

Academic Performance in NECO English Language and Biology in a Selected Secondary School in Surulere Local Government, Ogbomosho, Oyo State, Nigeria

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DOI: 10.56201/ijee.v9.no4.2023.pg31.37

ABSTRACT

National Examination Council is the final qualifying examinations that must be taken by Senior Secondary School Students at the end of their secondary school education. Success in the examinations is mandatory as it provide the basic prerequisite and qualification to gain admission into institution of higher learning. The main objective of this study is to analyze the performances of students of a selected Senior Secondary School in Surulere local government area of Oyo State, Nigeria in two subjects which are Biology and English Language. The study analyzes the result for the period of eight (8) years. The total numbers of enrolment for the two subjects within the year 2014-2021 were gathered from the school record with the consent of the school authority. Also the NECO results were retrieved for the period of eight years and analyzed using Pearson product Correlation Coefficient. It was discovered that there was a significant positive relationship between the student's performances in NECO Biology and NECO English Language. The average performance in Biology at credit level was 79.04% while in English language it was 78.99%. The study therefore recommends adequate supply of teaching and learning materials to the schools, employment of more qualified Biology and English language teachers, adequate and seasonal release of grants to the schools for seminars and workshop while the teachers should be ready to discharge their duties as required by their professions.

Keywords: Performance, Examination, Biology, English Language, NECO

Introduction

NECO examination is one of the secondary school certificate examinations (SSCE) secondary school students undertake for the final award of certificate. Apart from WASC which is an examination annually conducted uniformly in all the English-speaking West African countries for all the secondary schools. NECO is being conducted annually and uniformly in all the states in Nigeria. All the students in the secondary schools undertake this examination at the same time between July and September each year, as the situation permits. This means that all the students are being taught under the same curriculum.

This research work presents the findings of a study of a relationship between students' performance in Biology and English Language conducted by National Examination Council (NECO) in selected secondary schools in Surulere Local Government Area of Ogbomoso, Oyo State. The curricula lay emphasis on science subjects and art subjects of which Biology and English language takes a higher rank. Hence, both subjects are core subjects in secondary schools in the nation (Amini, 1997).

The West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) for a number of years has been the only examination body for ordinary level examination in this country. National Examination Council (NECO) came up in the year 2000 by the Federal Government.

According to Olasehinde and Olatoye (2014), science education is designed to guide the world toward a scientifically literate society and this is important for an understanding of science as it offers personal fulfillments and excitements. As Biology is regarded as the most simple to understand among all science subjects so also is English Language among all the art subject and thus both usually attract the widest enrolment.

One of the criticisms against NECO is that some believed that their questions are tougher than those of WAEC. Some universities who once rejected NECO results now accept them. Since it has been discovered that WAEC and NECO have the syllabus which is being regulated by the body, it makes it easier for privately owned secondary schools to register their students for NECO.

Ajeyalemi (1987) opined that students in secondary schools are running away from sciences and even English Language despite the benefits attached to both subjects. This is due to poor standard in Mathematics and English Language, others are lack of good textbooks, lack of proper support from homes etc.

The importance of Biology in studying science and English Language in studying any courses has long been recognized world-wide. Having known that these two subjects are part of the major subjects in secondary schools, is there any relationship between the students' performances in both subjects within the stipulated years in the selected school?

Statement of the Problem

The study intends to examine the variation in the academic performance of students in Biology and English Language NECO Examination.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study analyzed the students' performances in SSCE/NECO English Language and Biology.

Specifically, the study shall:

1. Determine the significant relationship between Biology and English Language NECO results.
2. Ascertain the percentage of students with credit pass (A-C), passes (D-P) and the percentage

failed (F).

3. Compare the percentage passed and the percentage failed in Biology and English Language for the eight consecutive years.

Research Questions

1. What is the significant relationship between Biology and English Language NECO results?
2. What is the percentage of the students with credit pass (A-C), passes (D-P) and the percentage that failed in Biology and English Language NECO results between 2014-2021?
3. What is the percentage of students with passes at credit level and above?

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between performance (percentage) of students in the selected school in Surulere Local Government, Ogbomoso in Biology and English Language between 2014-2021.

The decision rule is: reject H₀ if t_{cal} > t_{tab} at 0.05 level of significance.

Methodology

The data were collected from the school authority of the Ajibare Community High School, in Iresadu, Surulere Local Government Area of Oyo State (Ogbomoso). The results for 8 consecutive years were collected within 2014-2021. This refers to the records of the total number of students that registered and sat for NECO with their grades in Biology and English Language in Ajibare Community High School.

The correlation coefficients (r) of the relationship between students' performance in NECO Biology and English Language within the period 2014-2021 in Ajibare Community High School were calculated.

