



# Effect of Teacher Qualifications and Skills on Student Performance in Public Secondary Education

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## Abstract

Teacher quality is widely recognized as a critical factor in determining student academic performance. This article examined the critical role of teacher quality influencing students' academic performance. A comprehensive review of existing literature revealed that high quality teachers are essential for improving student outcomes, reducing achievement gaps, and promoting educational equality. The findings highlighted the significance of teacher subject expertise, pedagogical skills, in shaping students cognitive, social and emotional development. The study concluded that prioritizing teacher quality through targeted professional development, evaluation, and support is crucial for enhancing student academic performance and achieving educational excellence. The implications of this study underscored the need for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to collaborate in ensuring that all students have access to high-quality education, thereby bridging the gap between educational aspiration and attainment.

**Keywords:** Teacher Quality, Students, Academic Performance, Public, Secondary School, Teacher, professional development.

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## INTRODUCTION

The quality of teachers has long been recognized as a critical factor in determining student's academic performance. In subject of English Language, where students' literacy skills and

language proficiency are critical determinants of their future academic and career prospects, the influence of teacher quality is particularly significant. Research has consistently shown that teacher quality is the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement (Hattie, 2009; Marzano, 2007). Teachers who are knowledgeable, skilled, and passionate about their subject area are better equipped to create engaging and effective learning experiences for their students. The teacher is a major factor in the entire educational process. In the discharge of his duty, he has multidimensional role to play in the school system. Such roles are; As a counselor; The teacher, apart from the teaching-learning process also plays the role of a counselor. He sees to the personal development career of his learner. In doing this, he offers guidance services to the learners, give moral advice that will help the learner exhibit high moral standard in the society.

As a manager, the teacher plays the role of a school manager. He gives managerial or administrative advice to the head teacher or inspectors. He also takes part in decision-making and implementation of school policies and programmes. Assessor; the teacher evaluates the instructional outcome of every lesson. He also evaluates terminal examination and makes comprehensive and objective reports of these evaluation and outcomes. In many situations, the outcomes of his report are used for innovations. Planner of instruction; The teacher plans the instructional process within the classroom, such planning includes the use of time, space, adequate instructional method and materials. The teacher also settles minor disputes in the in terms of fighting, loitering, stealing, destruction of school property, punctuality and regularity. There are several definitions of a teacher given by different scholars. Some see the teacher as a person, who merely instructs others or help others in training.

To these scholars, the teacher should be in a position to create desirable changes in the behaviour of his learners. Samuel (2009) saw teacher as a person who has acquired professional training in teacher education institutions such as colleges of education, faculties of education and national teacher's institute. Such professional teachers teach from the pre-primary school level to the university level. The teacher must possess certain good qualities to carry out his duties and roles in the teaching-learning process as well as curriculum implementation process and transfer of knowledge. These qualities are; good personality; personality in this regard is the totality of the worth of the teacher. It includes; tolerance, patience, honesty, loving, caring, humble, empathy, neatness, friendliness, decency, trustworthy, punctuality, so as help learners imitate good ideas. Knowledge of the subject matter; One of the principal duties of a teacher is to have an acceptable command of the content are of the subject he is teaching and must make sure he knows it better than the student he is supposed to teach. A good teacher should be able to explain the various topics to the proper understanding of the learners. Knowledge of the subject should also include knowledge of methodology and application of different teaching methods in teaching specific topic (Allen, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2000).

A good teacher keeps abreast of the innovations and current issues in his subject by attending seminars, workshops and reading current books and journals etc. Leadership ability; A teacher should possess certain leadership quality such as the ability to utilize the authority of his or her position for the benefit and interest of the learners. The teacher should exercise his authority in a democratic atmosphere even in the classroom situation. Ability to teach effectively, this involves the competence in communicating a given knowledge to the learner. The teacher should love and know the subject enough in such a manner that he can explain every bit of an instructional content whenever he is called upon to do so. The attribute can motivate the learners to learn. He should demonstrate the competence in communicating that knowledge to his

learner. He states objectives correctly and in behavioural terms. He is orderly in the presentation of his lessons. He varies methods of teaching and styles to suit the learners and the subject matter. He uses relevant teaching materials; he uses valid and reliable instruments of measurement to assess his students.

Another quality of the teacher is the certification and qualification of the teacher, the teacher should be professionally trained and certified in his area of specialization and education such professional background prepares him for his career. To this effect, the teacher should be well devoted and committed to his professional calling through effective discharge of his duties. One of the principal duties of the teacher is to have content knowledge of his subject matter. He effectively does this by having a deep and better understanding of the topic he intend teaching, the various skills and methods, as well as the use instructional materials to enhance the teaching-learning process. In addition, pedagogical skill is one of the good qualities of a good teacher, pedagogical skills are vital teaching skills that the adopt in teaching that are inevitable to facilitate the teaching-learning process (Amaele, 2012).

