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A Comparative Analysis of Arabic Students' Performance in Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination in Ilorin-Metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ARABIC STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN MOCK AND BASIC EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION IN ILORIN-METROPOLIS, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The performance of students in a particular examination must have the ability to predict or be used as a yardstick for measuring their performance in another examination. This study focuses on a comparative analysis of Arabic students' performance in Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. All the Junior Secondary School III students in the metropolis constituted the study population, while all Arabic students that sat for both mock and BECE constituted the target population. Purposive and stratified sampling techniques were used to select the results of candidates that sat for Arabic in both the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination. Proforma was used to collect 1,286 candidates' results in the Mock and the BECE. The percentage was used to describe the demographic data of the respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested with the t-test statistics. The findings revealed that the students' general performance in both the MOCK and BECE Arabic is at credit level, and that significant difference exists between the performance of Arabic students' in the Mock and BECE. Generally, students' performance in both the MOCK and BECE was relatively high. The study recommended that Teachers of Arabic should put more efforts to sustain their students' performance in the subject. The students are encouraged not to take both the Mock and the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) with levity. They should complement the efforts of their parents, teachers, school administration and government by studying voraciously in order to sustain their performance so that they can come out with flying colours.

Key words: Arabic, Performance, Mock, Basic Education Certificate Examination

Introduction

The performance of students in a particular examination must have the ability to predict or be used as a yardstick for measuring their performance in another examination. As such, the performance of Junior Secondary School III students in the internal examinations (MOCK) could be used to predict their performance in the external examinations Basic Examination Certificate Examination (BECE).

The term "academic performance" has been described as the scholarstic standing of a student at a given moment (Adeyemi, 2018). It refers to how an individual is able to demonstrate his/her intellectual abilities. It is the actual accomplishment showing the learner's ability as measured by a score or an achievement test. It is the level of achievement a student attains. Adu, Ojelabi and Adeyanju (2019) asserted that academic performance can be viewed as an outcome of all academic tasks or rigours of a person

which could be poorly or successfully stated. Academic performance is generally referred to as the display of knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects (Busari, 2012; Nwokocha & Amadike, 2015).

Students' performance in examinations is an indication of the success or otherwise of the teaching-learning process. The factors that determine the academic performances of students are classified into two broad categories, namely: biological and environmental factors. Biological factor describes how intelligence affects academic performance while environmental factors describe how parents' socio-economic and educational status affect performance. In connection with the environmental factor, Olubadewo (2015) noted that the provision and maintenance of school facilities can have serious effects on students' performance.

Academic performance or achievement is a pedagogical term used to determine students' success in a formal school setting. It provides information about the learning abilities and capabilities of the learners (Denga, 1998). Olutola (2011) observed that students' academic performance can be considered in relation to their attitude, aptitude, ability or mental capability with co-students. Academic performance is an area that parents, teachers and national leaders have keen interests in. Nwokocha and Amadike (2015) opined that students' academic performance is the yardstick for testing the educational quality of a nation. Hence, it is expedient to maintain a high performance in both internal and external examinations.

The history of the Arabic Language in Nigeria is traceable to the centuries preceding the colonial era. The role of the then existing empires in the Western Sudan

towards the development of the language is notable in their socio-economic transactions. Those empires included Mali, Ghana, Songhai and the Kanem-Bornu and covered a larger portion of the present-day Northeastern States of Nigeria. The religion of Islam, which has its original divine scripture (Al-Qur'añ), revealed and preached in Arabic, enabled the spread of the language across the Muslim World (Abdullahi, 2020). An emperor, by name Umm Jilmi, who ruled Kanem-Bornu between 1085 and 1097 C.E, had a remarkable impact on the study of the Arabic Language in Nigeria.

According to Galadanci (2002), Umm Jilmi embraced Islam through his socio-economic contacts with Arab traders. The emperor influenced the widespread of Islam in his domain and thus promoted the development of the Arabic Language therein. His teacher was a Muslim scholar known as Muhammad Mani. At that time, the Arabic Language was used for transaction in commerce, religion, politics, administration, record keeping and communication among the indigenes and the Arabs (Oladosu, 1992). The same thing applicable in other empires founded in the then Western Sudan, thereby making the Arabic Language the lingua franca across the existing communities in the area (Abdullahi, 2020). It was the same experience in places like the old Sokoto Caliphate, the old Hausa Kingdom, and the old Ilorin Emirate. The Arabic Language was a medium of record keeping in those domains (Shittu, 2012). These justify the status of Arabic in the then empires and as it is corroborated by the fact that Arabic is acquired and spoken as a mother tongue (MT) by the Shuwa Arabs of Bornu State of Nigeria (Abdullahi, 2020).

