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Assessing the Effects of Teachers Qualification on Students Academic Performance in Private Secondary Schools in the South Eastern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Ensuring high-quality teaching is vital for positive student learning experiences and achievement outcomes. This study investigated the effects of the teachers' qualification on students' academic performance in private secondary schools in Southeastern Nigeria. Through a well-thought-out and carefully designed survey, over 515 respondents from 187 schools shared insights into their daily educational realities; their responses revealed generally that qualified teaching staff are dedicated to covering subjects comprehensively, however, some specialized areas needed more in-depth modern curriculum demands. The analysis uncovered largely positive yet complex qualification dynamics; higher teacher numbers correlated with broader competencies, benefiting coverage. Formal training is strongly associated with examination success, highlighting qualifications' value. Yet continuous skills growth matters as needs evolve. These honest respondents' voices prompt thoughtful reflection. While standards currently meet minimums, achieving excellence requires collaborative progress. Targeted support could strengthen specialized expertise within small classes. Incentivizing expansion motivates continuous learning curves. Partnering with educators and communities cultivates locally tailored growth. Monitoring disparities prompts equitable support. This work facilitates an understanding of how qualifications interconnect with private secondary school students' performance, championing each Student's potential. Through open minds and caring hands, we may clear pathways for all hearts and minds to blossom.

Keywords: Teacher qualification, Student academic performance, Secondary education, Private schools, South Eastern Nigeria, Educational standards, Correlation analysis, Student achievement.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the backbone of any society; it shapes young minds, equips students with knowledge and skills, and lays the foundation for productivity and national development (Ahmed et al., 2019). Secondary education, in particular, prepares students for higher education and the world of work (Eze et al., 2018). A quality secondary school experience can open up opportunities and chart the course for students' futures (Ali et al., 2019).

At the heart of a good secondary education are effective teachers. Teachers directly impact what and how much students learn in the classroom (Jungert et al., 2018). Their subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, motivation, and passion largely determine the success of the teaching and learning process (Oloruntegbe et al., 2019).

It is well established that teacher quality factors like academic qualifications, professional training, and experience correlate strongly with positive student outcomes (Adelabu, 2005; Oluwatayo, 2012; Oyetunde et al., 2018; Casian etal., 2021). Highly qualified teachers tend to have deeper content knowledge, adopt innovative teaching methods, set higher student expectations, and inspire a love for learning. The combination leads to higher achievement among their students (Okeke and Dlamini, 2018).

However, like most developing countries, private secondary schools in Southeast Nigeria often need help in securing and retaining qualified teachers (Oga-Baldwin and Fraser, 2019). Low salaries, poor benefits, and unsatisfactory working conditions dissuade many highly qualified teachers from joining or staying in these schools (Ugoani, 2019). Many private secondary schools employ underqualified or inexperienced teachers out of necessity (Nwagwu and Ogechi, 2017). The consequences for students in such schools can be significant.

Research shows that students of under-qualified teachers tend to have lower test scores (Nneji, 2017), have higher dropout rates (Odia and Omofonmwan, 2007), and perform poorly in external examinations compared to students of highly qualified teachers (Uche and Affiah, 2018).

This study aims to investigate the association between teacher qualifications - including educational background, subject matter expertise and pedagogical training - and student performance at private secondary schools in southeastern Nigeria. The goal is to generate evidence that can inform efforts to strengthen teacher quality and impact, ultimately benefiting students and society as a whole. With a focus on implications for educational policies and practices, this research seeks to meaningfully contribute to advancing Nigeria's secondary education system and improving learning outcomes for all students. Through rigorous analysis and a thoughtful research approach, this study will endeavor to provide practical, insightful findings delivered in a considerate manner that prioritizes actionable recommendations over sweeping claims.

Statement of the research problem

Despite the rising number of private secondary schools in southeastern Nigeria, there remains limited understanding of the relationship Ьetween teacher qualifications and student performance within these schools. While smaller class sizes, improved infrastructure and perceived higher standards contribute to the popularity of private secondary institutions in the region, little research has examined how teachers' educational background, subject knowledge and pedagogical training impact student academic achievement.

Understanding the effects of teacher qualifications on student outcomes is especially important for private secondary schools in southeastern Nigeria. These institutions enroll students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, with parents investing significant resources expecting quality education and good returns. However, there are indications that teacher quality in some private secondary schools may Ье inadequate due to issues with recruitment, professional development and retention.

The lack of clarity around how teacher qualifications relate to student performance in private secondary schools presents challenges for policymakers, school leaders and educators seeking to identify strategies to strengthen teacher quality and optimize pupil academic outcomes. Filling this research gap by investigating how factors like teachers' education, subject matter expertise and training impact student achievement could generate valuable insights to inform policies and practices aimed at improving teacher effectiveness and strengthening the overall secondary education system in southeastern Nigeria. Therefore, the overarching research problem this study seeks to address is the limited understanding of the effects of teacher qualifications on pupil outcomes within private secondary schools in southeastern Nigeria, resulting in barriers to implementing evidence-based approaches for boosting teacher quality and student learning within these contexts.

Aim and Objectives

This study aims to assess the effects of teacher qualification on students' performance in private Secondary schools in South Eastern Nigeria.