Teaching skills refers to specific teacher behaviour or notions designed to promote the effectiveness of lesson presentation in order to facilitate the process of teaching. Also, the number of years a teacher spends in the educational system influences the academic performance of students to a large extent. This because, the more a person stays, the more he/she is exposed to new ideas, strategies and methods to adopt to improve the teacher-leaning system by the school's board. Therefore, the teacher must have teaching experience that will positively affect the students' academic performance. The ability of the teacher to be bold, outspoken and audible in his teaching is another critical quality of a good teacher which emphasis the verbal ability of the teacher. Good communication or verbal ability of the teacher involves describing one's objectives clearly giving clear instructions, asking questions that are clear and understandable to the student and respond to students' questions with understandable explanations, giving precise instructions for assignments. This article tends to examines relationship between teacher quality and student academic performance, highlighting the key factors that contribute dynamic.

## **CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION**

### **The Teacher**

The teacher is an individual who plays a vital role in educational process, facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values by students. Teachers are responsible for creating a supportive learning environment, designing and delivering instructional materials assessing student progress, and providing feedback and guidance. The teacher is an individual who was taught and trained in the arts, science and theory es of teaching. He is the one who can guide, motivate and inspire the learner through a variety of appropriately selected and sequentially arranged learning experience towards the achievement of specific goals and objectives of the schools for positive changes in the society. He is the hub of the educational system. No school can do without him because the effectiveness of the system depends on his adequacy. To this, it is said that education unlocks the doors to modernization while the teacher holds the keys. Since no educational system can rise above the level of knowledge of its teachers, employers need to be carefully selective in teachers' employment else. The detrimental effect is on the society at large via the child.

There are several definitions of a teacher given by different scholars. Some see the teacher as a person who merely instructs others or helps other persons to acquire a skill and other forms of training. To these scholars, the teacher should be seen as someone who has acquired professional training institutions, such as colleges of education, and national institute. The teacher plays a vital and significant role in the education process of the individual person as its true purpose is to realize the potential of the whole person. Teachers have to teach in such a manner as not merely to furnish the minds of the students with suitable information alone, but to cultivate and develop their mental, moral and psychological capacities in the best possible way.

A teacher is a person who teaches the students with the allocated time in the school to foster learning. They play an important role in ensuring quality education delivery. The most common role the teacher plays is to dispense pertinent knowledge to the students by following a stipulated curriculum that guides that level of education. Teachers, as important members of the school, play pivotal roles in educating the students. Teachers use different teaching methods in teaching to ensure knowledge is dispensed. They set the tone of their classroom, build a warm environment, and become role models. A teacher is responsible for the emotional, behavioural, planning, preparing and effectively teaching students in a class to support or enhance their success. Far beyond that, he carries out the role of a parent, counselor, mentor and many others. However, the primary role of a teacher is to impart knowledge to his students and ensure that their performance increases over time.

The teacher is a positive thinking person who works hard in making sure the aim and objectives of education are attained and he does this by transferring knowledge to his students and making sure they acquire this knowledge in all aspects’.

Teachers are expected to ensure a good progress in the performance of his students, monitor their emotional, social and moral development. He can help to address social problems that affect his student success. The teacher is expected to have advance knowledge and skills in order to be efficient and effective in the classroom for instructional delivery. He is expected to be proficient in the use of technologies in teaching and in management of the classroom for students’ academic performance.

According to Omieibi-Davids (2011), the teacher’s knowledge of how to teach is very important if he is to bring about learning. This requires that he has sound knowledge of methods and materials and classroom management technique to use for a particular content, activity or group of learners. It enables him choose the appropriate instructional materials to effect desired changes. Also, his understanding of how to teach equips him with the fact that the teacher teaches everything they need to know about a given topic, that there is still more the learner is expected to discover on his own. Thus, what is important is not how much he teaches but how well he teaches, it is the quality of a teacher that will prompt further search for knowledge and better understanding and utilization of what is already taught.

In line with this, Ubah (2012) referred to the teacher as the chief work group of the principal. The teacher is the key to functional education in terms of teaching and learning activities and as such, he should be accountable for his academic performance and that of the students he teaches (Moses-Promise & Moses, 2016). A caring, competent and qualified teacher for every child is the most important ingredient in education. Success of a school system depends on its teacher. But for the teachers to do this they must be adequately prepared and motivated (Agu et al., 2000).

