equipping the students with skills that will make them employable in the world of work (Esene, 2001). In order to achieve the above objectives, secondary school curricula were structured to include both prevocational and academic subjects. The issue is that if the secondary school students are expected to acquire the basic knowledge of business and to develop their basic skills in business and occupation, there is the need, therefore, to find out the extent to which the objectives of business studies are being achieved in terms of meeting the entry-level employment of secondary students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of the study is to assess the academic performance of junior secondary school students in business studies with reference to the Delta Central Senatorial District of Delta State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- 1) Evaluate the academic performance of junior secondary school students in business studies at the Junior Secondary School Examination
- 2) Proffer suggestions on how to make maximum uses of the instructional materials and equipment available for teaching the skill and non-skill business subjects.

### **Research Questions**

The study answered the following questions:

- 1) What are the percentage passes of students in business studies at the junior secondary school examination?
- 2) Are the instructional materials and teaching equipment available for teaching the skill and non skill business subjects?
- 3) What is the status (quantity and quality) of business teachers in secondary schools?
- 4) What is the performance of male and female students in business studies?
- 5) What is the performance of urban and rural students in business studies?

### **Hypotheses**

Based on the factors under consideration, three null hypothesis were formulated

- 1) There is no significant difference in (he mean performance scores of male and female students in business studies.
- 2) There is no good academic performance of students in business studies at the junior secondary school examination
- 3) There is no significant differences in the mean performance scores of urban and rural students in business studies.

### **Research Methodology**

The descriptive and survey designs were adopted in the study. The research was designed to assess the academic performance of junior secondary school students in business studies in Delta Central Senatorial District.

### **Population**

JSS III students of the junior secondary schools in the Delta Central Senatorial District formed the population for the study. Three hundred and twenty (320) students were involved in this study.

### Sample and Sampling Techniques

The secondary schools in the Delta Central Senatorial District were stratified based on location into urban secondary schools and rural secondary schools using the stratified random sampling techniques. The eight local government areas in the district were used for the study. One secondary school was selected from each local government area and forty students from each of the selected secondary schools were used for the study. This gives a total of three hundred and twenty JSS III students who were selected using a random sampling techniques. The survey design involved the use of three sessions of Junior Secondary Schools Certificate Examination results- 2005, 2006 and 2007.

Fifty students' results were randomly selected for each year. This gave a total of one hundred and fifty students for each school. And a total of one thousand, two hundred students' results.

**Table 1: Secondary Schools Selected for the Stud\**

S/No	Location	Schools Selected
1.	Secondary schools in the urban areas	1. Army Day Secondary School Effurun, Uvwie 2.3. Local Government Area. Aladja Grammar School, Aladja, Udu 4. Local Government Area Anglican Girls Grammar School, Ughelli, ughelli North Local Government Area Okpe Grammar School, Sapele, Sapele Local Government Area.
2.	Secondary schools in the rural areas	5. Agbon College, Okpara-Inland, Ethiope East Local government 0. Area Oha Grammar School, Oha, Okpe Local Government Area 7. Ekakpanre Grammar School, Ekakpanrc, ughelli South Local 8. Government Area Ukavbc Secondary School, Qghara, Ethiope West Local Government Area

### Research Instrument

Junior Secondary School Examination for three years (2005, 2006 and 2007) was used as part of the instrument for the study. Structured questionnaire was also used as instrument to elicit information on the academic performance of junior secondary school students in business studies in Delta Central Senatorial District. The questionnaire comprised fifteen (15) questions and used a 4-point response scale of strongly agree, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. The column of "undecided" was excluded because Obe's study had shown it to be overwhelmingly popular with the respondents, who most probably used it to conceal vital information.

### Method of Data Analysis

The following statistical tools were used for the analysis of the data collected. They include: percentage, means, standard deviation, Pearson product-moment correlation and student t-test.

### Research Question One

What is the percentage passes of students in business studies at the junior secondary school examination? The research question is answered in table 2.

**Table 2: Mean Scores, % Pass, % Fail and Standard Deviation of Students' Performance in Business studies**

N	X	%pass	%fail	Standard Deviation
1,200	41.39	26	74	6.1858

From Table 2, shown that the percentage pass of students in business studies is 26%. This indicates a downward value and poor results of business studies at the Junior Secondary School

Examination.

### Research Question Two

Are the instructional materials and teaching equipment available for teaching the skill and non-skill business subjects? The research question is answered in table 3. Table 3: Percentage distribution of respondents to the questionnaire items on instructional materials.

