Influence of Music Teachers' knowledge of Subject Matter on Students' Academic Performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis

By

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Abstract

The influence of music teachers' knowledge of subject matter is crucial to their role as contributors to the overall well-being of society. As mentors and role models, the quality of a music teacher is dependent on their competency, making it essential to evaluate this aspect. But despite this knowledge there is a significant decreased enrolment of music students in senior secondary schools who is really responsible. The present study aims to explore the influence of music teachers' knowledge of subject matter on students' academic performance. Using a descriptive survey method and proportionate stratified random sampling technique, the study assessed music teachers' knowledge of subject matters' variables, guided by two research questions Two groups were selected from music teachers and students, and the data was analysed using mean and standard deviation, with the Likert scale rating. The study adopted the Blooms Taxonomy of Learning Domain. The study revealed that a music teacher's knowledge of subject matter is an essential quality that any teacher who wishes to impact the Society should develop. They should use various

teaching methods that aid understanding of the subject matter, gain mastery of the subject matter by staying abreast of the changes happening globally in the music industry, and relate it to the students in the classroom. The study concludes that 42.8% of music teachers have influence of knowledge of subject matter on students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis. As such, the study recommends that experienced teachers should be given opportunities to teach in their subject areas, and only competent teachers on both the subject matter and pedagogy should be employed to teach music as education requires competent teachers. Teachers should also improve their teaching skills and techniques to enhance students' understanding of the concept of study, among others.

Introduction

The state of music education in Nigerian basic schools has been a cause for concern for quite some time. Ekwueme (2009) highlights that this is primarily due to the fact that the music teaching profession is not highly regarded in society, resulting in a limited pool of candidates. Additionally, there is a shortage of suitable assessment tools which leads to insufficient periodic evaluation of music instructors. Therefore, it is necessary to periodically assess the influence and performance of music teachers. A music teacher has a significant influence on the learner because the teacher's mastery of the subject matter is a prerequisite for effective teaching. In his study on teacher competence and student achievement, Sahan (2009) emphasized that the basic areas of teacher competence include mastery of the subject matter, understanding of human nature, interest in continued professional improvement, and knowledge of how to apply the principles of teaching.

Taebel (1990) agrees with this sentiment, stating that evaluating music teachers without considering the uniqueness of their subject is unfair. He asserts that music teachers should be evaluated in a way that is sensitive to the unique features of music teaching and learning. Taebel argues that the common perspective on teaching, the explicit instruction model, relies on criteria that are not suitable for music teaching. Therefore, he recommends improvements in current evaluation

systems to make them fairer for music teachers. These improvements include using an objective classroom observation instrument, including examples of music teaching in the observer manual, training observers to discuss and observe music classes, accounting for the difficulties of using the observation tool in a music performance class, and listing behaviors that are important in evaluating a music teacher's classroom performance, such as demonstration, accuracy of error detection, and appropriateness of feedback.

The teacher plays a crucial role in the lives of students and society. If a teacher imparts incorrect information or knowledge, it could negatively impact generations to come. A music teacher has a significant influence on the learner, as their mastery of the subject matter is necessary for effective teaching. Music is a subject designed to enable students to learn and develop fundamental skills in playing musical instruments, creating and appreciating sound, and translating all of it into a meaningful venture that could be of personal and societal use. Currently, music curriculum has been combined with visual art to become Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA) in junior secondary school, but remains a separate subject in senior secondary school. This highlights the importance of a music teacher's mastery of subject matter in raising students' academic performance standards in schools and society. Secondary education is a stage that comes after primary education in the educational system and is designed to prepare students for higher education and useful living in society. Solomon (2018) believes that the future of any nation depends considerably on the quality of secondary education provided to citizenry, which is dependent on the quality of teaching provided by teachers among other factors. Ahmad and Khan (2016) believe that teachers play an imperative role in developing and molding a child's character for the future, and that no country can go beyond the level of its teachers. Consequently, the role of teachers in a child's life through teaching cannot be understated. Nye and Nye (1985) assert that a serious music student should have a good teacher and a strong background in theory and harmony, as music is a challenging subject that doesn't lend itself to self-teaching if not well-prepared. Therefore, it is essential to employ qualified and competent music teachers. Taiwo and James (2015) state that teaching as a scientific process involves systematic planning and programming of instruction and experience, using technological tools to lead students to acquire specific novel and worthwhile knowledge, skills,

attitudes, and competence for building the total man (mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual). Vandermeer (2006) maintains that when a teacher is experienced, such a teacher is in a better position to handle contingencies in both in the classroom and the laboratory. Well not many studies have been carried out on music teachers' knowledge of subject matter in Port Harcourt Metropolis, although several studies have been written to suggest factors that could foster Music teachers' influence.