To achieve the aim of this study, the following objective will guide the study:

i. To determine the types of private secondary schools in the study area

ii.To ascertain the number of teachers in the private secondary schools and their qualifications

iii.To discover if teachers are handling all subjects in the private secondary schools

iv.To assess the performance of students in the recent WAEC and NECO examinations for the past 33years (1990-2023)

v.To determine the relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' performance in private secondary schools in southeastern Nigeria

Research Question

1. What are the types of private secondary schools in the study area

ii. What are the number of teachers in private secondary schools and their qualifications

iii. Do all the private secondary schools have teachers that handle all subjects?

iv. What are the performance of students in the recent WAEC and NECO examinations for the past 33years(1990-2023)

v. What are the relationship between teachers' qualification and students' performance in private secondary school in southeastern Nigeria

Scope of the Study

Geographically, this study is limited to Abakalki, Enugu, Owerri, Umuahia and Awka all in the southeastern part of Nigeria (Figure 1). The study assesses the effects of teachers' qualifications on students' performance in private secondary schools for the past twenty-three (23)

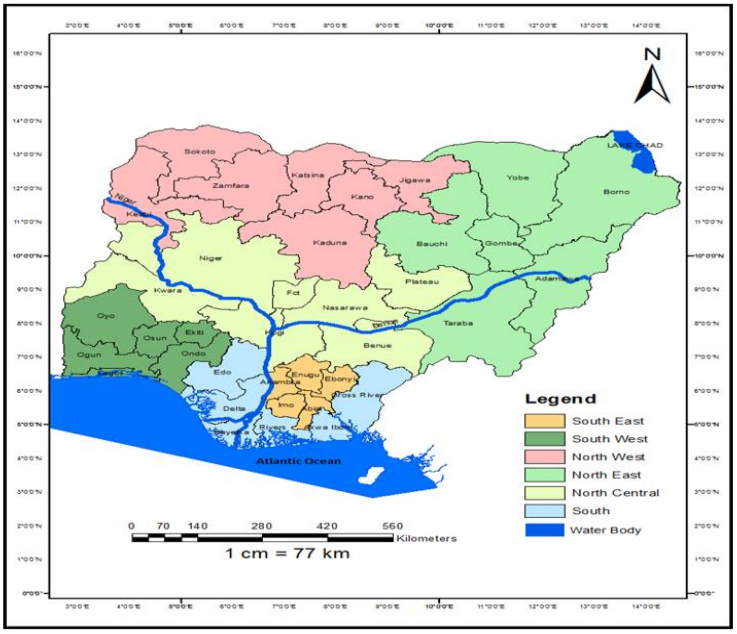

Figure 1: Map of Nigeria showing geopolitical zones.

years (2000-2023).

Significance of the Study

This research explores the relationship between teacher qualifications and student performance in private secondary schools in southeastern Nigeria. By gaining insights into how factors, including teachers' educational background, subject matter expertise, and training, impact student academic achievement, this study aims to inform efforts to enhance teacher effectiveness and maximize student learning outcomes. The findings have the potential to improve education quality and progress in the following ways significantly:

Improving Teacher Recruitment and Placement: By determining which teacher qualification factors strongly correlate with student performance, the findings could help policymakers and school leaders optimize their hiring strategies and properly match teachers to subjects and grade levels where their expertise is most needed; this ensures our most qualified teachers are teaching in positions where they can make the greatest difference.

Informing Targeted Professional Development: The research could inform the design of customized professional development programs by identifying specific gaps in teachers' qualifications that constrain effectiveness; this can help upgrade teachers' knowledge and skills in ways that directly address barriers to improved student learning.

Optimizing Resource Allocation: With clarity on which qualification factors have the greatest impact, policymakers and schools could allocate resources more strategically to areas like teacher training and support programs. This optimized resource use can maximize returns on investments in developing educators' capabilities.

Guiding Policy Reform: The findings could inform policy reforms to strengthen teacher qualifications as a foundation for higher student achievement and learning gains by providing critical evidence on relationships in specific school contexts.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Study Area

Nigeria's Southeast geo-political zone comprises of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo (Alaran and Olugbenga, 2017). It is located in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria and covers an area of approximately 29,550 square kilometers (Adeleke, 2018). The Southeast occupies a strategic location as it borders the North Central (Benue State), South-South (Rivers, Akwa Ibom, and Cross River States), and South Western (Edo State) geo-political zones of Nigeria (Onyebuchi et al., 2020). Figures 1 and 2 show the study area.

