PERCEIVED EFFECT OF ASSIGNMENT METHOD ON SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ECONOMICS

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Abstract
This study examined students' perception on the use of assignment instructional method in enhancing senior secondary students' academic achievement in Economics. A survey research design was adopted and 100 students were randomly selected from four Senior Secondary Schools. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data and Arithmetic means and Pearson correlation were used for analysis of data. The result revealed that relationship between the usage of Assignment method of teaching and the students' academic achievement in Economics is statistically significant. Also, the result showed that gender has no significant influence on students' academic achievement when taught using Assignment method. Based on these findings, it was recommended that Economics teachers should always adopt learner-centered instructional strategies.

Keywords: *Effect, Assignment method, Academic achievement, Economics, Students*

Background to the Study

Economics concerns with effective allocation of scarce resources. It deals with how individuals, businesses and governments utilize the limited resources to satisfy the unlimited wants. Economics involves making decision about production, distribution and consumption. Optimization plays key role in both Microeconomics and Macroeconomics analysis, that is, we either maximize or minimize (Oyeniyi, 2005). As a school subject, Economics widens learners' mental capacity for a better understanding of real life problem, analyze it and proffer solution. Also, it equips its recipients with the necessary information and understanding to make wise choice about future career prospects, investment decision and retirement strategies. This enables learners to contribute effectively to social and economic development of the society (Bitrus, Domiya & Hannatu, 2016; Jhingan, 2009; Ibukun, 2009; Okafor, 2008). Despite its usefulness, teaching and learning of Economics especially at secondary school level has been dominated by teacher-centered instructional method

("chalk and talk") which has negatively affected students' learning outcome. Therefore, there is need for usage of instructional methods that engage students actively (Goffe & Kauper, 2014). One of such learner-centered methods is assignment method of teaching.

Assignment method is a teaching strategy where learners investigate and solve problem individually or collectively. In assignment instructional strategy students are allowed to make decision on how to demonstrate their understanding of learnt concepts or skills (Jones & Bartlett, 2014). Assignment method also promotes self-learning attitude which stimulate motivation, active engagement, independent thinking, self-reliance, problem solving skill and self confidence in students. This in turn improves students' learning outcome and retentive capacity (Carr, 2013; Dean, Hubbell, Pitler & Stone, 2012; Dueck, 2014; Adeagbo, 2014). To achieve an effective assignment, critical thinking should be encouraged by allowing learners to create new ideas and solution to a given problem. A good assignment should be relevant to the subject matter and students' education level. Furthermore, assignment should be from simple to complex, time friendly and unambiguous (Huisman, 2016). Importantly, assignment should not only engage learners and provoke thought but as well be in line with defined objectives. The main objective of assignment is to promote learners' understanding and enhance their academic achievement.

Academic achievement refers to the extent to which desired education goal is attained by learners, teachers or institutions. It is used to determine learners' accomplishment in learning or education programme. Academic achievement measures how well a student meets the standard lay down by education institution or examination body. It can be defined as an assessment of the level at which students and teachers attain a stated educational goal irrespective of method and perspective of the instrument used (Emaikwu, 2012; Spinath, 2012). It should be noted that, tools and methods use in measuring academic achievement is determined by the nature of the subject and the desired objective. Various factors influence student's attainment of objectives of teaching and learning. Student's gender is one of such factors.

Gender is a distinctive characteristic, function, conduct, and obligation society ascribes to both male and female. It is the unique personality of the two sexes that is culturally related. Gender is mental and emotional feelings of an individual being either feminine or masculine. It is a societal functions imposed on male and female (Nnamani & Oyibe, 2016; Singh, 2010; Kadiri, 2021). Various studies have been conducted on the influence of gender on students' academic achievement. Some revealed that gender has significant effect on students' academic achievement (Gambari, Bello, Agboola & Adeoye, 2016; Gerald, 2014) while some showed no significant difference (Usman, 2017; Nnamani & Oyibe, 2016, Kadiri, 2021). However, study conducted by Eze, Ezenwafor and Obi (2015) revealed that female students outperformed their male counterparts in courses that are related to Arts and Language while male students did better in Mathematics and Sciences related courses. This shows that the effect of gender on students' academic achievement has

not been clearly established. Therefore, this calls for further studies on the effect of students' gender on academic achievement. And this explains the inclusion of gender as moderator variable in this study.

