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# Teachers' Staggered School Attendance And Students' Academic Achievement In Secondary Schools In Delta State, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT**
The study teachers staggered school attendance and students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria examines the impact of staggered attendance on students' academic performance. The primary objectives are to explore the relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic success. The study is guided by two research questions and one hypothesis .The research employs a correlation research design. The population of the study consists of teachers (2,144) and students (45,171) in Public Secondary Schools which amounts to a total population of 47,315 respondents in Delta State. The findings reveal a significant relationship between staggered teacher attendance and students' academic achievements; particularly highlighting the challenges posed by inconsistent teacher presence and reduced instructional time. The study concludes that staggered attendance negatively impacts students' academic outcomes, particularly in terms of continuity in learning and teacher-student interaction. It recommends that educational stakeholders should review and improve scheduling practice.
**Keywords**: Staggered, School attendance, Academic Achievement, Secondary school.

## INTRODUCTION

In recent times, global educational systems have faced unprecedented challenges, primarily driven by health concerns such as the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to these challenges, many schools have implemented staggered school attendance by teachers as a strategy to mitigate health risks while maintaining some level of in-person learning (Alves, Lopes, & Precioso, 2021).

Students' academic achievement is rooted in the longstanding interest of educators, researchers, and policymakers to comprehend the intricate factors that contribute to and impact students' success in their academic pursuits. Traditionally, academic achievement has been associated with factors such as instructional methodologies, teacher effectiveness, curriculum design, and students' individual characteristics. However, contemporary educational landscapes are marked by dynamic changes, including technological advancements, diverse learning environments, and, notably, the challenges posed by events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and removal of petroleum subsidy by the Federal government of Nigeria.

Staggered school attendance by teachers in Delta State occasioned by the removal of fuel subsidy and the attendant increase in prices of goods and services, with debates surrounding its perceived impact on students' academic achievement. This practice of staggered school attendance by teachers refers to

teachers having different schedules or rotating shifts, resulting in some students having inconsistent access to their teachers (Abbasi & Bamakan, 2022)

One of the main concerns regarding staggered school attendance is the reduced instructional time for students. When teachers have different time schedules, it can lead to a decrease in the overall time spent with the students in the classroom. This limited interaction may result in lack of continuity in learning as students may not receive consistent guidance and support from teachers

The perceived impact of staggered school attendance by teachers on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools represents a vital area of investigation amid the evolving landscape of education. Exploring the perceived impact helps strike a balance between ensuring the safety of students and teachers during a global health crisis while maintaining a focus on sustaining and enhancing academic achievement. Staggered school attendance by teachers can be influenced by factors such as the need for social distancing, reducing class sizes, ensuring adequate teacher-student interaction, managing resources efficiently and implementing COVID-19 safety protocols. These measures aim to enhance overall safety while maintaining educational standards during challenging times.

Educators are vital to students' academic achievement in the attainment of learning objectives. To achieve regional and national education objectives and to lessen inequities, their presence in the classroom is seen as a necessary condition for learning to occur.

The variables that make up staggered school attendance by teachers involve various components related to scheduling and organization. These include: teacher attendance schedule, classroom allocation, subject or grade allocation, student grouping, teaching resources, administrative coordination, teacher collaboration and evaluation and assessment. Teacher absenteeism in the educational context is a matter of critical importance. The presence of teachers in the classroom is essential for effective instruction and student learning (Bhatty, 2020). High levels of teacher absenteeism can result in reduced instructional time, negatively affecting students' academic performance. In the context of Nigeria, as in many other developing countries, the issue of teacher absenteeism has gained increasing attention in recent years.

Research indicates that teacher absenteeism in Nigeria is a pervasive problem, with varying levels across regions (Abdulkareem, 2018). While there is a considerable body of literature on this issue, few studies have focused on the perceived impact of staggered school attendance by teachers on students' academic attainment.

The average proportion of days that instructors are present when they are supposed to be instructing pupils in an assigned class is called teacher attendance. The impact of teacher absenteeism on students is evident in reduced instructional time, negative effects on motivation, and lower learning outcomes. Students may become de-motivated and disengaged when faced with inconsistent teacher presence. Consequently, the lack of a consistent and supportive learning environment can hinder students' enthusiasm for learning and lead to a decline in their academic performance (Akporehe & Ekwevugbe, 2025).

Understanding the perceived impact of staggered school attendance by teachers on students' academic attainment in Nigeria is crucial for addressing the challenges faced by the education system. It not only highlights the need for targeted interventions but also underscores the importance of evidence-based policy recommendations to improve teacher attendance and enhance the quality of education (Money & Ekwevugbe, 2008).