Statement of the study

It has been observed that there is a significant decline in music enrolment among students in senior secondary schools following their completion of junior secondary school. Furtherly, observations of students who have had the privilege of being taught music reveal that many express regret over not having a strong foundation in music, which would have encouraged them to pursue the subject in senior secondary school and beyond. This raises the question of who is responsible for inspiring students to pursue music as a career. In light of this, the researcher sought to examine the underlying reasons for this poor enrolment in selected secondary schools within the Port Harcourt metropolis. To this end, a set of objectives were developed which aimed at evaluating the music teachers' years of experience, ascertaining their knowledge of the subject matter, as well as the performance of their students in music.

The focus of this study is to evaluate the variables that could probe music teachers' influence on students' academic performance in the Port Harcourt metropolis.

Objective of the study

The major objective of this study is to evaluate the music teachers' influence of knowledge of subject matter on students' academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Find out the extent music teachers' years of Experience influence music students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis.
2. Ascertain the extent music teachers' knowledge of subject matter influences music students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formed to guide the study:

i. To what extent do music teachers' years of experience influence music students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis?
ii. How does music teachers' knowledge of subject matter influence music students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis?

Music teacher

A teacher is a trained, certificated, registered and licensed professional who attended a teacher training institution and successfully completed its prescribed teacher education programmes in the art and science of teaching his or her specialist teaching subject(s) at a particular level of the educational system (Adegoke, 2010). A teacher is a person who provides education for pupils (children) and students (adults). A teacher is an expositor, one that is gifted with the ability to break difficult things down into simple elements and present them in a clear and logical manner. He takes his students seriously, preparing outlines for their study, and teaching them for the long haul rather than for their immediate gratification (Jorgensen, 2008).

Omirin (2001) cited in Omirin (2004) stated that the quality of teachers is one important factor in the school system, which influences the performance of students.

As with every art, teaching incorporates techniques and skills. There is the need for teacher education to produce self-motivated teachers who will continually seek solutions to problems facing them in the classroom, who will not wait for government or external aid to implement change (Otuka, 2001).

Music Education is a very viable and important course. According to Rod (2005):

> It instils in students the habit of mind that lasts a lifetime; critical analysis skills, the ability to deal with ambiguity and to solve problems, perseverance and a drive for excellence. The creative and skilled child developed through the arts, carries them toward new ideas, new experiences and new challenges, not to mention personal satisfaction. This is the intrinsic value of the arts, and it cannot be overestimated.

Going by the above submission, music education is a non-negotiable education that helps produce the ideal child for societal productivity. According to Tuner (1921) in Okafor (2005), the significance of music and its interconnections with other arts is evident in that:

> Nothing is more difficult for the unmusical person to believe that music expresses thought… It is this imagination of a point or a straight line, this imagination of ideas, which is the real stuff of thought. This imagination may be expressed in words, in form and colour, or in sound. It is thus that we get the three arts of literature, the Fine Arts, and Music Fundamentally; they deal with the same stuff of imagination (p.190).

Although, Music is a subject that is one of the most consistently threatened to be terminated in our schools, (Tristan,2009). To this end, Music educators need to strive for competency in other to preserve their noble field of study from extinction.

Domains of learning in Education

Educators usually use Bloom's Taxonomy to develop learning outcomes. Bloom's Taxonomy comprises three learning domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor, and assigns to each of these domains a hierarchy that corresponds to different levels of learning. According to Hoque (2016),

> The cognitive domain contains learning skills predominantly related to mental (thinking) processes. Learning processes in the cognitive domain include a hierarchy of skills involving processing information, constructing understanding, applying knowledge, solving problems, and conducting research. The affective domain involves our feelings, emotions and attitudes. This domain includes how we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasm, motivations, and attitudes. Psychomotor objectives are those specific to discreet physical functions, reflex actions and interpretive movements. The psychomotor domain is comprised of utilizing motor skills and coordinating them. P. 46-50