Karl Pearson correlation coefficient (r):

$$r = \frac{N \sum XY - \sum X \sum Y}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

where:

N = Number of pairs

X = Marks in NECO Biology

Y = Marks in NECO English Language

Table I: Relationship Between Students' Performance in NECO Biology and English Language (2014-2021)

BIOLOGY					ENGLISH LANGUAGE			
Year	Total Enrolment	Credit(A-C)	Pass	Fail	Total Enrolment	Credit(A-C)	Pass	Fail
2014	52	28	23	1	59	35	22	2
2015	51	50	1	-	72	69	3	-
2016	51	41	7	3	70	60	10	-

2017 S	17	7	9	1	37	27	10	-
2018	40	33	7	-	51	49	2	-
2019	18	13	5	-	37	19	18	-
2020	17	17	-	-	39	25	14	-
2021	26	26	-	-	49	43	6	-
TOTAL	272	215	52	5	414	327	85	2
%		79.04	19.12	1.84		78.99	20.53	0.48

Table II: Examination Enrolment with Grades

Subject	Total Enrolment	No. of Students with Grade			
	2014-2021	Credit (A-C)	Pass	Failed	% Pass
Biology	272	215	52	05	98
English Language	414	327	85	02	99

Though the percentage pass in Biology was lower (98%) than that of English Language (99%), the highest percentage pass at Credit (A-C) level was recorded in Biology (79.04%) compared to that of English Language which is 78.98%. While the passes in Biology at pass (P) level was (19.12%), that of English Language was 20.53%.

Table III – Students’ Scores / Grades with the Corresponding Percentages

Subject	Total % Pass	% Credit (A-C)	% Pass(p)	% Failed
Biology	98.16	79.04	19.12	1.84
English Language	99.52	78.99	20.53	0.48

The percentage failed (F) in Biology is 1.84% while the percentage failed in English Language is 0.48%. The total percentage pass in Biology is 98.16% while that of English Language is 99.52%. Within the period 2014-2021 we discover that more students failed Biology than English Language.

DISCUSSION

The school under this study is a public school that is it's a school that is being controlled by the state government while the examinations considered is NECO and the subjects under consideration are Biology and English Language.

It was discovered that, there was statistically significant positive relationship between students' achievement in Biology and English Language in NECO in Ajibare Community High School for the year 2014-2021. It was discovered that there is positive relationship between Biology and English Language NECO results. The highest percentage passes at credit (A₁- C₆) level was recorded in Biology (79.04%) compare to that of English Language which was (78.98%). While the passes in Biology at pass (P) level was (19.12%) while that of English language was (20.53%). The percentage failure in Biology is (1.84%) which is more than that of English Language which was (0.48%). The correlation coefficient calculated indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between student performance in Biology and English Language NECO result in Ajibare Community High School within the year 2014-2021.

In this research work, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between Biology and English Language NECO result is rejected.

High grades in Biology implies high grade in NECO English Language. Low grades in NECO Biology implies low grade in NECO English Language.

Ballone-Dura, Czerndiak and Haney (2005), Opined that in improving students' achievement in school, the most important factor is the science teacher. Poor performance in the field of science is caused by poor quality of science teachers, overcrowded classroom and lack of suitable and adequate science equipment to mention few of them (Ali, Tonman and Gasim 2004). It was discovered that school that are properly equipped interm of science laboratories, good textbooks, qualified teacher and a well conducive environment tend to produce better NECO result in Biology and English Language while poorly equipped schools perform poorly in the subjects.

According to (Araoye, 2012), good student background has also been identified as factor that could promote high performance in biology.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

From the above discussion, the following conclusions are drawn out:

There was significant positive relationship between students' achievement in Biology English Language in NECO in Ajibare Community High School for the year 2014-2021 since it has been discovered that there is positive relationship between students' achievements in most of the years in the two subjects, the hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between NECO Biology and NECO English language results within the year 2014-2021 was rejected.

Recommendations

In an attempt to improve students' performance in both NECO Biology and NECO English Language the following recommendations are made:

There should be adequate supply of teaching/ learning materials to the schools by the government.

There should be employment of more qualified biology and English-language teachers.

Adequate/ seasonal release of grants to the schools for seminars/ workshop for teachers

Government should provide standard laboratory, adequate laboratory equipment and consumable material to the schools.

Proper awareness and educative lectures should be given to the students that students who perform well in NECO Biology should be able to perform well in NECO English Language, knowing that both are compulsory subjects.

The school authorities and teachers should encourage the students to prepare very well for both subjects.

Adequate preparation of the students for the examination and positive peer influences would enhance academic success.

Suggestions

On the basis of the above findings, it is suggested that further research should be carried out to:

- I. Investigate whether male students performs better than female students in NECO Biology and WAEC Biology or not.
- II. Determine whether the students in urban area performs better than those in rural area or not.

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