The people of the Southeast are predominantly of Igbo ethnic origin and share similar cultural values, traditions, and customs (Agwu et al., 2019). According to the 2006 census, the population of the Southeast was estimated at approximately 16.4 million people, making it one of the most densely populated regions in Nigeria (Akpan et al., 2018). The main occupation of the people in the Southeast is farming and trading, with agriculture contributing significantly to the region's economy (Ugoani, 2019). The region is also known for its highly

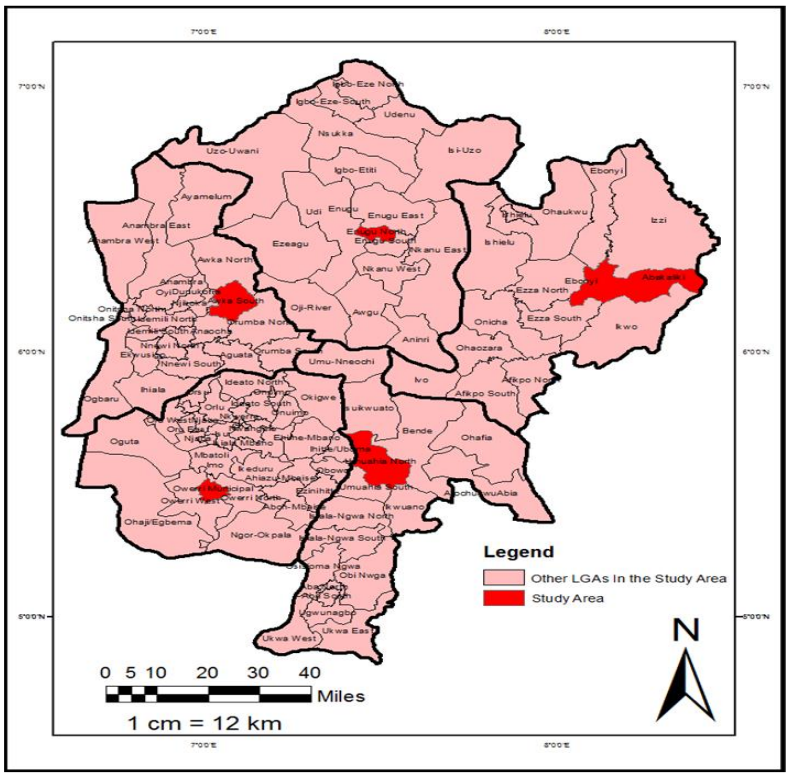

Figure 2: Map of Southeast geopolitical zone showing the study area.

educated and entrepreneurial population (Nnamdi et al., 2019).

The Southeast has vast natural resources, particularly in oil and gas deposits that remain untapped (Lawal et al., 2020). Other natural resources in the region include large deposits of limestone, coal, and natural gas (Amadi and Egbule, 2018). The region has an infrastructure deficit, particularly in power supply and road networks (Ogbonna et al., 2020). However, there have been recent improvements in other sectors like banking, education, and health care (Nmadu et al., 2017).

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative, correlational research design utilizing survey methodology to investigate the relationship between teacher qualification and students' academic performance in southeastern Nigeria (Alshenqeeti, 2014; John et al., 2018). A representative sample of 515 respondents including teachers, principals and students from 189 private secondary schools across five major cities (Abakaliki, Umuahia, Awka, Owerri, and Enugu) in Southeastern Nigeria was surveyed. Stratified sampling was used to select schools from each city proportionate to the total number of secondary schools (Yan, 2017), while simple random sampling was applied to select respondents from each stratum (Reid et al., 2018). Participants responded to a researcher-developed questionnaire of scales measuring teacher qualification (Burke, 2017) and academic performance (Burgess et al., 2018). Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 27.0 (Leard Statistics, 2019).

Independent and Dependent Variables

The independent variable was teacher qualification (Darling-Hammond et al., 2016), defined as the academic and professional credentials of the teachers; this included educational attainment (undergraduate degree, master's degree, doctorate), teaching certificates, and years of teaching experience (Hattie, 2016). The dependent variable was students' academic performance (Wouters et al., 2018), defined as the student's learning outcomes measured by various internal and external examinations, including continuous assessments, term examinations, and final examinations (Schneider et al., 2017).

Instruments

A 40-item, 5-point Likert scale questionnaire collected data on teacher qualification and students' academic performance (Vartanian, 2019). The questionnaire consisted of two sections: Section A gathered demographic information on the respondents, while Section B consisted of 20 items measuring teacher qualification and 20 items measuring academic performance.

Table 1: Respondents location.

Location	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Enugu	65	12.6	12.6	12.6
Ebonyi	70	13.6	13.6	26.2
Anambra	70	13.6	13.6	39.8
Abia	166	32.2	32.2	72.0
Imo	144	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	515	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Gender of respondents.

Sex	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	185	35.9	35.9	35.9
Female	330	64.1	64.1	100.0
Total	515	100.0	100.0	

