

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN WASSCE ECONOMICS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

¹OBASI, BLESSING PRECIOUS, ²Dr. ADEKUNLE, THOMAS OLUTOLA
& ³Dr. STEVE, OLUWASEGUN BADA

Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education,
Federal University Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, Nigeria.
nnennayaogbugoukpai2701@gmail.com

Abstract

The study investigated the comparative analysis of students' performance in WASSCE Economics in senior secondary schools in Katsina, Katsina State. The study had three objectives, three research questions, and three hypotheses. An ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. Population of the study is thirty-one thousand, one hundred and seventy (31,170). The study's sample size consists of one thousand, four hundred and thirty-seven (1,437), a Proforma was used to collect data for the study. Data collected was analyzed using frequency and percentage to answer the research questions and a t-test was used to test null hypotheses formulated for the study. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Findings of the study revealed significant difference in the students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public schools in Katsina Zone in 2021 ($t = -2.830$; $p < 0.05$), but no significant difference in 2022 ($t = .098$; $p > 0.05$) and 2023 ($t = .534$; $p > 0.05$). The study concluded that there is a significant difference in the students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private secondary schools in Katsina Zone, Katsina State. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made among which are: the school administrators in public schools should encourage their teachers to engage students in extra moral classes to improve their performance in Economics examinations, such as WASSCE, NECO SSCE and NABTEB.

Keywords: Comparative Analysis, Students' Performance, WASSCE Economics

Introduction

The role of education in human survival and development is of great importance because no society can develop without quality education system and education remains the only way through which society actualize its dreams and aspirations. Smith (2021) defined education as the wise, hopeful and respectful cultivation of learning and change. This definition comprises all forms of education learned with the aim of actualizing human dreams as well as enhancing the existing conditions.

Britanica (2021) describe education as discipline that is concerned with methods of teaching and learning in schools. In Nigeria, education is one of the major areas of human endeavors. Therefore, Federal, States and Local Government Areas are all involved in education. There are different bodies from Federal Ministry of Education, State Ministry of Education, the Local Government Education Authority and several bodies responding to Educational demands in Nigeria. In Nigeria senior secondary, Economics is one subjects offered by students and its defined by Robbins, as the science which studies human behavior as a relationship between ends and scarce means which have alternative uses. According to the NERDC (2022) curriculum, the objectives of teaching Economics in secondary schools are to enable students to understand basic economic principles theories and concepts as well as the tools for sound economic analysis, understand the structure and functioning of the Nigerian economy, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills in economic contexts. It enables students to contribute intelligently to discourse on economic reforms and development as they affect or would

affect the generality of the citizens, as well as understand the structure and functioning of economic institutions. Economics education is extremely important because it is vital to the future health of our nation's economy.

In the school setting, students' performance in economics plays a significant role in the economic, agricultural, industrial and commercial growth of the country (Daramola, Olutola & Ogunjimi, 2017). Schug and Wood (2020) emphasizes the importance of Economics education in developing critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills, all of which are essential for responsible citizenship. Sadly, our education system is still striving to produce citizens that can discover a way out of our economic state. Examinations have always played a major role in defining and monitoring educational standards because their results are used to measure and assess students' academic achievements. Consequently, students' performance in external examinations such as those conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) in Economics remain one of the most objective means of evaluating whether or not teaching and learning of economics are effectively done in secondary schools.

Student performance has been a subject of discussions and debate among scholars; because it is the most vital educational policy and indicator that stakeholders are interested (Alaka, 2021). Also, Aremu (2021), stressed the importance of academic performance as a fundamental criterion by which all teaching-learning activities are measured, using some standards of excellence and the acquisition of particular grades in examinations to measure candidate's ability, mastery of the content, skills in applying the knowledge acquired to a particular situation.

Statement of the Problem

Students' performance in public and private senior secondary schools in the West African Secondary School Certificate Examinations Certificate (WASSCE) has revealed that many students are underperforming (Adu, 2022). Frequent incidence of leakages and examination malpractices on the part of the examination bodies may not be entirely unconnected with lack of dedication on the part of teachers, inadequate teaching materials, supervision, qualified staff, low funding of education on the part of the government and low level of commitment of students.