Teachers occupy the position of in-loco-parentis in the life of the learner and their contribution to the overall development of the child cannot be overemphasized. Students spend a

large portion of their school time with the teacher and also acquire several qualities from the teacher. Since the teaching and learning relationship between the teacher and the students is the main purpose of their convergence, teachers are expected to pay more attention to how they can assist the student to acquire the needed skills, knowledge and attitude to become reasonable and responsible members of the society.

The role the teacher plays in the learning satisfaction of the student which subsequently determines the academic performance of the child cannot be estimated but this depends to a great extent the quality of the teacher and how well he or she is able to contribute to the overall development of the child. Students also look forward to meet and interacts the teacher who is able to contribute meaningfully to their development and the satisfaction they derive from their teaching and learning interaction affects other aspects of their development. Students rate their course and instructional process as satisfactory if they see and understand that the teacher is communicating well, facilitating the learning process and encouraging the learner as well as organizing the lesson plan in an orderly manner and showing respect for the learner and all of these can only be developed when the right quality of teacher has been engaged.

Teachers no doubt have powerful influences on students especially those in their classroom and the quality of the teacher such as the teachers' qualification, experience and level of training goes a long way to influence how much the student is able to benefit from the classroom including the satisfaction they derive from the interaction in the classroom. It was on this premise that Dunlap and Frank as cited in Maphoso and Mahlo (2015:52) stated that "all teachers must possess instructional/ intervention skills to maximize the learner's outcomes". These competencies are sometimes developed as the teacher upscale his or her level of education, gather more experience on the job and also undergo further training. All of these are required or smooth classroom interaction between the teacher and the students as well as how much the students can benefit from the classroom for their overall academic advancement. In other words, the teacher's role is crucial to effective and efficient learning, the teacher is expected to provide essential inputs like adequate planning of lesson notes, effective delivery of lessons, proper monitoring and evaluation of students' performance, providing regular feed-back on students' performance, improvisation of instructional materials, adequate keeping of records and appropriate discipline of students to produce and enhance expected learning performance in secondary schools (Ayeni, 2010).

### **Key Characteristics of Teacher**

- Educator: A teacher is an educator who imparts knowledge, skills, and values to student.
- Facilitator: A teacher facilitates learning by creating an environment that is conducive to learning, providing guidance and support, and encouraging students to take an active role in their learning.
- Mentor: A teacher serves as a mentor, providing guidance, advice, and support to students as they navigate their educational journey.
- Role Model: A teacher is a role model who demonstrates values, behaviours, and attitudes that promote social, emotional, and academic growth.
- Caring and empathy: Teachers demonstrate a genuine interest in their students learning and well-being, providing emotional support and guidance.
- Expertise: Teachers possess specialized knowledge and skills in their subject area.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of a Teacher**

- Lesson planning and delivery: Teachers plan and prepare lessons that meet the needs of their students and also deliver instructional materials, adapting to the needs of diverse learners.
- Instruction: Teachers deliver instructions that is engaging, informative, and relevant to their students' lives.
- Assessment and Evaluation: Teachers assess student learning and progress, providing feedback that is constructive and supportive.
- Classroom Management: Teachers create and maintain a positive and productive learning environment.
- Communication with Parents and Guardians: Teachers communicate with parents and guidance, and counselling to students.

## **Qualities of an Effective Teacher**

- Pedagogical Skills: An effective teacher has the skills and knowledge to plan and deliver instruction that meets the needs of their students.
- Communication Skills: An effective teacher communicates clearly, concisely, and respectfully with students, parents, and colleagues.
- Emotional Intelligence: An effective teacher has high emotional intelligence, which enables them to understand and manage their own emotions and those of their students.
- Flexibility and Adaptability: An effective teacher is flexible and adaptable, able to adjust their teaching to the changing needs of their students.
- Subject Matter Expertise: An effective teacher has a deep understanding of the subject matter they teach.
- Continuous Learning: An effective teacher engages in ongoing professional development, staying current with best practices and research-based instructional strategies.
- Passion for Teaching: Effective teachers are passionate about their subject area and committed to teaching.

## **Teacher Quality**

Quality refers to the degree of excellence or superiority of something, such as a product, service, process, or attribute. Quality is often used to relate to the value that a product or service possess in relation to the expectation of end users. It is a term used to refer to how well a thing has met with the expectation of beneficiaries.

Teacher quality is a term that is used to refer to the value that a teacher possesses and is able to bring into the teaching and learning process. Explaining further, Suarman (2015:627) indicated that when we are referring to the quality of the teacher, it refers to the appropriateness of the teaching process, fulfilling teaching needs, and having the ability to anticipate clients and stakeholders' expectations in teaching and learning, the appearance of conducive physical facilities, friendly staff, and great administration services and all of these are put in the right perspective by the teacher who knows how. Teacher quality is built on a continuous basis and as such the teacher needs to explore every available platform to improve in quality so as to be able to contribute to classroom activities.