The National Policy on Education stated that one of the objectives of secondary education

in Nigeria is to provide holders of the Basic Education Certificate (BEC), Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate (JASC), Senior Islamic Studies Certificate Examinations (SISCE) and National Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies (NBAIS) with the opportunity for education at a higher level, irrespective of gender, social status, religious or ethnic backgrounds. This can be achieved through the placement of an individual learner in an appropriate career opportunity such as Science and Mathematics, Technology, Humanities and Business Studies (FRN, 2013).

To achieve this specific objective, individual learners have to be assessed so as to ascertain the level at which the stated educational objectives were met. This assessment is in the form of formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation is the type of assessment conducted by individual institutions for their own use in evaluating the progress of the students in their custody. This assessment is in the form of tests, assignments, end-of-term examinations and end-of-session examinations which are used in most schools for making an internal decision. The situation with other levels of education (primary & tertiary) is not vastly different.

The second type of evaluation that operates in post-primary schools is the summative evaluation that is conducted by the agencies external to the school system. Gender is an important variable that is commonly associated with students' academic performance.

Gender is the natural attributes and qualities associated with being male or female and the mutual relationship that connects the sexes (Ewhrudjakpor, 2016). Saghir, Ashfaq (2015) defined gender as the roles and responsibilities of men and women and the relationship between them. Gender does not

simply refer to women or men, but to the way their qualities, behaviours and identities are determined through the process of socialization. Gender is the socially-constructed attributes, roles, values, responsibilities and needs connected to being masculine or feminine (CERMI, 2012). Gender and sex are at times used interchangeably but are distinct terms. Sex on the other hand describes the biological differences between male and female, which are universal and determined at birth with certain identifiable physical features which are fixed.

According to Olorundare and Derogba (2014), gender is referred to as stereotyping and it refers to a collection of commonly held beliefs or opinions about what are "appropriate" behaviours and activities for males and females. Studies that have been conducted on the influence of gender on students' academic performance arrived at different findings. Some found that gender has significant influence on students' academic performance, while others discovered that gender has no influence on students' performance. For example, Yahaya (2018), Abdullahi (2011) and (2020) found that gender has a significant influence on students' performance. To Olorundare and Derogba (2014) and Ashikhia (2010), gender has no significant influence on the performance of male and female students. On the basis of these inconsistencies in research findings, the researchers examined the relationship between students' academic performance in Arabic MOCK and BECE in Kwara State, Nigeria based on. School type is another variable that influences students' performance.

The influence of school type on students' performance has generated various opinions from scholars. Some scholars are of the opinion that one of the things that influences

students' performance is the school type. Empirical findings exist that school type poses challenge to teaching and learning. Schools are organised in order to create the conditions in which all members of the community come to see themselves as learners. Basically, there are two types of school which are public and private schools. Private schools are such that the government licensed enterprising individuals, religious bodies and organisations to operate with little or no control whereas public schools are the schools managed and controlled by the government. It has been discovered that private schools to some extent have good supply of instructional resources, good organisation, adequate planning and funding while the reverse is the case in most public schools.

There is a widely-held view that students who attended private schools perform better than those who attended public schools in diverse parts of the world. Adamako (2014) and Asante (2015) observed that the academic performance of private schools' students in Ghana has always been better than that of their counterparts in the public schools at the elementary level. The present study, therefore, intends to affirm or refute the assertion that the academic performance of private schools students is always better than their counterparts in public schools in Kwara state.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the general performance of Junior Secondary Arabic students in the Mock examination in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. What is the general performance of Junior Secondary in Arabic students in the Basic Education Certificate

Examination in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested:

- H₀₁:** There is no significant difference between Arabic students' performance in the Mock and in the BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.
- H₀₂:** There is no significant difference between Arabic male students' performance in the Mock and in the BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.
- H₀₃:** There is no significant difference between Arabic female students' performance in the Mock and in the BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.
- H₀₄:** There is no significant difference between Arabic students' performance in the public schools in the Mock and the BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.
- H₀₅:** There is no significant difference between Arabic students' performance in the private schools in the Mock and BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.

Methodology

This study was a descriptive survey type which was considered appropriate by the researchers to give systematic description of the comparative analysis of Arabic students' performance in the Mock and the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.