Economics is a growing subject in secondary education and probably one of the most popular elective subjects offered in secondary schools. Therefore, the importance of effective teaching and learning of economics in the secondary schools cannot be overemphasized. Meanwhile, the current poor performance of students' in public and private senior secondary schools in West African Secondary School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) in Nigeria is disturbing the minds of the parents, guardians, teachers, counselors and educationists. This is because, in 2021, the students' performance is 838,486 (53.75%) in public schools and 721,666 (46.26%) in private schools, in 2022, the students' performance is 756,347 (47.27%) in public schools and 659,452 (41.22%) in private schools', in 2023, the students' performance is 742,345 (46%) in public schools and 619,263 (38.37%) in private schools (WAEC, 2005).

However, despite the popularity of Economics as a secondary school subject, there has been persistent poor achievement by students, as indicated in recent annual Chief Examiner's reports of the West African Senior Certificate Examinations (2004, 2005 & 2007). In addition, most university teachers of Economics have expressed the view that prospective university students of Economics should not study Economics in secondary schools. They contend that it is easier to teach Economics to students with no previous knowledge of the subject than to those who were taught Economics badly in secondary schools. Therefore, there seem to be several potential problems with the teaching and learning of Economics at the secondary school level.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the comparative analysis of public and private students' performance in WASSCE Economics in senior secondary schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. compare the students' performance in 2021 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.
2. compare the students' performance in 2022 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State
3. find out the students' performance in 2023 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in the study.

1. What is the analysis of 2021 students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State?
2. What is the analysis of 2022 students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State?
3. What is the analysis of 2023 students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in students' performance in 2021 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in students' performance in 2022 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in students' performance in the 2023 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

Methodology

The study adopted ex-post facto research design to investigate the comparative evaluation of the academic performance of both public and private senior secondary schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State. The population of the study consists of 1,437 senior secondary school three (SS 3) students in public and private secondary schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, who sat for the 2021 – 2023 WASSCE Economics examinations. The sample of this research is one thousand, four hundred and thirty-seven (1,437) which was drawn from thirty-one thousand, one hundred and seventy (31,170), the multi-stage sampling techniques was adopted. The instrument designed or used for data collection in this study was five (5) Mark Collection Form (MCF), that is Proforma. No instrument was validated as a result of the Mark Collection Form that was used, and no reliability test was carried out. The data collected was analyzed using frequency and percentage to answer the research questions and t-test was used to test null hypotheses formulated for the study. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results

Research Question one to three: What is the analysis of 2021-2023 students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State?

Table 1: Frequency distribution showing the analysis of 2021-2023 students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

S/N	Grade	2021 (Frequency & Percentage)	2022 (Frequency & Percentage)	2023 (Frequency & Percentage)
1.	A	1 (0.4)	-	-
2.	B	38 (13.3)	23 (8.2)	11 (4.1)
3.	C	124 (43.5)	157 (55.9)	157 (58.6)
4.	D7	22 (7.7)	45 (16.0)	40 (14.9)
5.	E8	16 (5.6)	27 (9.6)	4 (1.5)
6.	F9	84 (29.5)	29 (10.3)	56 (20.9)
	Total	285 (100%)	281 (100%)	268 (100%)

The table 1 shows that in 2021 students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State, out of two hundred and eighty-five students sampled, 1 (0.4%) student had A; 38 (13.3%) students had B; 124 (43.5%) students had C; 22 (7.7%) students had D; 16 (5.6%) students had E8 and 84 (29.5%) students had F. The results revealed that in 2021, 42.8% students do not have credit in WASSCE economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

The table 1 also shows that in 2022 students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State, out of two hundred and eighty-one students sampled, no student had A; 23 (8.2%) students had B; 157 (55.9%) students had C; 45 (16.0%) students had D; 27 (9.6%) students had E8 and 29 (10.3%) students had F. The results reveals that in 2022, 35.9% students do not have credit in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

