

**THE IMPACT OF STUDENTS' CHARACTERISTICS ON THE
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN EDO STATE (A CASE STUDY OF OVIA NORTH-EAST LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA)**

BY

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**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

OCTOBER, 2023

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF
EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
(EDUCATION) DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE.**

OCTOBER, 2023

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned certify that this project work was carried out by **Favour Esele EDOH** with matriculation number **EDU1804004** of the Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Universality of Benin, Benin City in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc. (Ed.) in Educational Political Science

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DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to God Almighty for granting me wisdom, knowledge, understanding, guidance, and protection, love, mercy and good health of mind and body throughout the period of this work and my stay in this institution.

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The researcher sincerely want thank God almighty, her Heavenly Father who never left her side throughout her stay in this school, She is extremely grateful for his kindness, mercy, love, provision, protection ,guidance and so many things he has done in my life during the course of my studies in University of Benin .

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to investigate the impact of students' characteristics on the academic performance of senior secondary schools in randomly selected schools in Ovia North-East local government area of Edo State. Poor performance has been the order of the day over the years in public senior secondary schools' examinations. It was observed that many interacting factors may cause poor performance of students in secondary schools. Student characteristics such as age, career choice, gender, study time, class attendance being amongst the factors were referred to as student characteristics. The objective of this study was to determine the influence of students' characteristics (age, career choice, gender, study time and class attendance) on academic performance of senior secondary school. Five research questions were raised to guide the study.

Stratified random technique sampling was used to select schools for the study. Two hundred and thirty-seven (237) students registered from five (5) selected public senior secondary schools were used to carry out the study. The item on the questionnaire was developed based on the objectives of the study. Data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative method where descriptive statistics including mean, frequency, percentages as well as standard deviation were used.

It was observed that students' age, career choice, gender, study times and class attendance influence students' performance in senior secondary school. The study shows that (37.1%) were 17 years old, also majority of student (29.5%) would wish to pursue medical related career while the highest mean performance of (61.4571). It was also observed that female had the highest population of (54.4%) and the mean performance score of (59.0370). (37.9%) of respondent choose home and holiday as their convenient study time and had the highest mean score of (76.8890), and finally students who attended classes regularly were (69.6%) and had highest mean score of (53.6667). Counsellors should be employed in public senior secondary schools who will in-turn guide the students towards making a better career choice. However, there were significant relationship between students' characteristics and academic performance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The problem of students' underachievement in secondary schools in Nigeria has been a much-discussed educational issue. In solving any problem, it is pertinent to understand the causes of such problems. Many causes have been studied and advanced as the etiological starting point for investigating the phenomena of students' failure or success. These causes are looked into from several perspectives including the role of the students, teachers, parents, school environment, society and Government. Learning outcomes are influenced by many factors and therefore, many interacting factors such as social and economic factors may cause the poor performance of students in Edo State. Students' characteristics such as student age, career choice, gender, study times and class attendance being among the factors that formed the basis of this study.

Most students begin their career with a desire to learn and with an intrinsic approach to achievement, which later switches to a more extrinsic orientation as students increase in age. Mature students were rather more likely than younger students to adopt a deep approach or a meaning orientation towards their academic work and was conversely less likely than younger students to adopt a surface

approach or a reproducing orientation. The level of career aspiration usually affects curriculum choice hence career choice. At the same time, career aspirations are influenced by numerous factors including gender, race, parental support, academic achievement, socio-economic status, and self-esteem (Peter, *et al.*, 2014).

Several studies have documented that female students have lower self-efficacy compared to male students. Girls' capabilities may be undermined by sex-role stereotypes in many cultures intimating that females are not as able as males, especially in science related disciplines. This difference in treatment through education created and sustained gender gap, which also became visible in several related disciplines. In a related development, it was also found that good study skills and habits are fundamental for student's academic performance. Concerning study time, better study times characterized the over-achieving group, implying that higher achievement required a systematic and planned approach to preparing lessons, a proper distribution of time, careful attention in the classroom, taking of meaningful notes and formation of expressive answers. In general, over achievers are those who had better study times. However, poor and bad study times were not solely responsible for under achievement.

