

## **Teacher Accountability and Student's Academic Achievement in Mission Secondary Schools in Anambra State, Nigeria: An Appraisal of Market- Based Accountability Model in Education**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study investigated teacher accountability and students' academic achievement in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria: an appraisal of market-based accountability model in education. The study adopted the correlational survey method, covering all principals, teachers and students' result in the senior school certificate examination (SSCE) in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select 500 principals and teachers, and 500 students' SSCE result from 50 schools. The Teacher Accountability, Students' Academic Achievement Questionnaire (TASAAQ) and Students' Academic Checklist (SAAC) were used to collect data from respondents. Data collected were analyzed using percentages, means scores, standard deviation, Pearson's product moment correlation co-efficient and T-test. Findings revealed that the market-based accountability model is not fashionable for teacher accountability in mission secondary schools in mission schools, students' academic achievement was high, teacher accountability has positive correlation with students' academic achievement and both principals and teachers agree that teacher accountability is necessary for students' academic achievement. Study recommended that important tenets of market-based accountability model should be adopted to bring teachers to accountability and increase chances of students' academic achievement.*

**KEY WORDS:** teacher accountability, student' academic achievement, mission secondary schools, market-based accountability model.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a very important element for the progress, growth and development of any given society. It is an instrument for human capacity building that helps society for self- perpetuation and the transmission of its ethos, norms and values from one generation to another. This makes the education industry and the school system that embodies its visions, goals and objectives via

the various educational policies, programs and activities mounted; a microcosm of the society in which it exists. The school could as well be described as an education factory where teachers as educational technicians offer client services to students with educational needs to be satisfied. The teaching – learning interaction that takes place in the classroom becomes the service point at which teachers do the utmost to ensure that set educational objectives are achieved satisfactorily in terms of students’ academic achievement. This makes the education agents, particularly teachers objects of public scrutiny and criticism as their action or inaction can truncate the attainment of the lofty goals and objects that education intends to satisfy. The intense public scrutiny and criticism that education agents, particularly teachers, face reflect the high expectations society places on education and its impact on individuals and society (Nkedishu, 2021). To this effect, stakeholders in education and society at large demand from school administrators and teachers an account of their performance in the utilization of available resource and the intended results. This has necessitated the development of certain concepts like accountability in education, answerability or stock taking used in relation to the school, school administrators and teachers aimed at ensuring that the business of educating students is carried out with a sense of responsibility. This accountability is even expected more from mission secondary schools, given the pedigree they have acquired from decades of supposed academic and moral excellence in Nigeria, often measured by the performance of students in the West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC). A successful student in Nigeria is one who has a minimum of credit passes in five subject areas, including Mathematics and English Language which is the minimum requirement for admission into tertiary institutions.

There is no consensus among scholars on the concept of accountability. Mastop (2010) cited in Abdullahi & Abubakar (2019) contends that accountability entails being called upon to account or answer for the omission or commission of something which may result in one suffering the consequence. It is an ethical concept that connotes the proper behaviour, and deals with the responsibilities of individuals and institutions for their actions towards other persons and organizations (Levitt, Janta and Wegrich, 2008). Accountability in education is concerned with the acceptance of responsibility and consequences by those to whom society has bequeathed the duty of educating. It accentuates answerability towards the efficient and effective implementation of educational programmes in school (abdullahi & Abubakar, 2019). It is intended to solve the principal – agent problem and the incentives that they provide to educators to improve students’ performance, providing direct incentive in the form of explicit rewards or sanctions in relation to good or bad performance (Feng, 2010). Accountability in education ensures that students’ are protected from incompetence on the part of the teacher and has produced meaningful improvements in students’ academic achievements in measurable terms (Bellwether, 2020; Nakpodia & Okiemute, 2010). With the accountability system in place, teaching – learning

activities are enhanced, effective use of available educational facilities is engendered towards attaining intended educational outcomes. Some of the indicators of teacher accountability include keeping school administrators informed of students' performance and teachers evaluated base on that, parents notified of the school academic performance result in comparison with other schools and students' success measured with a centralized examination at certain times (Usman, 2016; Erga, 2017).