Researchers' designed Proforma was used to collect candidates' grades in both the Mock and BECE 2018/2019 academic session. The grades of both Mock and BECE are assumed to be products of standardised examinations norm reference.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	544	42.0
Female	742	58.0
Total	1286	100.0
School Type		
Public	1057	82.0
Private	229	18.0
Total	1286	100.0

Sample and Sampling Techniques

All the Junior Secondary School III students comprised the total population while all JSS III students that sat for Arabic in the MOCK and BECE constituted the target population. Purposive and stratified sampling techniques were used to select forty-three schools of which twenty-five are public and eighteen are private schools where students sat for Arabic in both the MOCK and BECE in the metropolis. Proforma was used to collect both MOCK and BECE Arabic results. 1,286 students' results were collected by the researchers and 3 research assistants. Percentage was used to describe the demographic data of the respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses

postulated were tested with the t-test statistics all at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Table 1: Demographic data of the Respondents

Table 1 shows that out of 1,286 students sampled for the study, 544 (42%) of the respondents were males and 742 (58%) were females. This implies that the majority of the respondents were females. Also, 1,057 (82%) of the respondents were from public schools and 229 (18%) were from private schools. This shows that majority of the respondents were from public schools.

Research Questions

Students who had A, C, P and F grades in Arabic in the Mock and the BECE examinations were scored 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The statistics of the students' performance in the Mock and BECE were used to provide answers to the research questions generated for the study.

Research Question One: *What is the general performance of Arabic students in the Mock examination in Arabic in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State?*

Table 2: General Performance of Students in the Arabic Mock Examination

Performance	N	Mean	S. D.	Minimum	Maximum
Mock	1286	2.81	0.72	1.00	4.00
Valid (listwise)	1286				

As shown in Table 2, the mean score of 2.81 with a maximum score of 4 and a minimum score of 1 was recorded. This shows that students' general performance in Arabic Mock examination is relatively high (Credit) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.

Question Two: *What is the general performance of Arabic students in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State?*

Table 3: General Performance of Arabic Students in B.E.C.E. Examination

Performance	N	Mean	S. D.	Minimum	Maximum
BECE	1286	2.86	0.689	1.00	4.00
Valid (listwise)	N 1286				

As shown in Table 3, the mean score of 2.86 with a maximum score of 4 and a minimum score of 1 was recorded. This shows that the general performance of students in (BECE) Arabic examination is relatively high (Credit) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 4: Paired t-test Showing the Difference between Students' Performance in the Mock and (BECE) Arabic

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig.	Remark
Mock	1286	2.81	0.69				
				1284	7.83	0.00	S
BECE	1286	2.86	0.72				

*Significant at $P < 0.05$

As shown in Table 4, the cal. t-value of 7.83 was obtained with a p-value of 0.00 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This signifies that there is a statistically significant difference between students' performance in Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination ($t_{(1284)} = 7.83$, $p < 0.05$). This difference was made by the

Inferential statistics of the paired t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses postulated for the study.

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference between Arabic students' performance in the Mock and the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).*

mean score of students' performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) which was higher (2.86) than the Mock Examination (2.81) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.

Hypothesis Two: *There is no significant difference in Arabic male students' performance in Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)*

Table 5: Paired t-test Showing the Difference between Arabic Male Students' Performance in the Mock and BECE

Male	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig.	Remark
Mock	544	2.74	0.77				
				542	5.84	0.00	S
BECE	544	2.81	0.73				

*Significant, $P < 0.05$

As shown in Table 5, the cal. t-value of 5.84 was obtained with a p-value of 0.00

computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of

significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a statistically significant difference between Arabic male students' performance in the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination ($t_{(542)} = 5.84, p < 0.05$). This difference was made by the mean score of male students' performance in the Basic Education

Certificate Examination (BECE) which was higher (2.81) than in the Mock Examination (2.74) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.

Hypothesis Three: *There is no significant difference between Arabic female students' performance in the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)*

Table 6: Paired t-test Showing the Difference between Arabic Female Students' Performance in the Mock and BECE

Female	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	Sig.	Remark
Mock	742	2.85	0.68	740	5.24	0.00	S
BECE	742	3.00	0.65				

*Significant, $P < 0.05$

As shown in Table 6, the cal. t-value of 5.24 was obtained with a p-value of 0.00 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This signifies that there is a statistically significant difference between Arabic female students' performance in the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination ($t_{(740)} = 5.24, p < 0.05$). This difference was made by the mean score of the female

students' performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) which was higher (3.00) than in Mock Examination (2.85) in the Metropolis, Kwara State.

Hypothesis Four: *There is no significant difference in the public Arabic School students' performance in the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)*

Table 7: Paired t-test Showing the Difference between Public Arabic School Students' Performance in the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)

Public	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal. value	Sig.	Remark
Mock	1057	2.78	0.73	1055	8.25	0.00	S
BECE	1057	2.84	0.69				

*Significant, $P < 0.05$

As shown in Table 7, the cal. t-value of 8.25 was obtained with a p-value of 0.00 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This signifies that there is a statistically significant difference between public Arabic

school students' performance in the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination ($t_{(1055)} = 8.25, p < 0.05$). This difference was made by the mean score of public school students' performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) which was

higher (2.84) than the Mock Examination (2.78) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State.