Additionally, researchers have carried out several studies on students perception of effects of teaching methods on academic achievement. Ntibi, Neji and Agube (2020) conducted a study on students' perceptions of teacher's knowledge of subject matter/lesson presentation and academic performance in physics. The study adopted Ex post facto research design and questionnaire was used to collect data while data was analyzed using One Way ANOVA. The result revealed a significant influence of students' perception of teacher knowledge and academic performance. Similarly, Zaim, Refnaldi and Rahmiyanti (2019) examined students' perceptions on teachers' teaching strategies and their effects on students' achievement in English. The research design used was Ex post facto and linear regression statistical technique was used to analyse data. Based on the result of the study, students' perception was high and no significant effect of students' perception towards teachers' teaching strategies and achievement was found. Furthermore, Ganyaupfu (2013) in a Quasi-experimental study on teaching methods and academic performance, used a General Linear Model to estimate data and discovered that student-centered method of teaching is more effective than teacher-centered method. Also, Oluwafemi, Umoru, Oyedele and Okereke (2019) adopted a Quasi-experimental design and ANCOVA statistical technique to assess the effects of assignment teaching method (ATM) on Business Studies students' academic achievement. The study showed that ATM is more effective than the conventional "Chalk and Talk" method. But gender has no influence on learners' achievement. Likewise, Junaid and Ayinde (2018) studied the effects of brainstorming and project teaching strategies on learning outcome using a pre-test post-test design. An achievement test was used to collect data while ANCOVA was made use of for data analysis. The two methods have effects on learning outcome and gender influence was also significant.

The foregoing shows that several studies have been carried out on the effects of teaching methods and academic achievement. However, most of the studies did not consider assignment method of teaching (Ganyaupfu, 2013; Junaid & Ayinde, 2018; Ntibi, Neji & Agube, 2020). Also, students' perception was not part of variables in the studies reviewed (Oluwafemi et al, 2019; Junaid, 2018; Ganyaupfu, 2013). The present study differs from the reviewed studies based on their independent variables. Similarly, this study is at variance with the reviewed studies in terms of research methods adopted while the present study used survey research design, some of the studies reviewed adopted Quasi-experimental design (Oluwafemi et al, 2019; Junaid & Ayinde, 2018; Ganyaupfu, 2013) and others applied Ex post facto method (Zain et al, 2019; Ntibi, Neji & Agube, 2020). Moreover, students' performance in Economics in Lagos state has remained unimpressive. One of the major factors responsible for this is the use of teacher-

centered teaching method by Economics teachers. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine students' perception on the use of assignment method and determine students' perception based on gender in Ojo educational district V of Lagos state, Nigeria.

Methodology

Survey type of descriptive research was adopted for the study. All Economics students in both public and private senior secondary schools in Ojo Local Government of Lagos state were the target population. While a total of one hundred (100) students were selected from four (4) secondary schools in Ojo educational district V of Lagos State using Krejcie and Morgan's table (1970). A structured questionnaire developed by the researchers was used to collect data with internal consistency coefficient of 0.79 using Cronbach alpha. Arithmetic mean and Pearson correlation statistics were used for analysis of data at 0.05 alpha level with IBM SPSS statistic 21.

Results Presentation

The results of the study are presented as follows:

Table 1: Students' perception on the use of assignment method and academic achievement

		STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	ASSIGNMENT METHOD OF TEACHING ECONOMICS
STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.515*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.050
	N	100	15
ASSIGNMENT METHOD OF TEACHING ECONOMICS	Pearson Correlation	0.515*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.050	
	N	15	15

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). IBM SPSS statistic 21

Table 1 shows that Pearson Correlation Coefficient, r = 0.515, and that the significant level is calculated = 0.05, and it then shows that the calculated significance level (0.05) = 0.05. Therefore, based on students' perception, the usage of assignment method of teaching and the students' academic achievement in Economics are statistically significant correlated (p = 0.05).

Table 2: Students' perception on the use of assignment method and academic achievement based on gender

		STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE	USUAGE OF QUESTIONNING METHOD OF TEACHING
STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON USE OF ASSIGNMENT AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	Pearson Correlation	1	.009
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.975
	N	100	15
GENDER (MALE , FEMALE)	Pearson Correlation	.009	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.975	
	N	15	15

IBM SPSS statistic 21

Table 2 shows that Pearson Correlation Coefficient, r = 0.009, and that the significant level is calculated = 0.975, and it then shows that the calculated significance level (0.975) > 0.05. This implies that students' perception on the effect of assignment teaching method and academic achievement based on gender is not statistically different (p > 0.05).

Discussion of Findings

Result from table 1 shows that p = 0.05 this means that based on students' perception, the usage of assignment method of teaching and the students' academic achievement in Economics are statistically significant correlated. This agrees with previous findings (Ganyaupfu, 2013; Junaid & Ayinde, 2018; Ntibi, Neji & Agube, 2020) but contradict the report of Zain, Refnaldi and Rahmiyanti, (2019). Also, result from table 2 indicates that p > 0.05. This is in line with the result of Oluwafemi, Umoru, Oyedele and Okereke, (2019) but disagrees with the finding of Junaid and Ayinde, (2018).

Conclusion and Recommendation

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study; that assignment teaching strategy is more effective and enhanced academic achievement than traditional "chalk and talk". Also, perceptions of male and female students on

the effects of assignment teaching method do not differ. Hence, the following recommendations are made; first, the use of assignment method of teaching should be encouraged in secondary schools. Second, the government and school management should provide all necessary facilities for effective use of assignment method. Lastly, both male and female students should be given equal opportunity in teaching and learning process especially when using assignment teaching strategy.

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