Gonzalez and Firestone (2013) from a broad point itemized the various forms of accountability models that exist to include bureaucratic, political, market based, professional and moral accountability. While bureaucratic accountability involves giving account along line of authority, political accountability refers to expectations people have of their representatives and leaders. Professional accountability deals with the responsibility a person has to operate within the accepted regulations of their profession, while moral accountability deals with the question of the morality of one's actions. With particular reference to market approach accountability, it is hinged on the perception that people put in more to their duties when there is a reason to fear loss as a result of non- performance. O'Connell & Yusuf (2015) believed that applying the market based approach on accountability theory to managing teachers' efficiency will yield good result, given that fear of loss of income or reward spur people to work more diligently. The main thrust of the theory is that principals can check the control problem that arises from the possibility that employees can benefit by concealing from the employers their level of ability, work effort and integrity. It is advocated that this model of accountability when applied to teachers will motivate them to give their best in the performance of the duties in view of a better reward. Familusi (2016) posited that priority ought to be given to teachers' individual accountability in order to improve students' academic achievement. This would define the contractual relationship between teachers and other education stakeholders – administrators, students, parents and the community, since they are employed for the purpose of impacting knowledge through their teaching activities in the classroom. The model advocates a business approach in the assessment of teachers' work function, effectiveness of result and reward, to the effect that teachers should be rewarded more when their students' academic performance is high, while they should also take responsibility for low performance among majority of their students. Magnesi & Surprenaut (2019) posited that adopting the market – based accountability system in school which promotes profitability, market entry, price changes, product differential and competition; produce better outcome.

Ubah (2023) in a survey carried out on administrative factors and teacher variables influence on students' academic achievement in mission secondary schools in Anambra and Delta states of Nigeria posited that administrators, teachers and stakeholders in education believed that accountability on the part of teachers promote effectiveness and higher chances of high students' academic achievement as it is evidenced in the 2019/ 2020 students' results in the senior school

certificate examination with over 80% success rate. Yaro, Arshad & Salleh (2015) in the study carried out on Teachers' Accountability as an Instrument of Effective Policy Implementation in Nigeria reported that there is commendable teachers' accountability in secondary schools. Schools try to respond to expectations of students, parents and other education stakeholders by continually adopting competitiveness among teachers, marketing performance, teaching to cover areas of test and second-order competition with other schools (Pages, 2021; Falabella, 2014). It was found that teacher accountability positively predicts students' academic performance in History as teachers discharged their duties accordingly and professionally, following the principles and norms of the teaching practices (Abdullahi & Abubakar, 2019; Onuka, 2017). Also, Ajayi, Fasasi & Alabi (2015) in a survey carried out accountability issues in basic school of Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State, reported that teachers felt moderately responsible for their students' academic performance. However, Ofozoba (2021) established that accountability should not only be measured by students' academic performance but also the processes that leads to it, taking into cognizance other available data that exist in the school.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The secondary schools owned and administered by religious organizations, particularly the mainstream churches have shown over the years to produce high students' academic performance especially in final senior school certificate examinations. This is often attributed to the believed high sense of discipline and hard work that pervades the administration of the mission schools. But the academic achievement recorded in any school would not be possible without the efforts and commitment of teachers who drive the implementation on planned academic programmes. However, it is often believed that mission schools, like other private secondary schools may not be able to attract the most competent and qualified personnel to occupy teaching positions, since the preference of every teacher would be to be employed in the public sector that offers higher pay and prospect of growth. Then, this leaves researchers in education to identify other factors that could influence teachers' job performance that also drive students' academic performance. Perhaps, the stringent and disciplined system in mission schools drive teachers to optimize their effort in the discharge of their duty to avoid sanctions or loss. The study therefore investigates the teachers' accountability system that could impact students' academic achievement in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. Is the market-based accountability model applied to teachers in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

2. What is the level of students' academic achievement in the 2020/ 2021 senior school certificate examination in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?
3. To what extent does teacher accountability influence students' academic achievement in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?
4. What difference exist between the mean score of the perception of principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools?

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between teacher accountability and students' academic achievement in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the perception of principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted the correlational survey design. The design was used to explain the relationship between the variables of market-based teacher accountability model and students' academic achievement. The population of the study comprised all principals, teachers and students' results of 2021/ 2022 senior school certificate examination from the one hundred (100) mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample of the study comprising 50 principals, 450 teachers and 500 students West African Examination Council (WAEC) examination results from 50 schools. The Teacher Accountability, Students Academic Achievement Questionnaire (TASAAQ) was administered to principals and teachers for data collection, while a Students Academic Achievement Checklist (SAAC) was used to collate students' results in which minimum of five (5) credit passes including Mathematics and English was considered the bench mark. The data collected was analyzed using percentages, mean scores, standard deviation, Pearson's product moment correlation co-efficient and t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

## **RESULTS**

**Research Question 1:** Is the market-based accountability model applied to teachers in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Mean Scores and SD on market-based accountability model**