Attendance is the amount of time a student participates in class activities. It is worthy to note that class attendance is an important aspect in improving student's performance. Students who attend less classes tend to earn lower final scores.

Ayodele (2017) stated that missing class has an adverse effect on performance only for more able students. He further reported that there seems to be no effect of missing class for lower ability students. Hence, the research seeks to ascertain the impact of students' characteristics on the academic performance in secondary schools in Edo State.

Statement of Problem

Academic performance is a major issue in the teaching-learning process. Good Education does not happen by chance. It is a product of effective teaching and learning coupled with the effort of school heads, the students, parents and their environment. Students tend to perform poorly in the class and in national exams due to some variable factors. And this has led to a drastic drop in the quality of education in secondary schools in Edo State. It is on this note that various researchers have observed that other variable factors such as age, gender, study time, class attendance and career choice have a great impact on students' academic performance. This would lead us to ask a viable but important question pertaining to this problem. To what extent have these variable factors influence the academic performance of students in secondary school?

Research Questions

To guide this study, the following research questions were raised

1. Does age affect students' academic performance?
2. What is the impact of career choice on students' academic performance?
3. Does gender affect students' academic performance?
4. Does study time affect students' academic performance?
5. Does class attendance affect students' academic performance?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of students' characteristics on the academic performance of senior secondary school in Ovia North-East Local Government Area of Edo state.

This study will look into the effects of age, career choice, gender, study time and class attendance as student characteristics.

Significance of the Study

The study will spur parents, to be aware of factors that may determine the academic performance of students, and to identify the limiting factors that hamper optimum performance of their children. The study will help the Edo state Government to identify pertinent issue that are currently militating against the performance of senior secondary school student in Edo state and act accordingly in order to bring about improvement in the academic performance of students.

It is also important to the curriculum planners and classroom teachers in that it clearly shows that their ability to influence the students positively as well as their personality is vital necessities in the development of positive choice toward students' academic performance.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study examined the impact of students' characteristics on academic performance of Senior Secondary School student in Edo State. It covered only the senior students (SS2) of the five-public senior secondary schools in Ovia North-East Local Government of Edo state. Private schools are not part of the study.

Limitation of the Study

The study is based on some selected secondary schools in Ovia North-East Local Government Area in Edo State due to various problems one may encounter during the study. Some of the limitations envisaged in the course of the study include finance, time-frame within which the research must be conducted, skepticism on the part of the students in completing the instrument[s] (questionnaire), as they think that disclosure of information means revealing confidential details.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are operationally defined for the study.

Academic performance: this is the extent to which teacher or institution has achieved their short or long-term educational goal.

Attendance: it is the amount of time a student participates in class activities.

Career: a chosen pursuit or course of business activity or enterprise, especially one's professional life or employment that offers advancement and honor.

Gender: it is the attribute of being a male or a female.

Secondary School Education: this is the form of education children receive after primary education and before tertiary stage.

Students' characteristics: this refers to those attributes that describe the demographic and socio background of the student. It includes gender, age, career choice, class attendance, study time, etc.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of related literature under the following sub-headings:

- Concept of Academic Performance
- Determinants of Poor Academic Performance
- Students' Characteristics
- Impact of Gender on Academic Performance
- Impact of Age on Academic Performance
- Impact of Career Choice on Academic Performance
- Impact of Study Time on Academic Performance
- Impact of Class Attendance on Academic Performance
- Summary of Literature Review

Concept of Academic Performance

Academic performance has to do with what the learner is able to accomplish by the execution of class work in the school. Some of the purposes of academic performances measurement with regards to education are as follows, to determine the relative effectiveness of a programme in terms of student behavioral output; to

identify students' growth or lack of growth in acquiring desirable knowledge skills, attitudes and social values; to help teachers determine the effectiveness of their teaching techniques a learning material; to help motivate student to learn as they discover progress or lack of progress in given task, to encourage student to develop a sense of discipline an systematic study habit to acquaint parents or guardians with their children performance to predict the general trend in the development of teaching and learning process, to make a reliable decision about education planning and to provide educational administrators with adequate information about teachers effectiveness an school need.