Teacher quality (QT) includes different indicators of teacher qualifications, in particular characteristics of teacher's educational background, amount of experience in teaching in teaching, and participation in professional development, as well as personality characteristics such as teacher's self-efficacy. A number of previous studies were able to relate measures of such teacher characteristics too student educational outcomes (Wayne & Youngs 2003), evidence suggests in terms of teacher knowledge and skills, which in in turns, are significantly related to instructional quality and student achievement (Hill et al, 2005). Self-efficacy beliefs influence thought patterns and emotions, which in turn enable or inhibit actions. Teachers with strong self-efficacy are typically more persistent and make stronger efforts to overcome classroom challenges than others.

Teacher quality refers to the characteristics, attributes, and competence that enable teachers to effectively promote student learning and achievement. Teachers' quality is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various aspects teaching, including teachers' knowledge, skills and dispositions (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

### **Importance of Teacher Quality**

- Student Achievement: Teacher quality is a significant predictor of student achievement (Hattie, 2009).
- Student Engagement: Teacher quality influences student engagement and motivation (Marzano, 2007).
- School Improvement: Teacher quality is a critical factor in school improvement efforts (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Teachers use different teaching methods in teaching to ensure knowledge is dispensed. They set the tone of their classroom, build warm environment, and become role models. A teacher is responsible for the emotional, behavioural, planning, preparing and effectively teaching students in a class to support or enhance their success. Far beyond that, he carries out the role of a parent, counselor, mentor and many others. However, the primary role of a teacher is to impart knowledge to his students and ensure that their performance increase over time.

Teacher quality is a key determinant of students' academic performance. It is referred as to those attributes or qualities that teachers possess. These attributes include teacher's teaching method, time management, subject mastery and many others. Teachers with these qualities to an extent influence their student academic performance.

### **Indicators of Teacher Quality**

Teacher Certification: Teacher's possession of specialized training and certification in their subject area (Darling- Hammond, 2010). Teachers Experience: Teacher's years of teaching experience and their level of expertise (Marzano, 2007). Teacher Education: Teacher's level of education and training in their subject area (Hattie, 2009). Teacher Evaluation: Teacher's performance evaluations and feedback from administrators, peers, and students (Danielson, 2013).

Teacher quality is an important factor affecting student performance (Snehi, 2011) and this quality can also be built by engaging in relevant and continuous training programmes. Training assists the teacher to acquire contemporary skills and knowledge that can be used to

make better decisions in the school. Teachers who engage in regular training programmes are expected to be able to contribute more to the school system as well as satisfy the expectation of the learner in the classroom. Teachers have different avenues or platforms that they can explore to improve on their quality on the job and the abilities developed in the process can be deployed in the classroom to improve on the satisfaction that the learner derives in and outside the classroom which has the capacity to improve on the students overall educational achievement in the long run.

Therefore, teachers are expected to fulfill their duties to help children to develop their primary skills that should be required for an advancement, where qualified teachers help students to discover their talents and get oriented to their future values effectively so as to overcome any challenge that lies ahead of them.

Effective teaching and learning cannot occur without congenial classroom environment. Teacher maintains positive and effective learning environment through well prepared and varied lessons, which cater for the range of student abilities and interests. It also involves, setting of realistic and challenging academic standards of student performance. Teachers are required to demonstrate commitment to teacher professional development through interest and attendance at appropriate in-service course, commitment to a programme of professional study. Several indices are used to measure the quality of a teacher. Each teacher quality measures, such as teacher experience, certification status, academic ability and even stability a school.

### **Academic Performance**

The concept of academic performance has often been used interchangeably with academic achievement. Performance refers to the results of an examination in a subject or a whole course (Lamas, 2015). Academic Performance refers to the extent to which a student achieves their academic goals, demonstrates mastery of subject matter, and exhibits cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills. Academic performance also refers to a student's achievement and progress in their academic pursuits, typically measured by their grades, test scores, and other evaluations. It encompasses various aspects of a student's academic life, including: academic achievement, learning outcomes, academic progress, academic engagement. Academic performance is an important factor in educational system, as it can impact students' eligibility for higher education, job prospects, and career advancement. It can also influence a student's self-esteem, confidence and overall well-being.