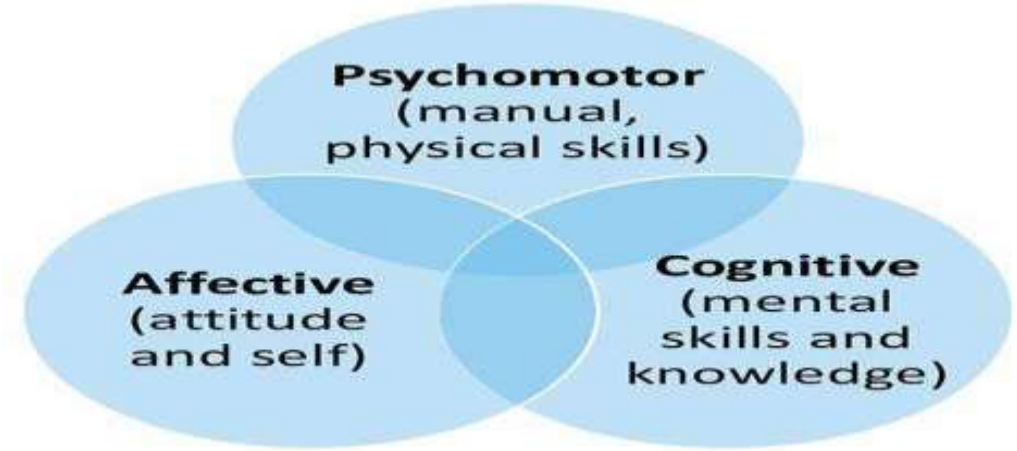


Figure 2.3: Domain of learning (McKenzie et. al., 2017)
Education is the attainment of knowledge and skills for cognitive, affective and psychomotor development.

Music teachers' Knowledge of the Subject Matter (Cognitive Competence)
Sahan (2009) in his study on teacher's competence and student's achievement underscored that the basic areas of teacher competence include mastery of subject matter, understanding of human nature, interest in continued professional improvement and knowledge of availability to apply the principles of teaching.

In Huitt's (1995) model, as cited in odunuga (2018) these are labelled Input variables. The subcategory of teacher characteristics includes specific competencies which include such variables as cognitive, affective. psychomotor and pedagogical. These are further broken down to knowledge and understanding of music, attitude and interest in music, ability to play musical instrument and ability to teach music.

Ogundare (2001) stated that music teachers who are fully qualified in music subject areas exhibit a significant relationship to an increase in academic achievement of music students in public secondary schools in Ekiti.

Chau (1996) states that "classroom observations in the different countries show that certain teachers have an insufficient mastery of the subject matter they teach.

In addition, many of them lack the pedagogical know-how required for good presentation of the material."



A picture of a comptent teacher using interactive whiteboard
Plate 2.1: Interactive Whiteboard in Music Classroom
Source: https://scholarlyoa.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Interactive-WhiteBoards768x512.jpg

Music Teachers' Method of Teaching (Pedagogical Competence)

In education, the teaching method is the approach used by a teacher to achieve desired learning outcomes. This includes organizing subject matter, utilizing teaching techniques, tools, and materials to meet teaching objectives. According to Ekweume (2010), teaching as a scientific process involves systematic planning and programming of instruction and experience, and the use of technological tools to help students acquire specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies for building total human development (mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual). Therefore, student academic performance is evaluated using multiple criteria, such as flexibility, creativity, adaptability, survival, satisfaction, interpersonal relationships, and positive psychological commitment of group members as stated by Robert (2007).

Etuk, Udosen, and Edem (2004) define teacher methodology as the systematic procedure in teaching, which includes the selection and organization of content, specifying the roles assigned to the teacher, and the student in the classroom encounter, and defining the types and function of teaching materials in each teaching situation. According to Igwebuike (2008), teachers' methodology is the approach, strategy, style, or process by which the teacher presents content to the student or directs the interaction patterns to achieve the stated objectives.

The Demonstration and Modelling Methods

Demonstration and modelling are visual teaching styles which allow pupils to see, imitate and practice repeatedly for skills acquisition in performing music. Learning takes place by observing expert's behaviour for repetition or practice Citing Syah (2003), Ramadhan and Surya (2017), state that "demonstration method is a method of teaching by demonstrating things, events, rules, and sequence of activities, either directly or through using instructional media which is relevant to the subject matter or material that will be presented".