Performance is defined as the observable or measurable behavior of a person in a particular situation. This means that performance measures the aspect of behavior that can be observed at a specific period. In relation to educational research, academic performance of a student could be defined as the learning outcomes of the student. This includes the knowledge, skills and ideas, acquired and obtained through their course of study within and outside the class room situation (Okorie, 2014). Academic performance also refers to excellence in all academic discipline, in a class as well as extra-curricular activities. Steingberger (2005) in Okorie (2014) posit that academic performance encompasses students' ability and performance; it is multi-dimensional; it is intricately related to human growth and cognitive, emotional and social physical development; it reflects the whole child; it is not related to a single instance but occur

at all levels' through a student's life in public school. Izundu (2005) in Okorie (2014) pointed that home environment influences the learning capabilities of a child either positively or negatively and thus affect student academic performance. Some of the variables includes parental socio-economic status level, other perform better academically parental supervision of children, location home, library facility among others.

According to Uche (2010) parental socio-economic status of the children of literate and high-income parents perform better in school than those from poor and uneducated parents. Children from, high socio-economic homes eat balanced diet, enjoy good health and facilities that stimulates their intellectual activity and make them perform better academically than their counterparts who indulge in smoking cigarette, Indian hemp which have scattered their brain which may result to poor performance. The study revealed that insufficient parental income; family type and lack of funding by government are factors influencing student's academic performance.

Determinants of Poor Academic Performance

Poor academic performance is most commonly determined by combining demographic, socioeconomic and environmental factors such parents' educational level, occupational status and income level (Jeynes, 2002). It is believed that low socio- economic status negatively affects academic achievement of students in

secondary schools (Hansen and Mastekaasa, 2003). Walters and Soyibo (1998) further elaborated that student performance is very much dependent on socio economic back ground (SEB) as per their statement, “High school students’ level of performance is with statistically significant differences, linked to their gender, grade level, school location, school type, student type and socioeconomic background (SEB).” Considering physical geographical location of most secondary schools in Sumbawanga District are in rural areas where also physical infrastructure is poor and limited, and therefore their communities might be affected by low socio-economic which influence academic performance.

The blame for poor academic performance among secondary school students could be attributable to a variety of factors such as student inability to manage their time, peers influence, family factors and the likes. Parents, teachers, curriculum, experts and evaluators have expressed considerable concern over the deteriorating students’ performance in public examinations. The persistent poor performance of secondary school student in school examination in Edo state Nigeria is so overwhelming, these had made development in secondary performance a difficult task, parent, guardians, school authorities and stake holders in education industry are therefore looking for solution to curb these poor performance (Adepoju and Oluchukwu 2011).

Students' Characteristics

Generally, previous research has considered socioeconomic factors the width of the curriculum, teaching methodologies used, the difficulty of using an individual education, previous knowledge and concept of students and the level of formal thought (Rodrigo-Alarcon, *et. al.*, 2014). The analysis of the individual's personality as a key determinant of students' academic performance has been a growing interest in the last decades. Several current researches suggest academic performance is not only associated with these intellectual factors, but "it is an effect of multiple adaptive, behavioral and psychopathological variables" (Rodrigo-Alarcon, *et., al*, 2014). Therefore, we have to consider that academic performance is a phenomenon influenced by multiple internal and external factors.

The following student characteristics that influenced the academic performance of students are:

- Gender
- Age
- Career choice
- Study time
- Class attendance

Impact of Gender on Academic Performance

Gender is the range of physical, biological, mental and behavioral characteristics pertaining to and differentiating between the feminine and masculine (female and male) population (Jacob and Linus, 2017). Gender can also be considered as a possible factor in overall school success. Beattie (1970) in Margaret (2011) found “the differences between boys and girls in achievement were as great as or greater than the differences between younger and older entrants”. Male children often seem to be the focus of studies on gender differences in the classroom. In preschool classrooms across nine different states, teachers rated inappropriate behaviors such as aggression toward others, lack of attention, refusal to obey, and turning inward for both boys and girls between the ages of three and six (Margaret, 2011). Fifty-five percent of boys versus 45% of girls fell within these categories for inappropriate behaviors, causing the authors to propose a more effective screening measurement to reduce the overrepresentation of boys (Margaret, 2011).