Academic Performance according to Obeka (2010), is the quality of results produced by students which reflects in the quality of their examination scores. Obeka, Bichi and Yusuf (2012) defines academic performance as the display of knowledge attained or skill developed in school subjects designed by test and examination scores or marks assigned by subject teacher. UNESCO (2019) Academic performance refers the extent to which students achieve their educational goals, as measured by their grades, test scores, and other evaluation. World Bank (2018) noted that academic performance is critical for determining students future educational and career prospects, as well as their potential contributions to society. This paper views academic performance as the extent to which as students achieves their academic goals and the expectations of their educational institutions.

Performance has been described as an action of a person or group when given a learning task. Academic performance can be defined as any scope or performance above the class mean score, taking into consideration the difficult level of the test. There is usually a stand or score



which is called the pass mark like 40% and 50%. Most common for public examinations, anyone who scores up to this mark is automatically assumed to have passed while anybody who scores less than this pass mark is regarded to have failed. It is also viewed in terms of actual performance in school (Ehinola, 2008).

### **Key Indicators of Academic Performance**

- Grades: Letter or numerical grades assigned to students based on their performance on assignments, quizzes, tests, and exams.
- Test Scores: Standardized or non-standardized test scores that measure students' knowledge, skills and abilities in specific subjects.
- Assignment Completion: Timely and satisfactory completion of assigned tasks, projects and homework.
- Class Participation: Active engagement in classroom discussions, activities, groupwork.
- Project-Based Assessments: Evaluations of students' ability to apply knowledge, skills, and critical thinking to real-world problems.

### **Factors Influencing Academic Performance**

- Intellectual Ability: Students' cognitive abilities, such as memory, attention, and problem-solving skills.
- Motivation: Students' interest, enthusiasm, and drive to learn and achieve academic success.
- Learning Strategies: Students' use of effective learning techniques, such as note-taking, summarizing, and self-testing.
- Teacher Support: Quality of instruction, feedback, and guidance provided by teachers.
- Family and socio-Economic Factors: Students' home environment, parental involvement, and socio-economic status.

Academic performance is the outcome of education. It is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. Academic performance is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested or which aspects are most important- procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts (Annie, et al., 2016). Nevertheless, it refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers. Academic performance by students has always been a subject of interest to every educational institution. Whereas there is a consensus that schools play a major role in the process. There seems to be disagreement about what that role should be. While some believe that the primary focus of schools should be the academic preparation of the students (Hirsch, 1996). Others however believe that efforts of schools should be integrated with other social institutions such family and community towards educating children. In fact, heads of educational institution, teachers and parents are primarily responsible for students' academic performance.

## Teacher Quality on Students' Academic Performance

Teacher Quality and academic performance are two interconnected concepts that are critical to student success. Teacher quality refers to the characteristics, attributes, and competence that enable teachers to effectively promote student learning and achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Academic performance, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which students achieve their educational goals and objectives, as measured by their grades, test scores, and other academic achievements (Hattie, 2009). The relationship between teachers and academic performance is complex and multifaceted. Research has consistently shown that teachers play a critical role in determining student academic performance. It has consistently shown that teacher quality is a significant predictor of academic performance (Hattie, 2009); Marzano, 2007).

Teachers who are knowledgeable, skilled, and passionate about their subject area are better equipped to create engaging and effective learning experiences for their students. In turn, students who receive high-quality instruction tend to achieve higher levels of academic performance. High quality teachers are better able to promote student learning and achievement. They are more effective in closing achievement gaps between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. High quality teachers are better able to engage students in learning and promote student motivation.

Quality teachers have been recognized as indispensable human resource and indeed, one of the most important elements in the school system, more important than the quality of equipment and materials (Kolawole, 2009). Teacher qualities include the logical acts of teaching such as defining, demonstrating, modeling, explaining and so on, psychological acts of teaching such as caring, motivating, encouraging, rewarding, punishment, planning, evaluating and so on; and the moral acts of teaching such as showing honesty, courage, tolerance, respectful, fairness and so on.

Quality teachers teach students how to learn and help them to use the models of learning that will support the best academic, social, and personal growth. This is partly similar to what Williams (2003) stated, that for students to reach their potential, a quality teacher must pay more attention to the interplay between the science and art of teaching otherwise termed pedagogy. Teaching for meaningful learning entails teaching the content, skills and inculcating the right attitude (Ukoh, 2014). Usman (2003) argued that shortage of qualified teachers is responsible for the poor academic performance observable among the students. Darling-Hammond (2000) contended that measures of teacher quality are more strongly related to students' performance than other kinds of educational investments such as reduced class size, overall spending on education and teachers' salaries.

