



Effect of Teacher's Attitude on Academic Performance of Economics Students in Senior Secondary Schools of Jos-North LGA, Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the effect of teachers' attitudes on students' academic performance in economics. This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study population comprised all students in public secondary schools in Jos-North's local government area of Plateau State. Five schools were sampled out of 22 public secondary schools in the study area. The study used a self-administered questionnaire to collect data from 210 students who are the respondents and were selected by the use of a simple random sampling technique. Descriptive statistics; mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the results. The findings revealed that teachers' attitude, the condition of service, teachers' Fringe benefit payment, teachers' promotion, and in-service training has a direct influence on the student's performance in economics. Also, the findings revealed that teachers' positive attitudes have a positive influence on student's academic performance and personality development; negative attitudes hurt both the performance levels and personality development of students. Based on the study, it is recommended that the government should provide school facilities timely, needs to ensure the availability of qualified teachers, adequate teaching and learning materials, enough classrooms for the students, and prompt payment of teachers' entitlement and promotion.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Attitude, Economics.

JEL Classification: A10, A13, A20

Contribution to/Originality Knowledge

The study contributes to the existing literature on teachers' attitudes toward students' academic performance.

1.0 Introduction

Education is a fundamental human right and the important thing to sustainable development, peace, and stability within and amongst nations is the provision of education to the populace of such nations. Education is an essential tool that can make an individual creativity, opportunity, and growth. Education is the activity that aids new generations obtain the necessary information, ability, attitude, and understanding and develop their character while preparing them for communal life. It is the activity that aids new generations attain the necessary information, potential, attitude, and understanding and develop their character while preparing them for communal life (Karsli, 2007 cited in Uluga et al, 2011).

Teachers are crucial in determining what happens in the classroom and they are those who would argue that the development of more inclusive classrooms requires teachers to cater to



different student learning needs through modification or differentiation of the curriculum (Forlin, 2004 cited in Mugisha, 2018). Teaching, alternatively, is the manner in which the individual develops abilities (obtained in the course of the education phase) in proportion to their potential.

The most critical issue in education and teaching activities is the teacher. A teacher, in the most general terms, is a person who works in an educational institute and enables students to reach cognitive, sensory, and behavioural aims and gains within the range determined by the educational system ((Karsli, 2007, Gundogdu & Silman, 2007 cite in Uluga et al, 2011).

In an educational setting, teachers' attitude toward teaching and learning is an important factor affecting students' achievement. Attitude is a hypothetical construct that indicates an individual's like and dislikes towards an item. It may be positive, negative, or neutral. Attitude is an approach, temperament, sensation, situation, etc. With regard to a person or thing: inclination or course, especially of the mind. Attitude is a way of looking at things (Shittu & Oanite, 2015).

The skills and characteristics that are important for a person to be a good teacher are also the same factors that define a good education. A good teacher has eight basic characteristics, which are; Knowledge of material; Decision making; Critical thought and problem-solving ability; Self-understanding and self-correction; Reflecting; Recognizing students and knowing students learning needs; Applying new findings in education; Teaching and communication ability (Ulug, Ozden & Eryilmaz, 2011).

An attitude is a mind-set that influences how a person thinks and acts. Attitude can have an impact on a person's performance positively or negatively. For example, a negative attitude towards one's job will result in poor performance. Similarly, attitude could also have an effect on how properly a teacher plans and prepares for his/her lessons. Shittu and Oanite, (2015) asserted that the attitudes of a teacher consciously or unconsciously, greatly affect students' academic performance.

Attitude is concerned with an individual way of thinking and behaving and this has serious implications for learners, the teachers, the immediate social group with which individual learning relates, and the school system as a whole (Yara, 2009). According to Gorden cited in Azmat, (2019) defined an attitude as a mental and neutral state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related.

Academic performance is a direct manifestation of learning effectiveness and a valid indicator to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and education in higher education as well as the overall development of students. The academic performance of secondary school students is an important factor affecting the achievement of higher education goals (Zhou & Siti, 2022). The student's overall performance is not absolutely the result of their work; performance is affected by many factors and the first one is the attitude of the teacher. A positive attitude from the

teacher affects the student's motivation, attitude towards school and school work, the student's self-confidence, and as a result personality development (Ulug, Ozden & Eryilmaz, 2011).