The relationship between gender and the academic performance of students has been discussed for decades. A gap between the achievement of boys and girls has been found, with girls showing better performance than boys in certain instances. Gender and father’s occupation are significant contributors to student performance (Nyandwi, 2014). The official curriculum concerns the subjects that are taught in schools and their content. It varies from country to country and in many there is a

national curriculum. Oshima and Domaleski (2006) in Margaret (2011) studied gender in relation to academic success in the reading and math domains. They found gender to be significant for predicting success in reading but not in mathematics in elementary and middle school.

Eze *et al.*, (2015) observed that there is a general belief that boys are superior to girls in terms of cognition and logical reasoning and even in academic performance. It was also noticed that factors that affect students' academic achievement in science subject include sex role stereotype, masculine image and female socialization process and inability to withstand stress. Regardless of the degree of emphasis one may put on a students' age or gender when it relates to academic success, there is reason to believe that both age and gender can be considered factors in a students' academic success.

Impact of Age on Academic Performance

Age of the individual, as it increases usually affects the various developmental changes and subsequently, affects every area of human performance. In addition, it is often said that older students, being more highly motivated and more experienced in many realms of life, should obtain higher grade point average (Bitrus *et. al*, 2016). Dur (1992) in Bitrus *et al*, (2016) reported that, there is no significant relationship between performance and age. Similarly, it was reported that, younger students obtain higher grades than older students, because of their relative freedom from cares. He

also observed that, age of the students while he/she attended college might be of importance about his/her academic success in college. The review conducted by Fennema and Lenon (1990) in Eze *et., al* (2015) on age trends indicated that girls showed slight superiority in computation in elementary and middle school while differences favoring males emerged in high school and college.

In a study conducted by Walkins and Hattie (1985) in Bitrus *et., al* (2016) in the US reported that on entry to university mature age student possess an effective study habits approach in their tertiary study and perform better academically than their younger counterparts, In Nigeria, Ogunkola (2010) investigated students inherent characteristics (age and sex), parents educational attainment and family size as predators of academic achievement among secondary school students in Ogun State. 100 Integrated Science students were selected as sample. Data generated was subjected to multiple regression and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result revealed that only age contributed significantly to the prediction of students' academic achievement in Integrated Science. This means that, age is a good predator for academic achievement.

Many researchers have studied the possible relationship between school entry age and academic success. Green and Simmons (1963) in Margaret (2011) studied student age as a contributing factor to school success, comparing “early entrants to years of achievement”. They questioned the wisdom of enrolling students at an earlier

age and summarized, “despite the extra year of schooling, the early entrant is only three months superior in achievement to the regular entrant at a particular age”. Hedges (1978) in Margaret (2011) also studied student age and academic success, “No matter what the entrance age limit may be, the children who enter (earliest) have more problems and achieve less than those of equal IQ who enter (later)”. Margaret (2011) also agreed that emotionally mature children may do better in school compared to younger, less mature children, but stated there are “no valid instruments” to identify these children.

Age means how old are the students studying in colleges of education. Bitrus *et. al* (2016) investigated creativity, age and gender as predictors of academic achievement among under graduate students of American universities. A sample of 154 (105 males and 48 females) students completed creativity test. Cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of the selected participants was used. Multiple regression analysis showed interaction effect between creativity, age and gender as lower predictors of academic achievement. No significant difference between CGPA and age was observed.