S/N	Market-based accountability model	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Teachers' remuneration is based on workload	2.25	.96	Disagree
2	Teachers' good performance attracts rewards	3.00	.79	Agree
3	Teachers who teach core subjects are paid more	1.90	.96	Disagree
4	Teachers who do not meet job demand suffer pay cut	2.45	1.05	Disagree
5	Teachers who are perceived to be inefficient are laid off	1.95	1.07	Disagree
Average Mean		2.31	.97	Disagree

Table 1 revealed result on market-based accountability model. The result shows that respondents agree on teachers good performance attracts rewards with mean of 3.00 but disagree on other items with mean less than 2.50 such as teachers' remuneration is based on workload, teachers who teach core subjects are paid more, do not meet job demand suffer pay cut, perceived to be inefficient are laid off. However, an average mean of 2.31 revealed that market-based accountability model is not applied to teachers in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of students' academic achievement in the 2020/ 2021 senior school certificate examination in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

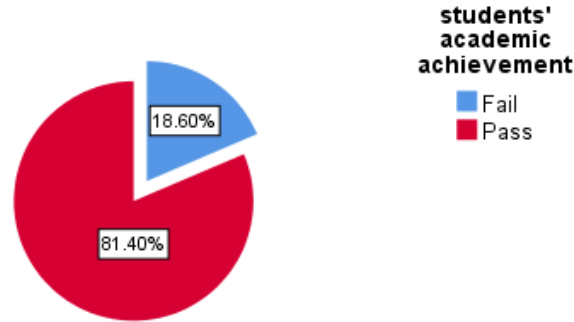
**Table 2: Percentage on students' academic achievement**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Fail (without Mathematics and English)	93	18.6
Pass(Mathematics and English)	407	81.4
Total	500	100.0

Table 2 provides information on students' academic achievement based on two variables: "Fail (without Mathematics and English)" and "Pass (Mathematics and English)." The table also includes the frequency and percentage of students falling into each category. According to the table, there were a total of 500 students considered in the analysis. Out of these, 93 students (18.6% of the total) failed without Mathematics and English. On the other hand, 407 students (81.4% of the total) passed with Mathematics and English. The table demonstrates the distribution of students' academic achievement, indicating that the majority of students (81.4%) passed their examinations with the required subjects. Conversely, a smaller proportion (18.6%) failed to meet the criteria by not having Mathematics and English. Thus, the level of students' academic achievement in the 2020/ 2021 senior school certificate examination in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. See Figure 1 for pie chart representation.



**Pie Chart Count of students' academic achievement**



**Research Question 3:** To what extent does teacher accountability influence students' academic achievement in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria?

**Table 3: Mean Scores and SD on influence of teachers' accountability on students' academic achievement**

S/N	Influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Teachers give regular classroom progress report to principal	3.05	.75	Agree
2.	Teachers give parents regular feedback on students' academic performance	3.25	.78	Agree
3.	Teachers show sense of responsibility towards students' academic progress	3.15	.81	Agree
4.	Teachers endeavor to meet the needs of individual students in the class	3.45	.75	Agree
5.	Teachers make effort to remediate areas students fail	2.95	.82	Agree
6.	Teachers respond to mass failure of students as their own failure of responsibility	3.10	.71	Agree
Average Mean		3.16	.77	Agree

Table 3 shows mean Scores and SD on influence of teachers accountability on students' academic achievement. The result on the table revealed that respondents agree on all the items with mean above 2.50. In specific, respondents agree with men scores of 3.05, 3.25, 3.15, 3.45, 2.95 and 3.10 on teachers give regular classroom progress report to principal, teachers give parents regular feedback on students' academic performance, teachers show sense of responsibility towards students' academic progress, teachers endeavor to meet the needs of individual students in the class, teachers make effort to remediate areas students fail and teachers respond to mass failure of

students as their own failure of responsibility. The average mean of 3.16 revealed that to a large extent teacher accountability influence students' academic achievement in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

**Research Question 4:** What difference exist between the mean score of the perception of principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools?