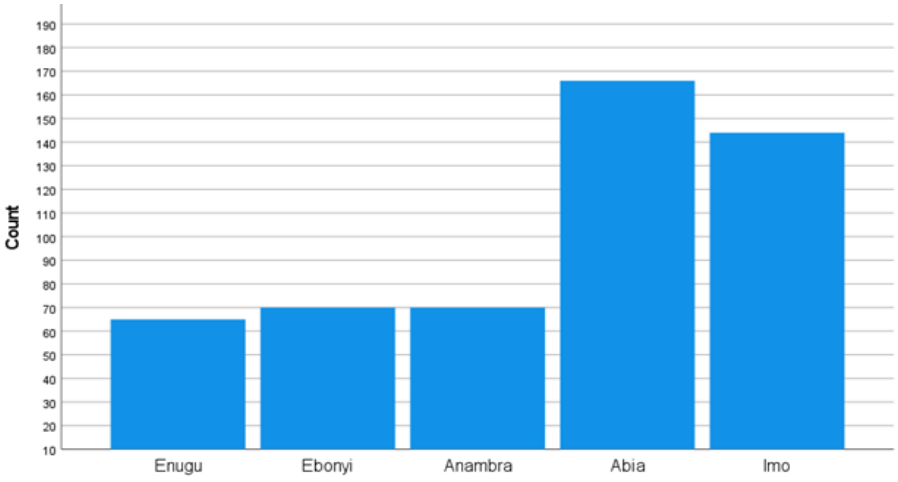

Figure 3: Bar chart representations of respondents locations.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation, and linear regression analysis were conducted to determine the relationship between teacher qualification and academic performance. Descriptive statistics were computed for all variables to characterize the sample, including means, standard deviations, ranges, and frequency distributions (Chandwani et al., 2020; Casian etal., 2021). It provided a summary of respondent demographics, levels of teacher qualification, and academic performance scores.

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was then computed to assess the strength and direction of the linear relationship between teacher qualification and academic performance (Neuman, 2019). The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) ranges from -1 to +1, with values closer to either extreme indicating a stronger correlation (Stempel et al., 2019).

Finally, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine if teacher qualification significantly predicts students' academic performance (Haque et al., 2019). Regression analysis also yields the regression coefficient (b), which indicates the expected change in the outcome (academic performance) per unit increase in the predictor (teacher qualification) (De Vaus, 2019).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 and Figure 3 outline some locations of the survey participants, how many participants were from each location, and what percentage of the total participants represented. The table shows that participants came from five locations: Enugu, Ebonyi, Anambra, Abia, and Imo. These locations likely correspond to specific areas or administrative divisions within the context of the study. The "frequencies" column indicates the number of participants from each location. The results show that 65

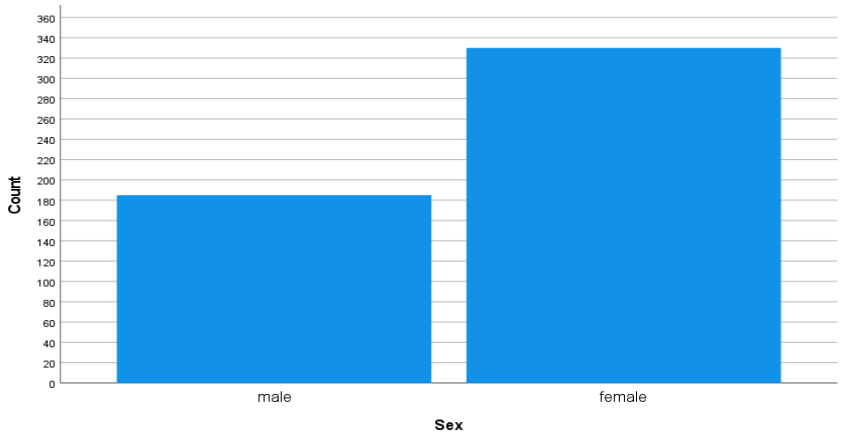

Figure 4: Graphic representation of respondents gender.

Table 3: Employment status.

Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Principal	46	8.9	9.3	9.3
Teacher	160	31.1	32.4	41.7
Student	172	33.4	34.8	76.5
Education Supervisor	3	.6	.6	77.1
Others	113	21.9	22.9	100.0
Total	494	95.9	100.0	
Missing system	21	4.1		
Total	515	100		

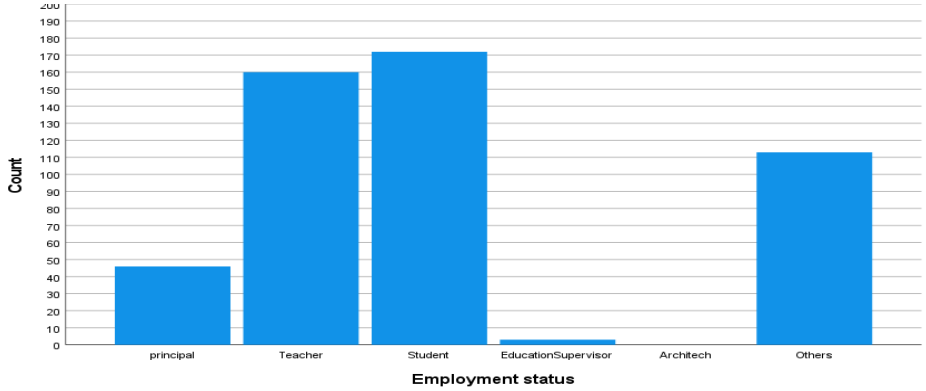

Figure 5: Graphic representation of respondents employment status.

participants were from Enugu, 70 came from Ebonyi and Anambra, Abia recorded 166, while Imo had 144 participants.

Table 2 and Figure 4 shows the gender of the respondents; out of the 515 respondents, 185 (35.9%) were male, and 330 (64.1%) were female. The "valid percentage" column shows that all 185 males were correctly categorized as male, and all 330 females were correctly categorized as female.

Respondent's employment status varied widely (Table 3 and Figure 5). The largest group comprises of teachers (32.4%; n = 160), closely followed by students (34.8%; n = 172). Principals represented the smallest proportion (9.3%; n = 46). The 'others' category constituted 22.9% of respondents (n = 113). 95.9% of respondents (n=494) provided valid employment data, while 4.1% (n = 21) needed more information. Teachers and students collectively comprised over two-thirds of respondents. However, principals constituted a relatively small minority.