The Discussion Method

In the teaching and learning environment, discussion is a conversation between the teacher and pupils, and among pupils, providing them with opportunity to share and express their views, ideas and opinion on what is being discussed, and also to listen to one another. It is a method which is integrated in almost all the other methods of teaching. With the discussion method, the teacher leads and guides the whole class in talking to each other about musical issues of mutual concern. The discussion method of teaching can be described as a process of verbal interaction between two or more people that covers the consideration of a topic or problem being studied. According to Tamakloe et al. (2005) discussions occur at brief intervals within demonstration and during the use of other methods of teaching in the classroom. As a consequence, the discussion method of teaching can be used effectively after showing pupils, for example, a video of a musical performance or listening to music to reinforce musical learning. It allows pupils to be more articulate about musical issues, enhances their oral communication skills, enhances their listening abilities, and gives them practice in democratic processes. It may, however, utilise a relatively longer period of time as majority of pupils in the class may want to contribute to the on-going discussion. The discussion

method may also be difficult to use well as it presupposes adequate advance preparation

Video Showing Method This is a method of teaching that brings realism into the classroom. Through the use of videos, musical concepts are demonstrated and illustrated to pupils in the classroom in a neat and exiting package. Citing Gardner (2000), Ljubojevic, Vaskovic, Stankovic and Vaskovic 2014) state that "videos are a tool for engaging … musical (rhythmic) intelligence of the student in the learning process." Videos "provide visual context and thus bring another sense into the learning experience. to pupils. Using a real life event such as the performance of Kete (a traditional Ghanaian music and dance type of the Akan-speaking people) during the enthronement of a royal personage may not be possible due to the processes associated with the event. An alternative approach is to create an opportunity for learners to observe such a performance by showing a video recording of such events in the classroom. This brings a sense of realism into the music class and gives pupils the opportunity to observe aspects of socio-cultural practices which are not otherwise easily accessible. It also enables the teacher to teach certain musical concepts that cannot be easily demonstrated or explained to learners. The teacher may not demonstrate body gestures associated with the Kete music and dance performances and, therefore, using video in the classroom becomes a viable alternative. In a sense, this arrangement provides the necessary experience to the learner for further self- exploration and self-learning. It also fits well in an environment where knowledge construction is socially mediated.

The Role-Play Method

As an approach to teaching music, role-play provides pupils with opportunity to act parts in an event. Pupils play various roles during a musical-play. It is important for teachers to take advantage of this inherent behaviour of pupils when planning music lessons to assign them (pupils) various roles to develop their skills in singing, dancing and playing of musical instruments in an ensemble. This allows pupils to collaborate with their peers, learn from one another and develop their interpersonal skills.



The role play method with students taking roles as they make music
Source: Akpan Isaac Aniefiok, research survey 2023

The Field Trip Method

Field trip creates space for the construction of knowledge through both self-discovery and contributions from the teacher and the learner. It is a practice of taking pupils from the normal classroom to a real life situation site for first-hand observations about what they have studied in the classroom. It "allows students to put the concepts and ideas discussed in class in a realworld context" Alam (2016). A school teacher in the Anambra state of Nigeria, for example, may take his students to observe music performances during the New Yam Festival of the people of igboSuch an educational exercise will provide pupils with the opportunity to learn about the traditional music associated with the festival. In no doubt, such experiences will contribute significantly to the students' acquisition of skills and understanding of their musical culture.

Music Teachers' Years of Experience (Psychomotor Competence)

Carr (2005), however, perceives the experience of teachers as those who have taught for many years and are able to motivate students and hold their attention, know how to manage their classroom effectively. Beyond doubt, the news of teachers' experience seems to hinge predominantly on the number of years taught, time-related criteria can range from 2 years or 3 years to 9 years or more. This view may not be true in all circumstances, especially in light of the fact that the numbers of years alone may not be matched with expert instruction. According to Persegian (2007), the length of time a teacher spends in the teaching job may determine the ability to teach effectively. This also would determine the psychomotor competence of the teacher which also implies the teachers' years of experience. Vandermeer (2006) maintains that when a teacher is experienced, such a teacher is in a better position to handle contingencies both in the classroom and the laboratory. An experienced music teacher will be able to calculate time, set the stage, and arrange the studio for the students to receive the prepared lesson. This is corroborated by Nwosu (2008) who said that the subject may be well worth knowing but nevertheless worth teaching because, in the time available, most students will learn nothing from it.

Odunuga (2016), futher stressed that:

> The competencies of individuals consist of groups of proficiencies, which are made up of clusters of knowledge structures, cognitive, interactive, emotional, and where necessary psychomotor skills and attitudes and values which are necessary for, performing tasks, solving problems, and more generally the ability to function in a particular occupation, organisation and position role.(p.9).