Economics is a subject that gains recognition and is incorporated into the curriculum, knowledge cannot be gained without a guide. Teachers, consequently, play a major role in the art of teaching and imparting the desired knowledge to the students. They have to, therefore, model their attitude in such a manner that they have to be mentored by their students at some point during and after schooling. Teachers are seen by students as an authority, role models, and the only source of all knowledge and information in the formal classroom setting. Students will learn and be trained if the teachers use good methods and have a positive attitude toward his/her teaching (Mucella, Melis, & Ahu 2011 cited in Ismail, 2022).

As a result of this negative attitude exhibited by some of the teachers towards teaching, most teachers are not prepared before going to the class to teach, as the mastering of the subject matter is not exhibited during teaching, some go to work at their will for which it is their primary assignment, others are not professionally trained and so decided to take-up teaching appointment simply because it is the last resort, and so cannot perform the art of teaching effectively to the learner and to teacher job satisfaction. This study, therefore, provided room for negative attitudes exhibited by teachers which consequently may affect students' academic performance in economics negatively in most of the secondary schools in Jos-North, especially where experienced manpower may be virtually inadequate. That is why, this study sought to find out the effect of teachers' attitudes on students' academic performance in economics in senior secondary schools in the Jos-North Local Government area of Plateau State.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study,

This study examined the effect of teachers' attitudes on students' academic performance in economics in senior secondary schools in the Jos-North Local Government area of Plateau State. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the influence of teachers' attitudes towards the academic performance of senior secondary school economics students in Jos-North L.G.A.
2. To determine whether teachers mastering of the subject matter has any influence on student's academic performance in economics.
3. To examine factors that affect teachers' attitudes towards teaching economics.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions were raised in this research work:

1. How does a teacher's attitude influence students' academic performance in economics?



2. How does teachers' knowledge of the subject matter affect students' academic performance in economics?
3. How do teachers' conditions of service affect their attitudes toward teaching?

2.0 Literature Review

The most important factor in education and teaching activities is the teacher. A teacher, in the most general terms, is a person working in an educational institution who enables students to react to cognitive, sensory, and behavioral aims and gains within the range determined by the educational system (Gundogdu & Silman, 2007). The teacher has gone beyond just teaching in the class, giving lectures, taking exams, and giving grades; the teacher also takes on the roles of organizing, managing, counseling, observing, and evaluating.

An understanding by teachers of what will be involved in the learning and teaching of students is essential. Understanding, does not, however, go the whole way, it must be combined with helpful ways and constructive attitudes, which encourage but do not patronize. These teacher attributes, it is believed, facilitate pupils' academic success. Ali (2009) observes in a study that, there was a statistically significant relationship between teacher characteristics and student academic achievement.

The attitudes of a teacher consciously or unconsciously, greatly affect students' academic performance (Shittu & Oanite, 2015). It has been established that teachers' attitudes highly influence students' interest in learning. Moreover, the personality traits of the teachers are more powerful and influential than the course content or instructional strategies used in the classroom. Additionally, teachers with negative attitudes may not be approachable to students as teachers who are positively motivated. Thus, students find it difficult to ask such a teacher question on the grey areas of the subject he/she teaches. Mugisha (2018).

An attitude is a mindset that is how a person thinks and acts. Or behavior is a response to thinking, which a teacher shows to her students at different times it can be positive as well as negative, effective or ineffective, voluntary or involuntary, and overt and covert for instance attitude or behavior influence student performance. Similarly, attitude and behavior could also affect how well a teacher plans and prepares for her lessons. The behavior and attitudes, consciously or unconsciously, greatly affect student's classroom performance (Azmat, 2019)

Moreover, teachers' personality traits are more influential and powerful than the course content or instructional strategies used in the classroom (Azmat, 2019). A good classroom strategy requires full interest and support from teachers and learners. If a teacher appears not interested or careful about a particular subject or student, he/she will be unable to foster a supportive learning environment.