Research Question 1: What are the types of private secondary schools in the study area?

Table 4 and Figure 6 shows the types of secondary schools examined; out of the 515 respondents, 23

Table 4: Types of secondary school.

Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Girls Only	23	4.5	4.5	4.5
Boys Only	116	22.5	22.7	27.3
Boys and Girls	371	72.0	72.7	100.0
Total	510	99.0	100.0	
Missing system	5	1.0		
Total	515	100.0		

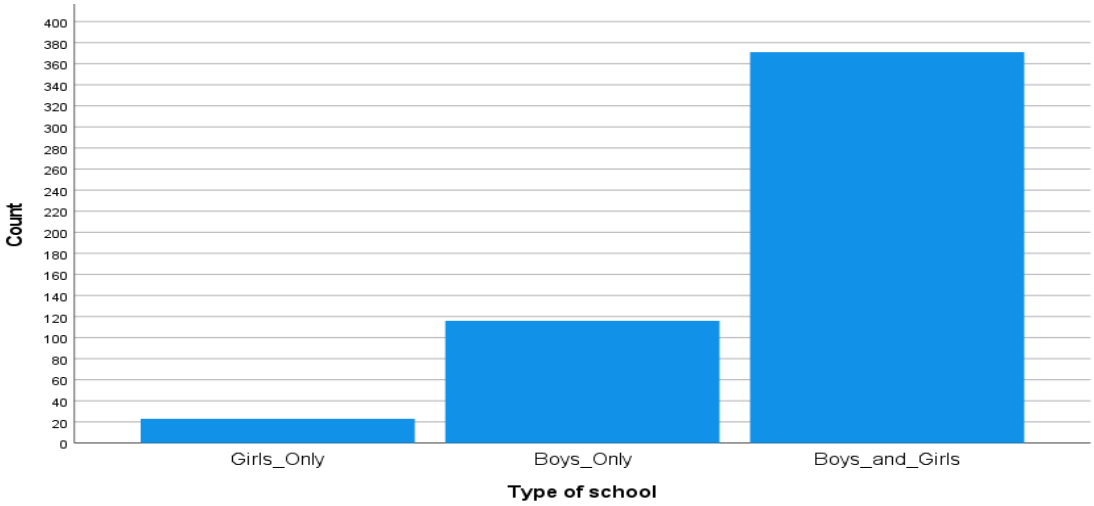

Figure 6: Graphic representation of types of private secondary schools examined.

Table 5: Schools with boarding facilities.

Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	301	58.4	59.7	59.7
Yes	203	39.4	40.3	100.0
Total	504	97.9	100.0	
Missing system	11	2.1		
Total	515	100.0		

Table 6: Those provided with boarding facilities.

Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Girls Only	19	3.7	9.4	9.4
Boys Only	14	2.7	6.9	16.3
Boys and Girls	169	32.8	83.7	100.0
Total	202	39.2	100.0	
Missing system	313	60.8		
Total	515	100.0		

indicated girls only, amounting to 4.5%, 116 were boys schools (22.5%), while 371 indicated boys and girls schools amounting to 72% of the total respondents, this shows that majority of the private secondary schools in the southeastern part of Nigeria constitutes of boys and girls followed by boys school only with the minority being private secondary schools with only girls.

Table 5 and Figure 7 shows most respondents indicated that their schools do not have boarding facilities. Specifically, 301 respondents said their schools do not have boarding facilities, while only 203 respondents said their schools do 5 have boarding facilities; this works out to approximately 60% of respondents coming from non-boarding schools and 40% from schools with boarding options.

Table 6 and Figure 8 categorized respondents from boarding schools; it shows that 19 (3.7%) respondents were from girls-only private secondary schools, boys-

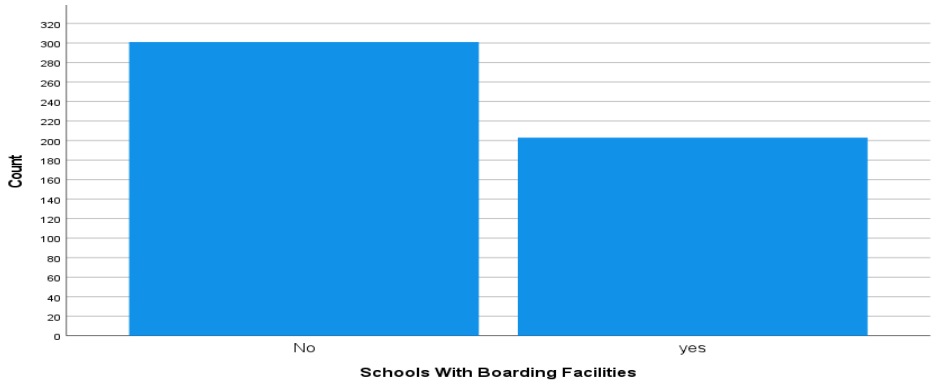

Figure 7: Bar chart representation of private secondary schools with boarding facilities.