S/N	Questions	Total	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
1	Most of the instructional materials are not available	100	143	44.7	90	28.1	62	19.4	25	7.8
2.	Carbon papers are commonly found for practical exercise	100	58	18.1	48	15.0	116	36.3	98	30.6
3.	Booklets of ruled ledger sheets are available	100	67	20.9	53	16.6	121	37.8	79	24.7
4.	Typewriters for students practical are not enough for students	100	111	34.7	134	41.9	40	12.5	35	10.9
5.	Typewriting tables and chairs are available for students work	100	39	12.2	58	18.1	106	33.1	117	36.6
6.	One typewriting room dimension (8.6 x 14.8) is available	100	172	53.8	14.8	46.2	0	0	0	0

7.	There is no typewriting store with shelves in your school	100	163	50.9	71	22.2	41	12.8	45	14.1
8.	Reams of A4 plain papers are available for students' work	100	165	51.7	101	31.6	20	6.1	34	10.6

From Table 3, 72,8% (233) of the respondents agreed that most of the instructional materials are not available for teaching the skill and non-skill business subjects, while 27.2% (87) disagreed. 66.9% (214) of the sampled population agreed that carbon papers are not commonly found for practical exercise while 33.35 (106) disagreed. Besides, 62.5% (200) of the respondents agreed that booklets of ruled ledger sheets were not available for business studies at schools. And 76.6% (245) of the sample agreed that typewriters for students' practical are not enough for students, while 23.4% (75) of them disagreed. However, 69.7% (223) of the respondents agreed that typewriting tables and chairs are not available for students work, but all the 320 (100%) students agreed that there was one typewriting room dimension (8.6 x 14.8) in their school. In spite of this, 73% (234) of the respondents agreed that there was no typewriting store with shelves in their school, while 26.9% (86) disagreed. But 83.3% (266) of the sample agreed that the ream of A4 plain papers are available for students' work. These indicate that most of the instructional materials and teaching equipment are not available for teaching business studies in the Junior Secondary Schools at the Delta Central Senatorial District.

### Research Question Three

What is the status (quantity and quality) of business teachers in secondary schools? Research question was answered in table 4.

**Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Respondents to the Questions on Quality of Business Teachers**

S/N	Questions	Total	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
9	There is no business I teacher in your school	100	61	19.0	59	18.4	180	56.3	20	6.3
10	Business teacher is a purl-Lime teacher in your school	100	90	28.1	40	12.5	112	35.0	78	24.4
11.	(Business teacher also	100	91	28.4	69	21.6	100	31.2	60	18.8

	economics and commerce									
12.	Business studies is not given attention by your school	100	161	50.3	97	30.3	30	9.4	32	10.0
13.	Most of the business teachers possess NCE	100	190	59.4	106	33.1	10	3.1	14	4.4
14	Business studies are not taught properly	100	183	57.2	112	35.0	14	4.4	11	3.4
15	Business studies teachers do not come for their classes regularly	100	140	43.8	174	54.3	06	19	0	0

Teacher is a part-time teacher in their school while 59.4% (190) of them disagreed. However, 50% (160) of the respondents agreed that business teacher also teaches economics and commerce. This indicates that there are no expert teachers in business studies in such schools. Besides, 80.6% (258) of the students agreed that Business Studies is not given attention by their school principal, while 19.45 (62) of the respondents disagreed. Furthermore, 92.5% (296) of the tested sample agreed that most of the business studies teachers possessed NCE qualifications in business education. And 92.25 (295) of the sampled population agreed that Business Studies is not taught properly in their school, while only an insignificant number of them 7.8% (25) disagreed. This is further confirmed by 98.1% (314) of the tested sample that business studies teachers do not come for their classes regularly. From the above analysis, it shows that most of the business studies teachers possess N.C.E. qualifications and some are even specialists in economics and commerce.

#### Research Question Four

What is the performance of male and female students in business studies? The research question answered in Table 5

**Table 5: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Performance of Male and Female Students**

Gender	Total Number of Students	Mean Scores	Standard Deviations
Male	600	41.5733	6.2112
Female	600	41.1983	6.1792

Table 5 shows that the male performance in business studies at JSSE is 41.5733, and the standard deviation is 6.2112. and female performance is 41.1983 and standard deviation is 6.1792

#### Research Question Five

What is the performance of urban and rural students in business studies? The research question is answered in table 6

**Table 6: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Performance of Urban and Rural Students.**

Location	N	X (Mean score)	SD (Standard Deviation)
Urban	600	41.1717	6.6475
Rural	600	41.6000	5.7053

#### Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female students in business studies. The hypothesis is tested with two Tail T-test and result and result is presented on Table 7.