A professional or trained teacher is expected to have certain qualities that will enhance his/her effective teaching and students' academic performance. Some of the qualities include:

- Teacher pedagogy
- Teacher years of experience
- Teacher subject mastery
- Teacher qualification
- Teacher classroom management

## **Teacher Pedagogy**

Pedagogical knowledge of the teacher is a quality indicator that involves the teachers' deep knowledge about the methods of teaching and learning. The science of teaching, according to Ogunboyede (2011), is referred to as pedagogy. Pedagogical knowledge is an essential and critical element in determining teachers' success in teaching and learning processes in the classroom (Ball and Bass, 2000). Lack of pedagogical skills and knowledge is a bigger threat to teacher quality than certification issues (Torff, 2005). Teachers with good mathematical pedagogical knowledge can break down mathematical knowledge into less polished and less abstract forms, thus making it accessible to students who are at different cognitive level (Ball, 2003). He further pointed out that teachers with good pedagogical knowledge understand where students may be struggling with learning the subject and should be able to present mathematical concept in a way that their students can comprehend each structure and avoid difficulties.

Teacher's subject matter knowledge is another teacher quality indicator. This has to do with teacher's knowledge about the content to be learnt or taught. The content to be covered in primary school science is different from the content to be covered in an undergraduate course.

## **Teacher Years of Experience**

Teacher's teaching experience is another teacher quality indicator which has to do with the number of years a teacher has spent in the teaching service. Adewale (2010) found out that years of experience has a strong correlation with improved students' performance and it is argued that prospective and experienced teachers' knowledge and beliefs serve as a filter through which their teaching take place.

Years of experience of a teacher are vital in affecting his performance in the classroom. In other words, the number of years a teacher spends in the educational system influences the academic performance of students to a large extent. This is because, the more he spends time in the education system, the more he/she is brought to light in relation to new ideas, strategies and methods to adopt to improve the teaching-learning process through previous teaching experiences, teachers workshop as well as evaluation of the system by the school board. In the same vein, experience of a teacher between 3 to 8 years appeared to be the rationale for his effective performance. Therefore, the teacher must have teaching experience that will positively affect the academic achievement of students.

The experience of the teacher on the job is also a factor that contributes to the quality of the teacher. Experience enables a teacher to better understand the dynamics of the school, the challenges that students face especially where a teacher has been teaching a particular subject for a long period of time. Experience enables a teacher to understand the solutions that work as well as the ways of resolving the problems that students face in school, and the experience of the teacher can be brought to the fore to assist the students derive more satisfaction from their learning activities, and social academic skills.

## **Teacher Subject Mastery**

Teacher subject mastery refers to the degree to which a teacher has a deep understanding of the subject matter they are teaching. This includes knowledge of the content, concepts, and principles, as well as the ability to apply this knowledge in the classroom. A good teacher should

have an acceptable command of the content of area of the subject he is teaching and should be able to explain the various topics to the proper understanding of the learner. Teachers who have strong grasp of the subject matter are better able to explain complex concepts, answer questions, and provide feedback, leading to improved student learning outcomes. Teachers who have a strong understanding of the subject matter are better able to manage the classroom, as they are able to provide clear instructions set realistic expectations and minimize disruptions.

Subject mastery is unarguably another teacher quality that is required from a teacher. Teaching a course entail more than superficial knowledge of the subject. That is, the more a teacher understands a particular content, the more effective and efficient he will be to transfer knowledge to the students. For example, a teacher with the knowledge of English Language will deliver accurately and competently than a teacher who has little or no content knowledge on the subject. When a teacher has a strong content knowledge, it helps his students get better knowledge and understanding of the subject which translate or result in academic performance. Subject mastery helps the teacher to respond to students productively. Teachers understanding of the purpose and nature of a particular subject or discipline influences his/her manner or method of teaching, the ability to clearly explain and ask good questions, the ability to arouse students' interest in the subject for better academic performance.

### **Teacher Qualification**

Teacher qualification is another teacher quality indicator and it refers to the educational credentials, training, and certifications that teachers possess to demonstrate their competence and expertise in teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2010). These qualifications serve as a benchmark for ensuring that teachers have the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to provide high-quality instruction and support student learning. Teacher qualifications are linked to improved student outcomes, including higher academic achievement and better social and emotional (Haie, 2009). Teacher qualifications can increase teacher confidence and self-efficacy, leading to more effective teaching practices (Bandura, 1997). Teacher qualifications demonstrate a commitment to the teaching profession and a willingness to engage in ongoing professional development.

Qualification of teachers have been considered as the essential catalyst that promote the improvement of the school setting where teachers are taken as the main source used in school development as well as students' school development which is considered to become the source that help the knowledge and changes. Therefore, students who fail in both external as well as internal examination are taught by unqualified teachers while the students who perform better, are taught by very qualified and experienced teachers who have effective methodology of classroom management and content delivery. Highly qualified teachers are also considered to be an agent of change due to the key role that they play for the purpose of making an improvement related to students' academic performance that should be done through effective delivery related to the quality of education.