Furthermore, staggered attendance may lead to lack of personalized attention for students. Teachers play a crucial role in identifying and addressing the individual needs of their students. However, when teachers have staggered school attendance or are absent some days of the week from school, it becomes challenging to personalize instructions and support (Ekwevugbe & Atare, 2022). Students may struggle to receive timely feedback, clarification, or additional help when needed which can negatively affect their understanding of the subject and hinder their academic performance. Another potential consequence of staggered school attendance is the disruption to the learning environment. Consistency and stability are essential for creating an effective learning environment. When teachers are absent or have staggered attendance, it can lead to a sense of disorganization and inconsistency in the classroom. This can affect

students focus, engagement, and overall motivation to learn, ultimately impacting their academic attainment (Ekwevugbe, 2014)

Nigeria has the world's highest rate of out of school children, despite the fact that basic education is both free and mandatory. The education system is severely underfunded, which is a major concern for the nation. More restrictions will likely be imposed and more at-risk children will be forced out of the education system as a result of the economic fallout from the elimination of subsidies, the effects of school closures, and the trend toward online education. (Nwanguma & Jebose, 2025,; Haruna, Bashir & Habiba.2020)

The academic performance and learning of pupils in Nigeria are adversely affected by teacher absenteeism and inefficient use of instructional time, according to Okunola (2021). Previous research has shown that 20% of primary school teachers in public schools are absent on any given day, and that students spend just 8% of a 30-minute class period actually learning, with the rest of the time wasted on pointless activities.

While teacher absenteeism has been studied in various contexts, the specific issue of staggered school attendance, characterized by irregular teacher presence, has received limited attention in the literature. This gap in research is particularly pronounced in the Nigerian context, where diverse challenges, including motivational factors, working conditions, and security concerns, may contribute to teachers' irregular attendance ( Ekwevugbe & Efetobor, 2025). By examining the perceived impact of staggered school attendance, this study aims to contribute valuable insights that can shape educational practices, policies, and support mechanisms, ultimately enhancing the academic experiences and achievements of students in public secondary schools.

In the context of this study, the researchers applied the social learning theory as the theoretical framework

**Statement of the Problem**

In recent years, the Nigerian education system has faced pressing challenges including plans for staggered school attendance by teachers. This issue, characterized by irregular and inconsistent teacher presence in schools raises critical concerns about its potential impact on students' academic attainment. Teacher absenteeism, whether due to reasons such as low motivation, inadequate working conditions, or security concerns in certain regions, has the potential to undermine the quality of education in Nigeria. Amid the global imperative to balance health and safety concerns with educational continuity, public secondary schools have increasingly adopted staggered school attendance by teachers. This practice, while intended to mitigate health risks, raises questions about its potential impact on students' academic achievement. The complex relationship between altered attendance models and academic outcomes poses a significant challenge for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders.

The consequences of staggered school attendance are multifaceted. It can lead to a reduction in the quantity and quality of instructional time that students receive, resulting in gaps in their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, it may erode students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning, potentially contributing to increased dropout rates. This issue has far-reaching implications for the Nigerian education system, as poor academic performance can limit students' future opportunities and hinder the nation's socio-economic development. Understanding the nuances of this relationship is crucial for optimizing educational practices and ensuring that the pursuit of safety does not compromise the quality of students' learning experiences.

Therefore, the problem to be investigated is the yet-to-be-clarified difference between staggered school attendance by teachers and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools, considering factors such as teacher-student interactions, adaptability, and overall well-being.

**1.1. Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. Is there any relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State?
2. Is there any relationship between subject allocation for teachers during staggered teachers' attendance and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State?

**Hypothesis**

The following Hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

**Research Hypotheses one:** There is no significant relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta South Senatorial District

## METHOD

The population of the study consists of all teachers (2,144) and students (45,171) in Public Secondary Schools which amounts to a total population of 47,315 respondents in Delta South Senatorial District

A sample size of 382 public secondary school teachers and students was gotten through stratified random sampling technique. From each stratum, 15% of the teachers and students were randomly selected from each local government to form the sample for the study.

The instrument for data collection is a self-developed questionnaire entitled Questionnaire on Perceived Impact of Staggered School Attendance by Teachers on Students Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools (PISSATSAASS). The questionnaire consist of three (3) sections, section 1 consists of demographic variables while section 2-3 contains statements requiring responses from teachers and students. It was validated and the reliability tested to ensure that its items were adequate to answer the research questions.