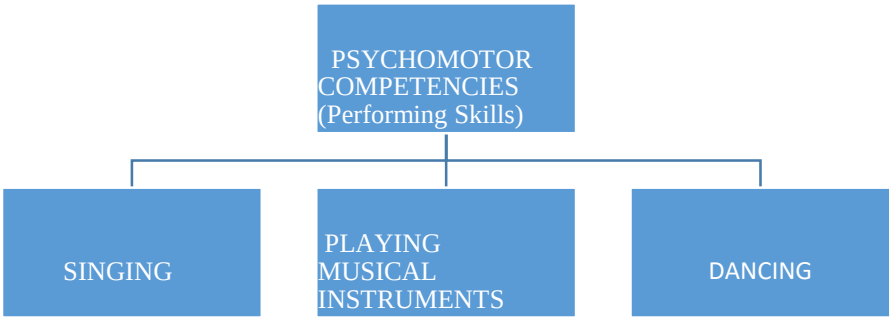


Figure 2.5: Psychomotor competence of the music teacher

Source: Odunuga (2016)

Psychomotor competence involves performing skills of the music teacher. This is divided into: Singing, playing musical instruments and dancing. Singing competence is inherent in the teachers' display of tonal stability, expressive quality, rhythmic accuracy, melodic accuracy, good articulation and motor reaction. Competence in playing either Western or African musical instruments involves melodic accuracy, rhythmic accuracy, articulation, tone clarity and expressive quality. Dancing include appropriateness of the dance, originality, good coordination, types and variety of moves. General psychomotor competencies includes: (i) Clear articulation (ii) Motor reaction (iii) Performing skill and (iv) Coordination of moves. Odunuga (2016)

Specific skill competence

Singing	Tonal Stability	Expressive Quality	Rhythmic Accuracy	Articulation	Motor Reaction
Playing Musical Instruments	Melody Accuracy	Rhythm Accuracy	Articulation	Tone Clarity	Expressive Quality

Source: Odunuga (2016)

Dancing	Appropriateness	Originality	Good Coordination	Types of moves	Varieties of Moves

Blooms Taxonomy of Learning Domain

Bloom's Taxonomy is a widely recognized framework that classifies educational objectives into three domains: cognitive, psychomotor and affective. This framework was designed to evaluate behavioural changes in students and to develop tests that measure their learning outcomes. Each domain consists of a hierarchy of levels, with the cognitive domain being the most widely used. According to Bloom (1956) as cited in Odunuga (2018) the cognitive domain is concerned with knowledge and abilities and consists of six classes: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The psychomotor domain, on the other hand, focuses on physical skills and abilities, and comprises six hierarchical levels: reflex movements, basic fundamental movements, perceptual abilities, physical abilities, skilled movements, and non-discursive communication. Finally, the affective domain deals with emotional states, attitudes, interests, and feelings, and is organized into five levels arranged hierarchically: receiving (attending), responding, valuing, organization, and characterization by a value or value context. This framework is widely used in educational settings to evaluate the effectiveness of learning outcomes and to develop appropriate evaluation tools. The theory is therefore employed in the study because it probes the music teachers' knowledge of the subject matter on students' academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Research Design

This study adopted descriptive research design. Ajoku (2006) explains that descriptive research describes "what is" by recording, analysing and interpreting conditions that exist. The approach requires going into the field, collecting data to answer research questions or test certain hypotheses in the study. It also made use of primary and secondary sources. The primary source includes materials gotten from the selected secondary schools in the Port Harcourt Metropolis via questionnaire and observation, while the secondary source includes library materials such as text books, journals, google scholars, etc.

Research Questions

i. To what extent do music teachers' years of experience influence music students' academic performance inthe Port Harcourt Metropolis?
ii. How does music teachers' knowledge of subject matter influence music students' academic performance in the Port Harcourt Metropolis?

Findings

Table 4.1: A table showing the percentages of teachers' years of experience and how it influences the students' academic performance in Port Harcourt metropolis.

Teachers' Year of Experience

Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
0-5 years	4	30.8
6-10 years	3	23.1
11-15 years	1	7.7
16-20 years	1	7.7
20 years & above	4	30.8
Total	13	100

FIELD SURVEY 2023

The table above also presents the teachers years of experience in teaching the subject it shows that 30.8% have 0-5 years of experience, 23.1% have 6-10 years of experience,7.7% have 11-15 years of experience,7.7% have 16-20 years of experience and 30.85 have 20 years & above years of experience. This implies that most of the teachers in junior secondary schools in Port Harcourt metropolis of Rivers State are experienced in teaching the subject.

Table 4.2: How teachers' knowledge of subject matter influences the students' academic performance.