**Table 4: Mean Score difference between principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools**

S/N	Influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement	Principals			Teachers		
		Mean	SD	Remark	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Teachers give regular classroom progress report to principal	2.85	.89	Agree	3.15	.68	Agree
2.	Teachers give parents regular feedback on students' academic performance	3.28	.95	Agree	3.23	.72	Agree
3.	Teachers show sense of responsibility towards students' academic progress	2.86	.89	Agree	3.30	.75	Agree
4.	Teachers endeavor to meet the needs of individual students in the class	3.27	.95	Agree	3.53	.66	Agree
5.	Teachers make effort to remediate areas students fail	2.84	.89	Agree	3.00	.81	Agree
6.	Teachers respond to mass failure of students as their own failure of responsibility	3.29	.48	Agree	3.00	.82	Agree
Average mean		3.07	.84	Agree	3.20	.74	Agree
Mean Difference		.13; SD = .10					

Table 4 shows mean score difference between principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools. The result shows that principals and teachers agree on all the items with above 2.50. The average mean were 3.07 and 3.20 for principals and teachers respectively. The mean difference between principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools was 0.13. The significant of the mean was tested on hypothesis 2.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between teacher accountability and students' academic achievement in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Table 5: Relationship between teacher accountability and students' academic achievement



		Teachers accountability	Students' academic achievement
Teachers accountability	Pearson Correlation	1	.839*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.558
	N	500	500
Students' academic achievement	Pearson Correlation	.839*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.558	
	N	500	500

\*Sig. at 0.05

Table 5 presents the relationship between teacher accountability and students' academic achievement. The table displays the Pearson correlation coefficients between the two variables. The correlation coefficient between teacher accountability and students' academic achievement is 0.839, which indicates a strong positive correlation. The p-value associated with this correlation is 0.558, suggesting that the correlation is statistically significant at the conventional significance level of 0.05.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the perception of principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools.

**Table 6: t-test on perception of principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools**

Variables	Mean	SD	DF	z-cal.	z-crit.	Remark
Principals	3.07	.84	998	.983	1.96	Not Significant
Teachers	3.20	.74				

Significance = 0.05

Table 6 presents the results of a t-test comparing the perception of principals and teachers regarding the impact of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement in mission schools. The mean perception score for principals was 3.07, with a standard deviation of 0.84, while for teachers, the mean score was 3.20, with a standard deviation of 0.74. The degrees of freedom for the z-test were 998. The calculated z-value was 0.983. The critical z-value at a significance level of 0.05 was 1.96. The remark provided in the table states that the difference in perception between principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement is not statistically significant.

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study showed that administrators and teachers in mission secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria do not particularly favor the market-based accountability model for teachers with a very low average score of 2.31. could be that they perceive the market-based accountability model to excessively commoditize the school system, activities and the teaching-learning interaction between teachers and their students, which is mostly dynamic, given the human objects involved in education. This finding departs from Magnesi & Suprenaut (2019) position that the market-based accountability model produces better academic outcome for students because it emphasizes profitability and competition among teachers and among schools. It disagrees with O'connell & Yusuf (2015) who posited that market-based accountability model enhances management of teachers' efficiency and yield good result by using fear of lose to inhibit non-performance. Finding revealed that there was high students' academic achievement with 81.4% success rate in final external examinations in the 2020/2021 session. This finding confirms Ubah (2023) who posted a very high performance of students in mission secondary schools in Anambra and Delta States in the senior school certificate examination 2019/2020 with over 80% of students scoring five credit passes and above including Mathematics and English. Finding also affirm that students' achievement should be measured with centralized examination at certain times (Usman, 2016; Erga, 2017). Finding established that teachers accountability significantly influences students' academic achievement positively, in mission secondary schools in Anambra State with a general mean of 3.16 and a correlation co-efficient of  $.839 > .558$  table value. This finding resonates with earlier studies which reported that teacher accountability protects students from incompetence of teachers and positively influence students' academic achievement measured in comparison to other schools (Bellwether, 2020; Abdullahi & Abubakar 2019; Onuka, 2017). Finding reports that the difference between the perception of principals and teachers on the influence of teacher accountability on students' academic achievement is not significant with a z-calculated score of  $.983 < 1.96$  z-critical value. This finding reiterates Ubah (2023) report that school administrators and teachers alike subscribe to applying the accountability system to school system to improve system's effectiveness in reaching the goal of producing successful students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Teacher accountability is an important variable in creating a system of checks and balances in the mission secondary schools and for ensuring that teachers perform their duties efficiently and effectively. As education agents who execute and translate education policies and programs into concrete experience in the classroom interaction with students, teachers in mission secondary schools in Anambra State are accountable to school administrators, their students, parents and other education stakeholders on their performance measured in terms of students' academic achievement rate. It is important that school administrators and teachers continue to ensure the

sustenance of students' academic success by continually calling to account the teachers who fall short in their job performance.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that some of the positive tenets of market-based accountability model such as inhibiting minimalism in teachers' job performance, more duty attracting more pay, reducing redundancy by either improving inefficient personnel or replacing them with more efficient ones could be adopted in ensuring that teachers are accountable in the performance of their duties and to increase students' academic achievement rate in mission secondary schools in Anambra State.

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