## RESULTS

**Research Question One:** *Is there any relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State?*

**Table 1a Mean of Teacher's Attendance Scheduling**

| S/No | Teacher attendance scheduling | N | VHE | HE | LE | VLE | Mean | STD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I believe that daily teacher attendance positively impacts students' understanding of academic content | 50 | 33 | 16 | 1 | 0 | 3.64 | 0.53 |
| 2 | Daily interactions with teachers contribute to students' engagement in learning activities | 50 | 27 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 3.54 | 0.50 |
| 3 | I think weekly teacher attendance affects the continuity of lessons and learning progress for students | 50 | 22 | 23 | 5 | 0 | 3.34 | 0.66 |
| 4 | I perceive that the consistency of teachers' weekly attendance influences students'' academic performance | 50 | 16 | 27 | 7 | 0 | 3.18 | 0.66 |
| 5 | I think monthly teacher attendance patterns impact the students'' academic routine | 50 | 13 | 25 | 10 | 2 | 2.98 | 0.80 |
| 6 | The availability of teachers on a monthly basis influences students' ability to seek help and clarification | 50 | 15 | 35 | 4 | 0 | 3.22 | 0.58 |
| | **Total Mean** | | | | | | **3.32** | **0.62** |

**Table 1b Mean on Academic Achievement of Students**

| S/No | Items | N | VHE | HE | LE | VLE | Mean | STD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Most of my students perform well in exams and tests | 332 | 107 | 125 | 48 | 52 | 2.86 | 1.04 |
| 2 | My students have a strong understanding of the course material taught in class | 332 | 63 | 181 | 80 | 8 | 2.90 | 0.72 |
| 3 | My student consistently completes their homework and assignment on time | 332 | 63 | 151 | 82 | 36 | 2.73 | 0.89 |
| 4 | My students actively participate in class discussions and activities | 332 | 100 | 142 | 82 | 8 | 3.01 | 0.80 |
| 5 | My student regularly engages in self-study to improve their academic performance | 332 | 99 | 92 | 81 | 60 | 2.69 | 1.08 |
| 6 | The feedback I provide to my students helps them improve their academic performance | 332 | 158 | 147 | 19 | 8 | 3.37 | 0.70 |
| 7 | My students effectively manage their time to balance studies and other activities | 332 | 68 | 132 | 76 | 56 | 2.64 | 0.99 |
| 8 | My students make good use of the learning resources available to them (e.g. library, online resources) | 332 | 51 | 105 | 140 | 36 | 2.52 | 0.88 |
| 9 | My students are highly motivated to learn and perform well in their studies | 332 | 56 | 146 | 106 | 24 | 2.70 | 0.83 |
| 10 | My students receive adequate support from their peers which positively impacts their academic achievement | 332 | 58 | 97 | 110 | 67 | 2.44 | 1.00 |
| | **Total Mean** | | | | | | **2.79** | **0.89** |

**Table 1c Correlation of relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State**

| | | Teachers Attendance Schedule | Academic Achievements of Students |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teachers Attendance Schedule | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .675* |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | | .016 |
| | N | 10 | 10 |
| Academic Achievements of Students | Pearson Correlation | .675* | 1 |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .016 | |
| | N | 10 | 10 |

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 1c shows the Pearson Correlation Coefficient for the Teachers Attendance Schedule and Academic Achievements of Students, yielding a Correlation Coefficient value of 0.675. Where the (r) = 0.675, and the P-value (p) = 0.016. The result shows $p < 0.05$ (α). This is a strong positive correlation, which means that when a high Teachers Attendance Schedule exists, there will equally be high Academic Achievements of Students and vice versa. As a result, there is a positive correlation of 0.675, implying that Teachers Attendance Schedule influences Academic Achievements of Students up to about 67.5% and as a result it can be deduced that there is a relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State.

**Research Question Two:** *Is there any relationship between subject allocation for teachers during staggered teachers' attendance and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State?*

**Table 2a Mean of Subject Allocation for Teachers During Staggered teachers' attendance**

| S/No | Subject allocation for teachers during staggered teachers' attendance | N | VHE | HE | LE | VLE | Mean | STD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | The variety of subjects allocated contribute to students' overall academic development | 50 | 22 | 25 | 3 | 0 | 3.38 | 0.60 |
| 2 | To what extent are grade allocations appropriate for meeting students' learning needs and abilities | 50 | 19 | 25 | 6 | 0 | 3.26 | 0.66 |
| 3 | The expertise of teachers in the allocated subjects contribute to students' understanding and success in those subjects | 50 | 33 | 16 | 1 | 0 | 3.64 | 0.53 |
| 4 | The allocation of subjects based on students' interests and preferences impact their engagement and motivation to excel academically | 50 | 18 | 27 | 4 | 1 | 3.24 | 0.69 |
| 5 | The consistency in grade allocation contribute to a smooth transition between academic levels for students | 50 | 17 | 30 | 3 | 0 | 3.28 | 0.57 |
| | **Total Mean** | | | | | | **3.36** | **0.61** |