Research evidence shows that teachers have an important influence on students' academic performance. They play a crucial role in educational attainment because the teacher is ultimately responsible for translating policy into action and principles based on practice during interaction with the students (Adediwura, & Tayo, 2007 cited in Ismail, 2022). If the teacher is

ineffective, students under the teacher's tutelage will achieve inadequate progress academically. This is regardless of how similar or different the students are in terms of individual potential for academic achievement.

On teacher personality, Adu and Olatundun (2007) contend that teachers' characteristics are strong determinants of students' performance in secondary schools. In addition to that, teachers with negative attitudes may not be as approachable to students as teachers who are positively motivated. So, students find it difficult to ask such a teacher question on the grey areas of the subject he/she teaches. This implies that teachers' attitude toward their students and teaching, in general, is very important for students' success.

This is consistent with the research study conducted by Sylod (2016), who believes that in teaching, the attitudes of the teachers play an important role in students' academic performance. A positive attitude from the teacher affects students' motivation, attitudes towards school and school work, the student's self-confidence, and as a result personality development. Teachers are crucial in determining what happens in the classroom and they are those who would argue that the development of more inclusive classrooms requires teachers to cater to different student learning needs through modification or differentiation of the curriculum (Forlin cited in Mugisha, 2018)

The attitude of a positive and encouraging teacher impacts positively on the student's attitude and behavior (Lee, 2019). In contrast, when a teacher has a discouraging attitude, it will more likely demotivate the students to learn (Li, 2022). Similarly, teaching approaches also significantly impact the attitude and behavior of a person (Beausaert et al., 2013)

It had been established by scholars such as Shittu and Oanite (2015) that teachers' attitudes highly influence students' interest in learning. The student's performance is not completely the result of their work; performance is affected by many factors and the first one is the attitude of the teacher. A positive attitude from the teacher affects the student's motivation, attitude towards school and school work, the student's self-confidence, and as a result personality development (Ulug et al, 2011).

In Plateau State, students' academic performance in economics is below expectations as evidenced in both internal and external examinations (WAEC Examiners Report, 2021). Students were usually prepared for both terminal and external examinations from time to time, unfortunately, teachers' inability to cover the required syllabus on the parts of the teachers contribute to students' failure. For instance, out of 100 percent of all students that sat for the SSCE (NECO) Examination in Economics in (May/June 2021) it was recorded that only approximately 32.28 percent of students passed while a total approximate percentage of 67.72 percent of failure were recorded, all this poor performance is anchored on teachers' attitude whether positive or negative performance is affected.

It is striking that this important subject (economics) which purported to be an eye-opener for student to be familiar with happenings within the economic system and acquire fundamental entrepreneurial skill which Nigeria government craving for as a field that will speedily ensure



economic development by means of quelling the menace of unemployment and crime rate due to idleness has turnout to be the very subject student are performing poorly which is due to the attitude some teachers possess when it comes to teaching and learning process of economics which encompasses variables like not tolerating individual differences in student, non-challan attitude towards the use of instructional material and methods appropriate for impacting knowledge, unwillingness to ensure proper classroom management, inability to show a genuine interest in teaching and enthusiasm for learning., personal appearance, Skills in adapting to change, accepting responsibility for actions both inside and outside the classroom and the desire to take a cooperative approach towards parents and school personnel constitute those attitudes which if negatively or positively exhibited can have effect on students' performance.

It is against this background that this study is being undertaken to find out the effect of teachers' attitudes on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Jos-North L.G.A, Plateau State.

3.0 Methodology

Awotunde and Ogunduluwa (2004) define research design as a plan that guides the researcher in structuring the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. The research is inquisitive in nature and it employed the survey method of data collection from the targeted population. The primary source of data is the questionnaire.

The population comprises of students from 22 public secondary schools and teachers. The population of students is 1580 and 342 teachers, The data were randomly selected from this population. From the sample, five (5) secondary schools were randomly selected, and the sample size of 210 students were chosen using Yamane's (1964) statistical formula was employed for sample size determination making the total number of respondents to be 280.