**Table 7: T-test for Mean Difference in Performance of Male and Female Students in Business Students.**

Gender	N	X	SD	df	Tab. Value	Calculated Value
Male	600	41.5733	6.2112	1198	1.96	1.048
Female	600	41.1983	6.1782			

The result of the t-test analysis shows that the calculated value of 1.048 is less than the table

value of 1.96. The hypothesis is therefore accepted. There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female students in business studies. That is, there is no significant difference in the mean scores.

### **Hypothesis Two**

There is no good academic performance of students in business studies at the junior secondary school examination. This hypothesis is tested using table 2, where mean score, % pass, % fail and standard deviation of students' performance in business studies are calculated. From Table 2, it shows that the percentage pass is 26%. This shows that the performance is very poor. Therefore, hypothesis two is accepted. That is there is no good performance of students in business studies in Delta Central Senatorial District.

### **Hypothesis Three**

There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of urban and rural, students in business studies. The hypothesis was tested using T-test and result as presented in Table 8.

**Table 8: T-test for Mean Difference in Performance of Urban and Rural Students in Business Studies**

Location	N	X	SD	df	Tab. Value at 0.05	Calculated Value
Urban	600	41.1717	6.6475	1198	1.96	-1.198
Rural	600	41.6000	6.7053			

The result of the t-test analysis shows that the calculated value of -1.198 is less than the table value of 1.96. the hypothesis is therefore accepted, that there is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of urban and rural students in business studies.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The purpose of this study was to assess the academic performance of junior secondary school students in business studies in Delta Central Senatorial District. It was found out that business studies was not given the desired attention in the public schools surveyed, as 80.6% of the sampled population agreed that business studies is not given attention by their school principals. And consequently, there was a poor academic performance (26% pass) of students in business studies in Delta Central Senatorial District, mean score was 41.39. Investigation also revealed that most of the instructional materials and equipment are not available for teaching the skill and non-skill business subjects. This probably may be responsible for the generally poor performance of students in business studies. This was supported by the studies carried out by Oyedeji (1991). Attah (1993) and Davies (2000) which noted that instructional materials and teaching equipment are among the many resources required and that the effective use of these resources could significantly increase students' academic performance.

Teaching and learning are, of course incomplete in the sense that teaching resources have their role to play in classroom instruction. The result of the findings showed that public secondary schools in the Delta Central Senatorial District were equipped mostly with NCE teachers in business studies and part-time teachers. This was supported by the studies by Anyaduba (1987) and Osuala (1998) which noted that the business teachers were at the core of any educational programme implemented. For instance the business teachers cannot be isolated totally in classroom instruction as long as they are the vehicles through which the business students can get to their various destinations.

Further investigation revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean

performance scores of male and female students in business studies. This study corroborates Oyedeji (1991) that there is a significant difference in the academic performance between male and female students in economics and commerce but no significant difference between male and female students in financial accounting. There was also no significant difference in the mean performance scores of urban and rural students in business studies. This was supported by the studies by Osuala (1998) which noted that superiority of urban students over their rural counterparts as reported by researchers due to difference in staffing, adequate facilities, social background and teaching condition, but what becomes the situation where such differenced do not exist? Definitely such superiority cannot be established where students have similar environmental conditions.

### **Conclusion**

This study sought to find out the academic performance of Junior Secondary School students in business studies. Therefore based on the results the following conclusions could be made:

- a. There is generally poor academic performance of students in business studies in Delta Central Senatorial District.
- b. There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of male and female students in business studies.
- c. There is no significant difference in the mean performance scores of urban and rural students in business studies.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Inspectorate Department of the Ministry of Education be well staffed to carry out the task of inspection and supervision of public secondary schools.
2. Instructional materials and teaching equipment found to be obsolete should be replaced and where instructional materials are not found they should be provided, in order to make teaching of business studies interesting and rewarding.
3. To enhance students' performance in business studies, the conceptual teaching approach should be adopted by the teachers and business educators as it will enhance students' understanding and assimilation of the concepts thereby improve their performance in the subject.
4. Business teachers with knowledge of content and pedagogy should be given proper attention in the selection and recruitment exercise.
5. Business subjects' curriculum should be reviewed, revised and adjusted in order to meet the challenges posed on the teachers and students, by the acceptance of office machine technology now in vogue

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