Qualified teacher refers to an individual that guides learners to get new knowledge and skills and who has achieved the minimum criteria for teaching a particular level of education (Lydia & Migosi, 2015). High quality teacher education as well as trainings is one of pre-requisites that lead to quality of teaching and also improves learning outcomes where the effective teaching should be observable and can be communicated effectively and also consulting to degrees and diplomas as well as certificates as a form of signaling. Having degrees, certificated as well as diplomas are considered to be the basic requirements that lead to teacher

qualification and also having effective code of conduct so as to meet the universal schooling goals. Qualified teachers should use various techniques that help students to improve their academic performance.

Despite, Halsey (2004) revealed that every qualified teacher should make an improvement that sustain inclusive classroom as qualified evaluator for the purpose on enhancing the level of teaching standards and that of the quality of education. Teachers' who make effective preparation of the students' activity and lesson delivery as well as homework strength students' active learning. On the other hand, teachers who are qualified in management of children who are disabled to some performed activities in classroom may enhance the school productivity effectively. This shows that competent teachers lead to improved competent students.

### **Teachers Classroom Management**

Classroom is a learning environment where students, teachers, and educational resources interact to facilitate teaching, learning, and socialization. A classroom is a space where student and teachers interact, and where learning takes place through various activities, discussions, and experiments. Classroom as a place to promote teaching and learning under the guidance of a teacher. It is the power house of formal education in which the success or failure of the curriculum is generated and sustained.

Teacher classroom management refers to the strategies, techniques, and skills used by teachers to create and maintain a positive, respectful, and productive learning environment. Effective classroom management is critical to ensuring that students are able to learn, grow, and succeed. A well-managed classroom management helps to provide a conducive learning environment, leading to improved academic achievement and student outcomes. Good classroom management is the key to the achievement of success in classroom activities by both the teacher and the student. It involves the integration and effective use of the basic qualities that every good teacher must possess in order to achieve success in classroom as well as the efforts and techniques he must adopt to ensure effective learning and full development of every learning with minimal interference and the techniques he must adopt to intervene when such interference occurs.

The teacher is the major factor of managing his class as to enhance and facilitate the teaching and learning process. He organizes and co-ordinates human and environmental factors in the classroom so that instruction can take place without disruptions. For effective classroom management, the teacher has to apply the following concepts: discipline, motivation, punishment, effective communication, reinforcement, and control as well as class participation.

### **Factors Contributing for Students' Academic Performance**

- Facility quality;
- Students' effort;
- Teacher-students relationship;
- Parents education.

## **School Facility**

The quality of facilities made available to a school determines the level of students' academic performance. School facilities are considered as a potent factor in the high academic performance of students. Facilities therefore include the building, classroom furniture's, and recreational equipment and other instructional materials (Benjamin, 2001). He went further to say that their availability, relevance and adequacy contribute to academic performances. In their contribution, Ajayi and Ojumber (2000) reiterated that when facilities are provided to meet relative needs of a school system, students will not only have access to the reference materials mentioned by the teacher but individual students will also learn at their own paces. The net effect of this is to increase the overall academic performance of the entire students. The idea that human and material resources are to be assembled together by educational administration within the school system for effective teaching and learning cannot be overemphasized. Physical and material resources are tangible resources that can easily be seen and observed in any institution.

School quality indicators therefore remain an important area in the school system that should be studied and managed to enhance teachers' job performance. The quality of education provided in any school does not only depend on the head teachers' quality as reflected in the performance of administrative duties but also in the effective discharge of teaching duties by teachers and the facilities available in the school system. In other words, school quality indicators may have a form of relationship with students' academic performance since the quality of an environment may go a long way to shape the activities and development of people and things within the scope of that environment. In other words, facility quality can affect students' academic performance.

## **Students Effort and Academic Performance**

Effort refers to the overall amount of time, energy, and persistence (the ability to continue working on a task despite obstacles, challenges, or setbacks) a student devotes to learning and achieving academic goals. Student effort is a critical factor in academic performance, as it influences the amount of time and energy devoted to learning. Research has consistently shown that students who exert more effort tend to achieve better grades and higher level of academic success. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), student effort is motivated by three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Expectancy- Value Theory (EVT) posits that student effort is influenced by expectations of success and the value placed on academic achievement (Ecclestone, 2007). Students who engage in self-regulated learning strategies, such as goal-setting and self-monitoring, tend to exert more effort and achieve better academic outcomes (Zimmerman, 2000). Students' effort-outcome expectancy, or their belief that effort leads to success, is a strong predictor of academic performance (Bandura, 1997).