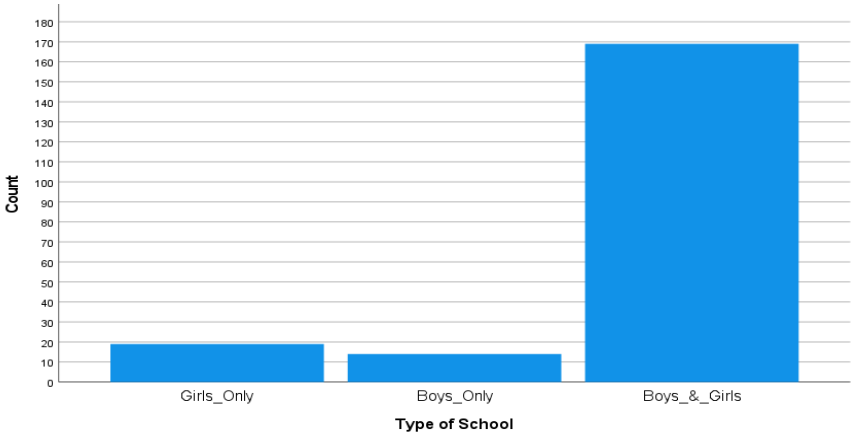

Figure 8: Bar chart representation of those provided with boarding facilities.

Table 7: Statistics of teachers in the schools.

N	**Valid**	**505**
	Missing	**10**
Mean		25.84
Std. Deviation		12.734
Minimum		8
Maximum		168

only schools recorded 14 (2.7%) respondents; 169 respondents from private secondary schools with boarding facilities were indicated to come from schools with combinations of boys and girls population, while 313 respondents boarding schools facilities were recorded as missing (system), which indicates that 3013 respondents come from schools with no boarding facilities.

Research Question 2: What are the number of teachers in private secondary schools and their qualifications?

Table 7 provides insight into how many teachers across the 189 schools participated in the study. Specifically, 505 surveyed participants shared the size of the teaching staff at their schools. Meanwhile, ten other respondents opted not to disclose that detail. The average number of teachers reported across the 505 schools was around 26. However, there was quite a wide range, as the standard deviation of nearly 13 teachers indicates; roughly two-thirds of schools likely had teaching staff somewhere between 13 to 39 teachers. On the smaller end was a school with only eight teachers. In contrast, one school reported having a sizable teaching staff of 168. So while most schools employed a couple of dozen teachers, the sample included some relatively minor and

Table 8: Number of teachers in the schools.

No. of Teachers	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
8	10	1.9	2.0	2.0
9	2	.4	.4	2.4
10	5	1.0	1.0	3.4
11	12	2.3	2.4	5.7
12	4	.8	.8	6.5
13	1	.2	.2	6.7
15	9	1.7	1.8	8.5
16	4	.8	.8	9.3
17	7	1.4	1.4	10.7
18	59	11.5	11.7	22.4
19	8	1.6	1.6	24.0
20	25	4.9	5.0	28.9
21	40	7.8	7.9	36.8
22	30	5.8	5.9	42.8
23	30	5.8	5.9	48.7
24	21	4.1	4.2	52.9
25	23	4.5	4.6	57.4
26	20	3.9	4.0	61.4
27	25	4.9	5.0	66.3
28	13	2.5	2.6	68.9
29	7	1.4	1.4	70.3
30	42	8.2	8.3	78.6
31	2	.4	.4	79.0
32	3	.6	.6	79.6
33	33	6.4	6.5	86.1
34	2	.4	.4	86.5
35	22	4.3	4.4	90.9
36	4	.8	.8	91.7
37	1	.2	.2	91.9
38	2	.4	.4	92.3
39	7	1.4	1.4	93.7
40	7	1.4	1.4	95.0
41	3	.6	.6	95.6
42	2	.4	.4	96.0
43	2	.4	.4	96.4
44	2	.4	.4	96.8
45	1	.2	.2	97.0
49	1	.2	.2	97.2
50	8	1.6	1.6	98.8
60	1	.2	.2	99.0
61	1	.2	.2	99.2
73	1	.2	.2	99.4
86	1	.2	.2	99.6
167	1	.2	.2	99.8
168	1	.2	.2	100.0
Total	505	98.1	100.0	
Missing System	10	1.9		
Total	515	100.0		

others hiring many more teachers.

The number of teachers in the Schools of each respondent; out of the 515 respondents, only 500 respondents shared information about the number of teachers in their schools. As shown in Table 8, the most commonly reported number of teachers was 18 (59 responses). Responses tend to cluster in the middle range of 8-33 teachers but declined rapidly outside this. Lower numbers, like eight teachers (10 respondents) and nine teachers (2 responses), were less frequent. Above 33 teachers, outliers emerged, such as 167 and 168 teachers (1 respondent each).

Research Question 3: Do all the private secondary schools have teachers that handle all subjects?

Our survey asked 515 respondents whether the teachers in their schools handle all subjects approved by WAEC and NECO (Table 9). The vast majority, 455 people representing 88.3% of respondents, answered yes to this

Table 9: Teachers handling all subjects approved by WAEC & NECO.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	455	88.3	89.0	89.0
Yes	56	10.9	11.0	100.0
Total	511	99.2	100.0	
Missing system	4	.8		
Total	515	100.0		

Table 10: If you have teachers handling all subjects, are they qualified.

Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Qualified	345	67.0	67.5	67.5
Qualified	165	32.0	32.3	99.8
Not Very Qualified	1	.2	.2	100.0
Total	511	99.2	100.0	
Missing system	4	.8		
Total	515	100.0		

Table 11: Educational Qualification for The Qualified Teachers.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
NCE	190	36.9	37.4	37.4
B.Ed.	240	46.6	47.2	84.6
M.Ed.	67	13.0	13.2	97.8
PhD	11	2.1	2.2	100.0
Total	508	98.6	100.0	
Missing system	7	1.4		
Total	515	100.0		

question. That translates to 89% of the valid responses. Only 56 individuals, or 10.9%, said no, their teachers do not teach every subject. The yes and no answers constituted the total valid responses of 511 people, accounting for 99.2% of participants. The remaining four respondents, making up 0.8% of the total, left this question unanswered.

Survey respondents who confirmed their teachers were qualified; rated instructor qualifications to explore teacher capabilities in multi-subject schools further (Table 10). A substantial majority (345 people, 67% of participants) deemed their teachers “Very Qualified” across disciplines. Additionally, 165 individuals (32% of respondents) viewed teacher qualifications as “Qualified.” Only one respondent selected “Not Very Qualified.” Together, these 511 valid selections comprised 99.2% of the sample. The remaining 0.8% (4 participants) did not respond.

To better understand the educational qualifications of the qualified teachers deemed capable across subjects (Table 11), the most common response was a B.Ed. Degree, cited by 240 people accounted for 46.6% of all participants. Slightly fewer, 190 respondents or 36.9%, indicated teachers held an NCE certification. The next most prevalent was a master's degree (M.Ed.), selected by 67 individuals representing 13% of the sample. A minority choose 11 PhD amounting to 2.1% of responses. Together these 508 valid answers constituted 98.6% of participants. The remaining seven respondents, or 1.4%, did not provide education levels for their school teachers.

For the small minority of teachers deemed unqualified to teach multiple subjects, we sought to understand their typical educational achievements (Table 12). The most frequently reported qualification was a First Degree with bias in education, comprising 37 responses or 7.2% of all participants. Closely following was a Diploma without educational training at ten answers and 1.9% of the sample. A few participants identified teachers holding a WAEC certificate, totaling 12 individuals and 2.3% of responses. Just one respondent noted an advanced Master's Degree lacking educational specialization.

Table 13 shows the subjects lacking qualified teachers; one school mentioned that Biology teachers were lacking. Some others noticed problems with Geography, Computer Science, Agriculture, Economics and Business teachers. Another slightly more extensive group of 4 respondents pointed out that Geography and Computer Science plus Agriculture and Economics teachers needed more qualified teachers.

One respondent called out Computer Science and Economics teachers, while three indicated that Further Mathematics, Computer Science, Marketing and Economics need more qualified teachers. The result

Table 12: What is the educational qualification for non-qualified teachers.

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
WAEC Holder	12	2.3	20.0	20.0
Diploma without educational training	10	1.9	16.7	36.7
First Decree with bias in education	37	7.2	61.7	98.3
Master's Degree without bias in education	1	.2	1.7	100.0
Total	60	11.7	100.0	
Missing system	455	88.3		
Total	515	100.0		

Table 13: Which subject is lacking qualified teachers

Subjects	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Biology	1	.2	7.7	7.7
Geography, Computer, Agric, Economics, Commerce	3	.6	23.1	30.8
Geography, Computer, Agric, Economics		.8	30.8	61.5
Computer, Economics	1	.2	7.7	69.2
Further Maths, Computer, Economics	3	.6	23.1	92.3
Marketing	1	.2	7.7	100.0
Missing system	502	97.5		
Total	515	100.0		

Table 14: Performances of students in the recent WAEC and NECO exams

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Excellent (80-100%)	344	66.8	68.0	68.0
Merit (60-70%)	147	28.5	29.1	97.0
Average (50%)	15	2.9	3.0	100.0
Total	506	98.3	100.0	100.0
Missing system	9	1.7		
Total	515	100.0		

shows that only 13 respondents out of 515 acknowledged certain subject areas could use better-qualified teachers.

Research Question 4: What are the performances of students in the recent WAEC and NECO examinations for the past 33years 2000-2023?

Table 14 displays students' recent performance for all the schools in the recent WAEC and NECO exams. The majority, accounting for 344 respondents or 66.8% of participants, reported an Excellent result ranging from 80-100%. Another sizable portion of 147 individuals and 28.5% indicated a Merit grade of 60-70%. Only 15 respondents, or 2.9%, achieved a borderline Average score of 50%. Together, these 506 valid responses represented 98.3% of those surveyed. For the remaining 9 participants, examination performance was unknown.

Research Question 5: What are the relationship between Teachers Qualification and Students Performance in Private Secondary School in South Eastern Nigeria

Table 15 shows the correlation analysis for different variables; it shows that the number of teachers in the schools has a weak negative correlation (-0.055) with qualified teachers handling all subjects and a weak negative correlation (-0.069) with students' performance in examinations; however, it has a significant positive correlation (0.216**) with the educational qualification of qualified teachers.

For qualified teachers handling all subjects, it has a weak

Table 15: Correlation analysis.