Item Descriptions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision

My music teachers' knowledge of music impacts my learning	140	4.3	0.92682	Accept
My music teacher makes lessons challenging and engaging for all	140	3.7071	1.32218	Accept
My music teachers' knowledge of music makes us interested in asking questions in class and out of class	140	4.0429	1.13715	Accept
My music teacher knows music very well	140	4.3571	0.96015	Accept
My music teacher's mastery of music makes me aspire to become a better musician	140	4.0929	1.15613	Accept
My music teacher can play any instrument and sing any song perfectly	140	3.9714	1.11847	Accept
My music teacher is proficient in playing instruments, theory, history of music	140	4.0286	1.15642	Accept
My music teacher comes to the classroom with teaching aids that make the class interesting	140	3.8714	1.23988	Accept
My music teacher assigns practice exercise and historical books to read in other to help us understand music more	140	3.6214	1.35958	Accept
My music teachers encourage me to do better in music theory performance	140	4.2571	1.04827	Accept

FIELD SURVEY,2023

The table above shows the respondents' perception on how music teachers' knowledge of the subject matter affects the student's academic performance in Port Harcourt Metropolis. All items present mean above the criterion mean of 3.0 as follows: My music teachers' knowledge of music impacts my learning (Mean=4.3; SD=0.92682). My music teacher makes lessons challenging and engaging for all (Mean=3.7071; SD=1.32218). My music teachers' knowledge of music makes us interested in asking questions in class and out of class

(Mean=4.0429; SD=1.13715). My music teacher knows music very well (Mean=4.3571; SD=0.96015). My music teacher's mastery of music makes me aspire to become a better musician (Mean=4.0929; SD=1.15613). My music teacher can play any instrument and sing any song perfectly (Mean=3.9714; SD=1.11847). My music teacher is proficient in playing instruments, theory, history of music (Mean=4.0286; SD=1.15642). My music teacher comes to the classroom with teaching aids that make the class interesting (Mean=3.8714; SD=1.23988).My music teacher assigns practice exercise and historical books to read in other to help us understand music more (Mean=3.6214; SD=1.35958).My music teachers encourage me to do better in music theory performance (Mean=4.2571;SD=1.04827).

Summary of Findings

After the analysis, the following major findings were made: The study reveals that 30.8% have 0-5 years of experience, 23.1% have 6-10 years of experience,7.7% have 11-15 years of experience,7.7% have 16-20 years of experience and 30.85 have 20 years & above years of experience. And by observation 42.8 percent are actually experienced which is average. This implies that more experienced teachers should be employed.

Secondly the study also reveals that: The mean is above 3.0 to all the questions asked on music teachers' knowledge of subject matter on students' academic performance in the Port Harcourt Metropolis, which implies that the music teachers are competent, but further observation reveals that only about 42.8 percent actually have mastery on music as a knowledge of subject matter.

The study finds out that the music teachers years of experience and mastery of knowledge of subject matter can influence the students, spurring their desire to pursue career in music studies and will result to a change in the perception of the society.

Therefore, professional as a music teacher in today's global market requires that the individual music teacher should be competent in whichever area of music. This include- sound knowledge of the subject matter, years of experience, needed for effectiveness in teaching. Music teachers' mastery of the knowledge of subject matter is key to effective teaching, foundation raising of the ideal child. The ideal

student growth would be encouraged by a competent teacher, equally the society stands to benefit maximally because of the impact of the teacher from the trained students. It is based on the finding that the study concludes that evaluating music teacher's competency demands a need for improvement in the teacher's philosophy, personality traits, 21st century teaching method, Mastery of subject matter. The researcher further recommends that teachers should improve on their teaching skills and techniques to enhance students' understanding of the concept of the subject matter.

Conclusion

This section discusses the result of the analysis as obtained from the research questions. The results show that the music teachers' years of experience and mastery of knowledge of subject matter have great influence on the students' academic performance, but only about 42.8 percent meets the requirement for effectiveness in teaching.

Based on the findings of this study, it is therefore concluded that teacher's Influence of years of experience, knowledge of subject matter,is a major determinant of success in the teaching of music in schools. That is if the teacher is competent in handling the subject both in theory and practice.

Recommendations

The study offers the following recommendations:

1. Experienced teachers should be given opportunities to teach in their subject Area.
2. Only competent teachers on both the subject matter and pedagogy should be employed to teach music, since education requires competent teachers.
3. Teachers should also improve on their teaching skills and techniques to enhance student's understanding of the concept of the study.

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