**Table 2b Mean on Academic Achievement of Students**

| S/No | Items | N | VHE | HE | LE | VLE | Mean | STD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Most of my students perform well in exams and tests | 332 | 107 | 125 | 48 | 52 | 2.86 | 1.04 |
| 2 | My students have a strong understanding of the course material taught in class | 332 | 63 | 181 | 80 | 8 | 2.90 | 0.72 |
| 3 | My student consistently completes their homework and assignment on time | 332 | 63 | 151 | 82 | 36 | 2.73 | 0.89 |
| 4 | My students actively participate in class discussions and activities | 332 | 100 | 142 | 82 | 8 | 3.01 | 0.80 |
| 5 | My student regularly engages in self-study to improve their academic performance | 332 | 99 | 92 | 81 | 60 | 2.69 | 1.08 |
| 6 | The feedback I provide to my students helps them improve their academic performance | 332 | 158 | 147 | 19 | 8 | 3.37 | 0.70 |
| 7 | My students effectively manage their time to balance studies and other activities | 332 | 68 | 132 | 76 | 56 | 2.64 | 0.99 |
| 8 | My students make good use of the learning resources available to them (e.g. library, online resources) | 332 | 51 | 105 | 140 | 36 | 2.52 | 0.88 |
| 9 | My students are highly motivated to learn and perform well in their studies | 332 | 56 | 146 | 106 | 24 | 2.70 | 0.83 |
| 10 | My students receive adequate support from their peers which positively impacts their academic achievement | 332 | 58 | 97 | 110 | 67 | 2.44 | 1.00 |
| | **Total Mean** | | | | | | **2.79** | **0.89** |

**Table 2c Correlation of relationship between Subject Allocation for Teachers during Staggered teachers' attendance and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State**

| | | Subject Allocation for Teachers During Staggered teachers' attendance | Academic Achievements of Students |
|---|---|---|---|
| Subject Allocation for Teachers During Staggered teachers' attendance | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .194 |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | | .295 |
| | N | 10 | 10 |
| Academic Achievements of Students | Pearson Correlation | .194 | 1 |
| | Sig. (1-tailed) | .295 | |
| | N | 10 | 10 |

Table 2c shows the Pearson Correlation Coefficient for the Subject Allocation for Teachers During Staggered teachers' attendance variable and Academic Achievements of Students variable, yielding a Correlation Coefficient value of 0.194. Where the (r) = 0.194, and the P-value (p) = 0.295. The result shows $p > 0.05$ ($\alpha$). This is a weak positive correlation, and implies that where weak Subject Allocation for Teachers during Staggered teachers' attendance exists, there will equally be weak Academic Achievements of Students and vice versa. As a result, there is a positive but weak correlation of 0.194. This therefore summarizes that Subject Allocation for Teachers During Staggered teachers' attendance influences Academic Achievements of Students up to about 19.4%. Conversely, the P-value (p) = 0.295, which is greater than the 0.05 significance level reveals that there is not a statistically significant association between the variables of Subject Allocation for Teachers During Staggered teachers' attendance and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State.

**Research Hypothesis**

**Research Hypothesis one:** There is no significant relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State

**Table 3** Multiple Regression showing the relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State

| *Regression Statistics* | |
|---|---|
| Multiple R | 0.675 |
| R Square | 0.292 |
| Adjusted R Square | 0.349 |
| Standard Error | 0.105 |
| Observations | 382 |

The table 3 shows the *Regression Statistics* measuring the relationship between the variables for teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta South Senatorial District. The table revealed a Multiple R value of 0.675 indicating that there is strong positive correlation between the variable for teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement up to about 67.5%. The table also shows the R Square value of 0.292 indicating that teacher attendance

scheduling is responsible for students' academic achievement up to about 29.2%. The multiple regression therefore shows a strong positive relationship between teacher attendance scheduling and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Delta State

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The effective scheduling of teacher attendance can significantly impact student outcomes. However, the scheduling of teacher attendance involves trade-offs between reducing absenteeism and ensuring that students have access to their teachers this is in line with Zhu et al (2022) who agreed that teacher absence negatively affects students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in China.

The researcher note that teachers who taught subjects that matched their expertise had a positive impact on students' academic achievement. This is contrary to Awogbemi (2023) who showed that subject allocation had no significant impact on student academic achievement in public secondary schools in Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION

Research in the Delta South State public secondary schools reveals a link between teachers' staggered school attendance and their students' academic achievement. The study revealed that teacher consistency to class is a potent tool for determining students' academic performance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Schools should prioritize the development of effective attendance monitoring systems and policies that reward regular teacher attendance.
2. Schools should prioritize strategic subject allocation by ensuring that teachers are allocated subjects that match their expertise.

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