The instrument for data collection that guided the study was a structured questionnaire titled "Effect of Teachers Attitude on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools Questionnaire" (ETASAPSSQ). The questionnaire consisted of 15 items. A four-point rating scale was used; it contains a list of statements to which the students respond to. The questionnaires were designed by the researcher to get information from the respondents. The response options to the items were a four-point rating scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was submitted to two experts, one in test and measurement in the Department of Educational Foundation and one in the Economics education unit of social science education, all in the University of Jos for screening and corrections. This was done to ensure that the items measured what they were designed to measure. The decision rule was to reject an item whose mean fell below 2.5 since it used a 4-point rating scale. The reliability of the instrument was tested through the result of the pilot study conducted and using Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is 0.71. Thus, the data collected were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis. Mean and standard deviation was

used to answer the research questions which was found suitable by the researchers because of its simplicity. SPSS version 25.0 was used for the analysis.

4.0 Results and Discussion

Research Question One: To what extent do teachers' attitudes affect students' academic performance in economics in Jos North L.G.A of Plateau State?

Table 1: Summary of Result of Teacher's Attitude and Student's Performance in Economics

S/No	Items	Mean	Std	Decision
1.	Our teacher comes to the class regularly And punctually.	3.17	0.72	Agreed
2.	Our teachers always frown at you when You answer a question wrongly	2.79	0.95	Agreed
3.	Economics teachers abuse us on slight issues	2.51	1.03	Agreed
4.	Our teacher teach us the method we like	2.96	0.90	Agreed
5.	Economics teachers are always ready to teach Us the subject	3.31	0.63	Agreed

The result in Table 1 showed mean scores and standard deviation of items constructed to answer research question 1. From the result presented, it is observed that the mean ratings of the responses of the respondent were 3.17, 2.79, 2.51, 2.96, and 3.31 respectively with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.72, 0.95, 1.03, 0.90, and 0.63. All the mean ratings were above the cut-off point of 2.50 which implies that the respondent sampled are aware of the influence of teachers' attitudes and students' performance in economics. This implies that all the items are measures of the influence of teachers' attitudes on student performance in economics.

Research question two: Does teachers' knowledge of the subject matter determine the student's academic performance in economics as a subject?



Table 2: Summary of Result Showing Teachers' Knowledge of the Subject Matter Determines Students' Academic Performance in Economics as a Subject.

S/No	Items	Mean	Std	Decision
6.	Teachers who teach with plenty of examples of the subject matter are better	3.39	0.67	Agreed
7.	Majority of our economics teachers don't know how to teach the subject	2.92	0.82	Agreed
8.	It's ideal to treat several examples of mathematical, statistical, and graphical aspects of economics for better understanding	3.24	0.83	Agreed
9.	There are no adequate materials for economics like other subjects.	2.88	0.90	Agreed
10.	Changing instructional strategy for students to follow up well in class is better	3.17	0.80	Agreed

The result in Table 2 showed mean scores and standard deviation of items constructed to answer research question 2. From the result presented, it is observed that the mean ratings of the responses of the respondent were 3.39, 2.92, 3.24, 2.89, and 3.17 respectively with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.67, 0.82, 0.83, 0.90, and 0.80. All the mean ratings were above the cut-off point of 2.50 which implies that the respondent sampled is of the opinion that teachers' knowledge of the subject matter determines the student's academic performance in economics as a subject. This implies that all the items are measures that teachers' knowledge of the subject matter determines the student's academic performance in economics as a subject.

Research question three: To what extent do teachers' conditions of service influence teachers' attitudes toward teaching?