Impact of Career Choice on Academic Performance

According to Popoola (2004) in Mercy (2017), Career is a job, or profession for which one undergoes regulated education and training over a period of time and which one intends to follow for the whole of one’s life. It is thus a chosen pursuit,

life work and success in one's profession". Choosing a career "is a path or course of action which essentially boils down to a career decision-making process". That is to say the choice of career is decision made by an individual. Parents' educational and occupational background may affect students' choice of career because some students may contemplate on whether to continue with their parents' occupation or not. What the students see in the television also may affect their career choice some careers demand that you have personality to match qualities of the occupation. For these reasons the necessity of a guidance counsellor on schools cannot be over emphasized. A career guidance counsellor is needed to unreliable and dangerous source of in search of career information such as culture peer groups which can lead to their graduating into armed robbery and other criminal business unintentionally.

Bandura *et al.* (2001) in Mercy (2017), viewed that each individual undergoing the process of making a career choice is influenced by some factors as the context in which they live, their personal aptitude and their educational attainment in order words, making career choice is controlled by some phenomenon such as the environment, individual's ability and educational achievement.

Impact of Study Time on Academic Performance

The level of preparation and learning strategies developed and employed consciously by students, go a long way to influence their level of academic performance. Thus, study habit is one of the greatest students or learning factors that

hugely influences students' academic achievements. If undermined by students at all levels, teachers, administrators, parents and guardians, school counselors and the government, then, the trend and menace of students' abysmal performance in both internal and external examinations would continue to boom and become more devastating and alarming (Ebele and Olofu, 2017).

Grace (2013) also maintains that the process of learning is still a little mysterious but studies do show that the most effective process for studying involves highly active behavior over a period of time. In other words, to study effectively, one must read, draw, compare, memorize and test himself over time. Individual are really different, thousands would love study at night before going to bed while other will love to study at dawn. Late night is normally quiet and an individual is unlikely to be disturbed by anyone. Besides, a person has longer hours to review all his notes and works unlike the dawn when an individual will have to race against time. A thorough review at night will help a person learn while the hesitant studying at the dawn is highly prone to forgetting. This is true for a particular group of people. This is entirely against the theory of 'Early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise'. Walking up the whole night to study for exams is sure to affect your health.

Late night study is less productive as the mind loses concentration late at night. Lack of sleep affects an individual's daily life. It weakens the strength of the student and can make him lose focus during examination. It will also lead to serious memory

impairment thus making no use of hard work and study. The extent of student's learning in academics may be determined by the grades a student earns for a particular period. It is believed that a grade is a primary indicator of such learning. It is concluded that they may also have learned a lot while low grades indicate lesser learning. However, many experiences and studies found out that there are also several factors that would account for the grades. It has been the interplay of so many factors - gender, IQ study habit, age, year level, parent's educational attainment, social status, number of siblings, birth order, etc. In fact, almost all of existing environmental and personal factors are a variable of academic performance. However, at this point in time, the research would like to investigate the possible relationship achievement of students in secondary schools.

Impact of Class attendance on Academic Performance

Although there are many factors which effect on students' performance either related to personal life or educational setting but the effects of absenteeism on students' performance is more prone to discuss. The students who are not come in schools, colleges and universities regularly and not attend the classes are called absent. Some students come in schools but not attend the classes also called absent. This habitual act of students is called absenteeism (Naila and Khalid, 2017). The effects of absenteeism in class participation, miss the chance to become a part in class participate, can't raise questions about any confusion regarding topics. Can't clear the

concepts, Poor participation in tutorial discussion; miss the chance of small group discussion within the class. They neglect much valuable information which students can gain in class (Naila and Khalid, 2017).

Hyde and Flour Moy (1986) study in Pudaruth, *et. al* (2013) concluded that those students who attended class more regularly were amongst the best students in their class. However, they also found that 21% of students who had very low attendance been in the top 20% in their class. Ledman and Kamuche (2002) in Pudaruth, *et, al* (2013) examined the effects of attendance on student performance in a Statistics course. Their results show that student performance is better when class attendance is higher

Kamla Raj quoted in his article; Naila and Khalid (2017) have established that students who attend classes more regularly seem to be more successful in their studies than those who regularly absent. In addition, students that attend class regularly are more likely to remember well the information and apply the knowledge effectively throughout their life. In other research by Dawn (2013), attendance was found to be positively and significantly related to student performance in Louisiana's public elementary and secondary schools. Absenteeism has a greater effect on students from poor families. Moreover, in a meta-analytical review of the relationship of class attendance with grade and student characteristics, it was discovered that the highest performing students had either very good or very poor class attendance and those

students in the lowest Quintile of grades were most likely to have average (rather than poor) attendance. They also reported that benefits of attendance for grades to decrease once an average level of attendance has been attained. That is, the difference in grades between students with average attendance and student with very good attendance (Ayodele, 2017).