Hypothesis Five: *There is no significant difference between private Arabic School*

students' performance in the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)

Table 8: Paired t-test showing the Difference between Private Arabic School Students' Performance in Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)

Private	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	Sig.	Remark
Mock	229	2.96	0.73	227	2.23	1.00	NS
BECE	229	2.96	0.69				

*Significant at $P > 0.05$

As shown in Table 8, the t-value 2.23 was obtained with a p-value 1.00 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 1.00 is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis five is accepted. This shows that there is no statistically significant difference between private Arabic school students' performance in the Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination ($t_{(228)} = 2.23, p > 0.05$).

Discussion

The first finding of the study showed that the general performance of students in the Mock Arabic Examination was relatively high (Credit) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. This is supported by Adeyemi (2018) who found that students perform well in internal examinations. The finding also aligned with the submission of Abdullahi (2011) Yahaya (2018) and Abdullahi (2020) that students' performance in Arabic Language was generally good. Saadu (2017) found that the general knowledge of Arabic Language among undergraduates in the Universities of Ilorin was relatively high.

The second finding showed that the general performance of students in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) Arabic Examination was relatively high (Credit) in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. This finding

negated Adeyemi (2018) who stated that students record poor performance in external examinations. The first two findings showed that there is a difference between the performance of students in Mock and Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Arabic in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. This is similar to the findings of Suleiman (2015) on the effectiveness of the performance of internal examination on the performance in external examination at the end of the study period. This study established the fact that performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) is almost equal to the students' performance in the Mock. However, a better performance was recorded in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). It then means that students tend to replicate the feat achieved in Mock in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).

The third finding revealed that there was a significant difference in students' performance in the Mock and the BECE examinations. This is in line with the finding of Obioma and Salau (2017) who found that there is a significant relationship between students' performance in public examinations and their performance in the higher institution. As shown from the analysis of the first hypothesis in table 4, the

t-value 7.83 was obtained with a p-value of 0.00 computed at 0.05 alpha level.

The fourth finding revealed that there was a significant difference in male students' performance in the Mock and BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. The finding agrees with the finding of Bala and Mohammed (2016) who found that there was a significant difference in the performance of male students in internal and external examination. They opined that male students perform better than the female.

The fifth finding revealed that there was a significant difference in female students' performance in Arabic Mock and BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. This finding agrees with that of Musa and Abdullahi (2018) that there is a difference in the female students' performance in languages. They further stressed that females perform better than their male counterpart academically.

The sixth finding revealed that there was a significant difference in public school students' performance in Mock and BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. The finding negates that of Suleiman (2015) that there is a significant relationship between the overall performance of students in external examinations and internal examinations as the public students' performance of this research in Mock is significantly different from that of the Basic Education Certificate Examination.

The seventh finding revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in private school students' performance in Mock and BECE in Ilorin-metropolis, Kwara State. The finding agrees with the finding of Igbiniedion and Epumepu (2011) that there was a notable difference in the performance of private school students in Ovia South LGA of Edo State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

The performance of students in Mock tends to serve as a yardstick for measuring their performance in Basic Examination Certificate Examination BECE. It could be said that students who score above average in Mock will more often than not score above average in (BECE). There is a notable influence of gender on the academic performance of students in Arabic language. The school type of students also influences their performance: Private school students' better performance may be as a result of more challenging grounds for academic activities made available for their students. Hence, the performance of private school students in both Mock and BECE tend to be constant.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The teachers should keep up their good work as the findings of this research proved that the teachers are working in that students' performance in Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) surpasses that of the Mock. The teachers should therefore intensify their efforts most especially in the area of Mock. They should use past questions from Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) to set their Mock examinations and coach the students intensely in preparing them for Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE).
2. Teachers of Arabic should put more efforts to sustain their students' performance in the two related subjects.
3. Arabic teachers should improve on the method of teaching Arabic grammar as a necessary tool to comprehend both

the Qur'an and Hadith of the Holy Prophet.

4. School administrators should make Arabic a compulsory subject for Muslim students and encourage them to speak the language in the school.
5. The state government and other relevant stakeholders should provide the necessary facilities needed by the school and the as well motivate the teachers in cash and in kind so that they can carry out their duties efficiently and effectively especially when Arabic is an elective subject across the level.
6. The students in particular are encouraged not to take both the Mock and the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) with levity. They should complement the efforts of their parents, teachers, school administration and government by studying voraciously in order to ensure that they come out with flying colours.

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