In addition, table 1 reveals that in 2023 students' performance in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State, out of two hundred and sixty-eight students sampled, no student had A; 11 (4.1%) students had B; 157 (58.6%) students had C; 40 (14.9%) students had D; 4 (1.5%) students had E8 and 56 (20.9%) students had F. The results reveals that in 2023, 37.3% students do not have credit in WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in students' performance in 2021 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

Table 2: t-test Summary table Showing the Difference in the students' performance in 2021 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools

Year	School Type	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calculated t-value	Sig. of t-value	Remark
2021	Public	145	1.9378	1.28139	283	-2.850	0.005	Significant
	Private	140	2.3714	1.30490				

The results in Table 2 shows that in 2021, the calculated t-value of -2.850 is significant at 0.05 alpha level ($t = -2.850$; $df = 283$; $p < 0.05$). This implies that there is significant difference in the students' performance in 2021 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State. As shown in table 1, private school students had the highest mean of 2.3714 which is higher than the mean 1.9378 of the counterparts in public schools. This result indicates that private school students performed better than their counterparts in public schools in 2021 WASSCE Economics. Therefore, hypothesis one is rejected.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in students' performance in 2022 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

Table 3: t-test Summary table Showing the Difference in the students' performance in 2022 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools

Year	School Type	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calculated t-value	Sig. of t-value	Remark
2022	Public	122	2.0164	1.30469	279	.098	0.922	Not Significant
	Private	159	2.0000	1.44470				

Table 3 also reveals that in 2022, the calculated t-value of 0.098 which is not significant at 0.05 alpha level ($t = 0.098$; $df = 279$; $p > 0.05$). This implies that there is no significant difference in the students' performance in 2022 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State. This result indicates that private school students does not perform better than their counterparts in public schools in 2022 WASSCE Economics. Therefore, hypothesis two is accepted.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in students' performance in the 2023 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

Table 4: t-test Summary table Showing the Difference in the students' performance in 2023 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools

Year	School Type	N	Mean	SD	Df	Calculated t-value	Sig. of t-value	Remark
2023	Public	123	2.1301	1.48743	266	-.534	0.594	Not Significant
	Private	145	2.2276	1.48952				

The results in Table 4 also show that in 2023, the calculated t-value of -.534 which is not significant at 0.05 alpha level ($t = -.534$; $df = 266$; $p > 0.05$). This implies that there is no significant difference in the students' performance in 2023 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State. This result indicates that private school students does not perform better than their counterparts in public schools in 2023 WASSCE Economics. Therefore, hypothesis three is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding shows that there is significant difference in the students' performance in 2021 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State. Private school students performed better than their counterparts in public schools. The findings align with those of Alawu, Nosiri and Ladan (2020) who similarly observed that students in private schools performed better than their counterparts in public schools. Their study, conducted in Kaduna South Local Government Area, comparing students' performance in Chemistry between private and public schools, supports the results of this study. The result of their study reveals that students in private school performed relatively better than their counterparts in public school. There is significant difference in the students' performance in 2021 WASSCE Economics in public and private

schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State.

The second and third finding shows that there is no significant difference in the students' performance in 2022 and 2023 WASSCE Economics in public and private schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance, Katsina State. This implies that public school students did not perform better than their counterparts in private schools and vice versa. Adeyemi (2022) disagreed with findings of the study. The findings of their study showed that private schools students performed significantly better than their counterparts in public schools.

Conclusion

The study shows that there is a significant difference in the students' performance in (2021 to 2023) WASSCE Economics in public and private secondary schools, indicating that private school students performed better than their counterpart in public schools.

Recommendations

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

1. The Ministry of Education and other relevant authorities should regularly organize refresher courses such as trainings, seminars, conferences, and workshops for Economics teachers and students in public senior secondary schools, to keep them abreast of current and productive student-centered teaching and learning methods.
2. The school administrators in public schools should encourage their teachers to engage students in extra moral classes to improve their performance in Economics examination especially in external examinations such as WASSCE, NECO SSCE and NABTEB.
3. Teachers in public and private senior secondary schools should take note of frequent questions set by WAEC so as to prepare their students adequately for examinations.
4. Education policy makers should develop and implement policies to address disparities in the allocation academic materials between public and private schools.

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