## **Teacher-Students Relationship**

Teachers-students relationship is another indicator which means getting to know the students as individuals as well as a group, getting to know them in terms of cultural background, intellectual profile, learning strength and academic potential as well as their interest outside the school and what they do for fun. Positive relationship with the teacher is important in supporting higher

level of self-esteem, higher academic self-efficacy, academic performance and more confidence in future employment outcomes. O'Connor et al. (2011) posited that positive teacher-student relationship enable students to feel safe and secure in their learning environments. They maintained that teachers who support their students in the learning environment can positively impact their social and academic outcomes.

### ***Key aspects of Teacher-Student Relationships***

- Emotional Support: Teacher's ability to provide emotional support, empathy, and care can foster a sense of safety and security, promoting students' academic engagement and motivation.
- Academic Support: Teacher's ability to provide academic support, guidance, and feedback can help students develop a sense of competence and confidence, leading to improved academic performance.
- Teacher-Student Interaction: The qualities of teacher-student interactions, including verbal and nonverbal communication can significantly impact student's academic experience and outcomes. Students who have positive relationships with their teachers tend to have better attendance and fewer disciplinary problems (Gillies, 2011).

### **Parent Education**

Parents are the most immediate relation of a child. Educated parents better understand the educational needs and their children's aptitude. They, thus help their children in their early education which affects their proficiency in their relative area of knowledge. Parents' education or academic background definitely contributes immensely toward the academic life of their children. According to Grissmer (2003), parents' level of education is the most important factor affecting students' academic achievement. Parents' educational background influences the academic achievement of students. This, according to him, is because the parents would be in a good position to act as second teachers to their children, and even guide and counsel them on the best way to perform well in education and provide the necessary materials needed by them. Musgrave (2000) argued that children who come from an educated home would like to follow the steps of their family and by this, work actively in their studies.

Jeynes (2002) also posited that a child from a well-educated family with high socioeconomic status is more likely to perform better than a child from an illiterate family. This he suggests apparently because children from an educated family are seen to have lots of support such as a decent and good environment for academic work, parental support and guidance, enough textual and academic materials and decent feeding. Eamon (2005) again claimed that virtually in all nations, children whose parents are highly educated, occupation and social scale have far better chance of getting into good secondary school and from there into the best colleges and universities than equally bright children of ordinary workers or farmers. In fact, the most important factor associated with the educational achievement of children is not race, ethnicity or immigrant status, instead the most critical factor is parents' education (Considine & Zappala, 2002).

## **Student Ambition**

Student ambition refers to the goals, aspirations, and desires that students have for their academic, career and personal lives. Ambitions can be a powerful motivator for students, driving their academic engagement, motivation, and overall success. The ability to set goals and pursue these goals is sometimes referred to by educators as students' academic ambition, academic ambition demonstrate that ambitions can be linked to the seeking of success and avoidance of failure. In the context of this paper, ambition is the persistent and generalized striving for success, attainment, and accomplishment. Students who choose to set difficult goals for themselves tend to become task oriented, with a sense of purpose for their lives. Certainly, academic ambition can influence student learning, preparation for life choices, academic motivation and achievement. Academic ambition is the student's ability to identify and set goals for the future, while being inspired in the present to work toward those goals. Ambition thus, represents the perception that an activity is important as a means to future goals. It reflects individuals' perceptions that are both possible and desirable to think in future terms and to plan for the future.

Individuals' ambitions are considered important because they might influence key choices, and outcomes such as educational achievement (Goodman & Gregg, 2010). In fact, many studies suggest that young people with higher educational ambitions have greater motivation and higher educational attainment than their peers (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003,).

## **CONCLUSION**

The quality of teachers has a profound impact on students' academic performance. Research has consistently shown that high-quality teachers are essential for improving student outcomes, reducing achievement gaps, and promoting educational equity. The evidence highlights the critical role that teachers play in shaping students cognitive, social and emotional development. Students' academic performance depends on so many factors but greatly relies on the quality of the teachers. Teachers are role models of the students and the excellent attributes of the teachers would definitely rub off on the students. Therefore, it is imperative that policymakers, educators, stakeholders prioritize teacher quality and provide ongoing support to ensure that all students have access to high-quality education.

## **Suggestions**

- Government should create a recruitment system based on merit so as to employ teachers with optimum qualification
- Government should provide regular professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' subject matter expertise, pedagogical skills.
- Principals should ensure that the potentials of the teachers are well harnessed and utilized to reflect the true picture of their quality in the academic performance of students
- Principals should ensure that all students must have access to safe, well-equipped, and technology-rich classrooms that support teaching and learning.



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