Table 3: Summary of Results Showing Teachers' Condition of Service Influences Teacher's Attitude towards Teaching

S/No	Items	Mean	Std	Decision
11.	Our teachers always change cars every Year	1.75	0.86	Disagreed
12.	Teachers in my school always go on strike due to poor pay	2.42	1.44	Disagreed
13.	Economics teachers always motivate a good student with money	2.13	1.00	Disagreed
14.	Teachers leave in the staff quarters	2.50	0.92	Agreed
15.	Every teacher in my school is assigned to an office	2.19	0.85	Disagreed

The result in Table 3 showed mean scores and standard deviation of items constructed to answer research question 3. From the result presented, it is observed that the mean ratings of the responses of the respondent were 1.75, 2.43, 2.13, 2.50, and 2.19 respectively with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.86, 1.44, 1.00, 0.92, and 0.85. Items 21, 22, 23, and 25 of the mean ratings were below the cut-off point of 2.50 while only item 24 was above the mean rating. It was observed that not all the items are measuring that teachers' condition of service influences teachers' attitude towards teaching (work) except item 24 which has a mean of 2.50 which is higher than the criterion mean. This implies that the respondent sees the teacher's condition of service as a factor that influences the teacher's attitude toward teaching (work).

5.0 Discussion of Findings

On the basis of the findings of this study, the results of analysis for research question one which sought to examine the effect of teacher's attitudes on students' academic performance in economics revealed that the average mean of 2.948 which is above the criterion mean of 2.5 from the result above, it may be concluded that teacher's attitude has a greater influence on student academic performance. This is in agreement with Temitope and Eweton (2015) who revealed that teachers' teaching experience has a significant influence on students' performance in Mathematics and English, also Eric and Mark (1998) conducted a study on the effect of teacher quality on student performance in Economics. Findings show among others that teachers' quality has a strong relationship with student performance. It is imperative to note that teachers' experience which reflects in their attitude has an influence on students' performance.



Findings from analysis of research question two which sought to find out if teachers' knowledge of the subject matter determine the students' academic in Economics as a subject revealed that the average mean of items that respondent agreed was 3.12 which is above the criterion mean of 2.5. From the result above, it may be concluded that teachers' knowledge of the subject matter influences the students' performance in Economics as a subject. This is in agreement with Bello (1980) in ELT (2001) as cited in Abubakar (2014) that today's teachers must have a good grasp of the subject matter of this is to command the respect of their students. Since the frontiers of knowledge keep expanding every day and the level of the pupils generally keeps rising too, economics teachers who want to keep abreast in the area of specialization should not cease to learn.

Findings from analysis of research question three which sought to examine if teachers' condition of service influences teachers' attitudes towards teaching (work). The result showed a mean of 2.12 of respondent who disagreed while a mean of 2.50 agreed that with the research question, the implication of the respondent is that the condition of service is poor and in turn affect teacher's attitude towards teaching, the enumeration is so poor, teachers demand is not met, salary is not paid on time in some schools, teachers don't even have offices. Adesulu, Abayomi, Ekwenuya, Youdeowei, Iruoma & Enwere, (2015) asserted that the plight of Nigeria's teachers is pitiful as many of them have died of hunger, diseases, and frustration. The system has turned a good number of them into beggars and destitute such that the younger generation dreads the idea of becoming teachers in teachers in the future. Adesulu, & et.al calls on the employer of teachers to consider increasing salaries and other remunerations for teachers to put them with their counterparts in other sectors.

5.1 Conclusion

Economics teachers are encouraged to further their studies so as to increase their knowledge and experience in their subject field or area of specialization. Economics teachers should be well committed to their responsibilities as professional economics teachers which will reflect in their attitude in classroom activities.

Economics teachers should be encouraged to go to seminars and workshops to build positive attitudes in them which will influence their classroom interaction with students and develop skills of manipulating different teaching strategies to make their students learn better. Economics teachers should know their subject matter very well so that they could help their students to learn better while they teach with fluency.

5.2 Recommendations:

The following recommendations were made.

- (1) Teachers of economics should be encouraged to go for both long-term and short-term training to boost their quality in teaching and learning in senior secondary schools. This is because by so doing, their power of knowledge and command of experience would

be greatly enhanced or boosted and this will serve advantage to both the teachers and students.

- (2) Government should ensure adequate recruitment of dedicated, qualified teachers to teach in all senior secondary schools in the study area in particular and the country in general.
- (3) Teachers should be encouraged to use different teaching strategies during the teaching of economics due to individual differences in the ability of students.
- (4) Teachers should be motivated by the government in terms of prompt payment of salaries and promotions.

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