		Number of Teachers in the School	Teachers handling all subjects, are they qualified	Educational Qualification For The Qualified Teachers	Performance of Students In the Recent WAEC and NECO Exams
Number of Teachers in the School	Pearson Correlation	1	-.055	.216**	-.069
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.217	.000	.124
	N	505	503	502	499
Teachers handling all subjects, are they qualified	Pearson Correlation	-.055	1	-.083	.591**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.217		.064	.000
	N	503	511	506	504
Performance of Students In the Recent WAEC and NECO Exams	Pearson Correlation	.216**	-.083	1	-.175**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.064		.000
	N	502	506	508	502
Performance of Students In the Recent WAEC and NECO Exams	Pearson Correlation	-.069	.591**	-.175**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.124	.000	.000	
	N	499	504	502	506

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

negative correlation (-0.083) with the educational qualification of qualified teachers and a strong positive correlation (0.591**) with students' performance in the exams.

The educational qualification of qualified teachers has a significant positive correlation (0.216**) with the number of teachers in the school and a weak negative correlation (-0.175**) with students' performance in the exams.

The performance of students in the exams has a weak negative correlation (-0.175**) with the educational qualification of qualified teachers and a strong positive correlation (0.591**) with qualified teachers handling all subjects.

The survey results in Tables 4-6 provide interesting insight into the learning environments of private secondary school students in Southeastern Nigeria. Regarding school gender dynamics, it shows that mixed-gender institutions make up the majority experience for kids in the region. Over 70% attend schools welcoming both boys and girls. While single-sex schooling for boys is still fairly prevalent at just under a quarter of respondents, it's striking how few young women have the option of girls-only secondary education. Less than 5% of students learn in this context.

Tables 7 and 8 provide insightful details about teaching staff sizes across the surveyed schools. While over 515 respondents participated overall, 505 shared information on teacher headcounts at their respective institutions. The average of 26 teachers per school seems fairly robust to support a student body. However, as the high standard deviation implies, staffing levels varied widely between 13 to nearly 40 teachers. At the same time, a few schools were indicated with minimal crews of only eight teachers. Meanwhile, several others employed 150 or more teachers. So school sizes in this sample ranged dramatically from very small to large. The 18-teacher figure emerged as a common scenario, breaking down response frequencies further. Overall, numbers clustered mainly in the 8-33 range, suggesting this captures typical staff capacities.

The vast majority (88.3%) reported their teachers covered all subjects. When rated, most teachers were deemed “Very Qualified” (67%) or “Qualified” (32%). The most common qualifications were a B.Ed degree (46.6%) and NCE certification (36.9%). For the minority deemed unqualified, most held a first degree in education (7.2%). Very few respondents identified specific subjects lacking teachers; the most noted were Biology, Geography, Computer Science, Agriculture, Economics or Business. Results indicate secondary schools generally have qualified teachers covering the curriculum. However, some subject areas like Computer Science may need more specialized training given their increasing importance. While most teachers meet standards, continuous professional development could help all instructors stay current as curricula evolve. A limitation is a reliance on respondent perceptions rather than direct verification of qualifications.

The majority (66.8%) reported an Excellent result ranging from 80-100% on the recent exams. Another sizable portion (28.5%) achieved a Merit grade of 60-70%. Only 2.9% scored an average of 50%. Valid

responses with a known performance level accounted for 98.3% of participants. Examination results were unknown for the remaining 9 respondents. Overall secondary school student achievement appears strong, with over 95% earning grades above average. This suggests learning goals and standards are generally being met. However, continued monitoring of performance measures can provide insight into areas potentially needing additional support.

The relationship between teachers' qualifications and students' performance in the external examination was determined using correlation analysis; it shows that the number of teachers in schools showed weak negative correlations with qualified teachers handling all subjects and student exam performance. However, it had a significant positive correlation with the educational qualifications of qualified teachers. Qualified teachers taking all subjects had a weak negative correlation with the academic qualifications of teachers and a strong positive correlation with student exam performance. Educational qualifications of qualified teachers had a significant positive correlation with the number of teachers but a weak negative correlation with student exam performance. Student exam performance showed a weak negative correlation with the educational qualifications of teachers but a strong positive correlation with qualified teachers handling all subjects.

CONCLUSION

This study provides valuable insights into the relationships between teacher factors and student performance in secondary schools in Southeast Nigeria. The findings indicate that while teacher quality and student achievement are generally adequate, some enhancements could maximize educational impact. Specifically, qualified instructors' breadth of subject coverage emerged as most strongly correlated with exam success. Ensuring teachers are equipped to teach diverse approved curricula effectively through strategic hiring, assignment, and professional development is crucial in supporting optimal learning outcomes. Meanwhile, higher qualification levels did not necessarily translate to higher scores, suggesting a balanced approach is essential. While average staffing levels and gender diversity in schools seem sufficient, wide variations in teacher allocation, imply some institutions could be strained. Targeted distribution aligned with changing community and curricular needs deserves attention. Subject areas like computer science may also require enhanced specialized training.

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

To provide targeted professional development, implement strategic teacher allocation, incentivize additional qualifications, partnerships with colleges of education, conduct classroom observations, disaggregate data to examine disparities and establish a monitoring task Force.

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