Students' class attendance and engagement plays an important role in today's higher education. Several previous studies have shown that class attendance is an important predictor of academic outcomes: students who attend more classes earn higher final grades. Anna *et. al.*, (2016) found that the influence of regular attendance on examination performance is more important for female students than male students: female students earning above-average grades had attended more classes than female students earning grades below class average. No such difference was identified for male students. It is also given by one author, students who missed the class on specific date, they are more likely to respond wrongly to question related to material covered in that day than those students who were present. It is given in the hypothesis that there is correlation between the students learning which had inquired empirically in educational literature. It is most surprisingly, there are inverse relation between the course performance and absenteeism in most of the studies (Naila and Khalid, 2017).

Arulampalam *et al.* (2007) in Pudaruth *et. al* (2013) conclude that the best class performers are those who are more likely to suffer from a missed lecture. It was also reported that for a verbal-based subject like Social Studies, class attendance is very important. Chen and Lin (2008) in Pudaruth *et. al* (2013) further confirmed that class attendance has a positive and significant impact on exam performance. In particular, their study reports that there is a 7.66% improvement in exam performance when students attend their lectures.

Summary of Literature Reviewed

In the course of reviewing work related to this study, several works by different scholars relating to the discourse were examined. First, the concept of academic performance was examined. According to Steinberger (2005) in Okorie (2014) posits that academic performance encompasses students' ability and performance. The review explained that knowledge, skills and ideas are acquired and obtained through, within and outside the classroom situation. Next, student's characteristics such as gender, age, career choice, study and class attendance were explored with a view to understanding the effects of these variables on students' academic performance. Eze *et al* (2015) in a study observed that boys are superior to girls in terms of cognition and logical reason and even in academic performance. On the other hand, a study by Nyandwi (2014) showed that girls exhibit greater performance than their male counterpart.

Furthermore, the impact of age on academic performance was briefly examined. It was reported by *Bitrus et al.* (2016) that older students perform better than younger students; being that older students are highly motivated and more experienced in many realms of life. From the review, it was observed that student's career choice had a great impact on their motivation and thus contributing to their academic performance. On study time it was discovered that students who study often perform better than those who study at their own convenient time.

Also, Hyde and Flour-Moy (1986) on class attendance concluded that students who attend classes more regularly perform better than those who do not. Reason attributed to this was that students who attend classes regularly tend to retain information compared to those who miss classes.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the method and procedure employed in this study under the following sub-headings:

- Design of the Study
- Population of Study
- Sample and Sampling Procedure
- Research Instrument
- Validity and Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis.

Design of the Study

This study adopted the survey research design. The trend study technique is employed to take into cognizance the academic performances of secondary school students in Ovia North-East LGA of Edo State. This is aimed at finding out the causes; effects that will help explain present events and anticipate future events.

Population of Study

The population of this study consists of all twenty-eight (28) public senior secondary schools in Ovia North East LGA., while the total student population is 5,007 (Source: Edo State Ministry of Education, 2021).

Sample and Sampling procedure

A total of five (5) public senior secondary school and 237 secondary school students constituted the sample for the study. Stratified random sampling was used to select schools for the study and geographical location of schools within the LGA was used as the criteria for stratification. It noted that the goal of the stratified random sampling is to achieve the desired representation from various sub groups in the population. The schools are:

- i. Ekosodin Secondary school
- ii. Army Day Secondary School
- iii. Ekiadolor College
- iv. Ohonre Secondary School
- v. Ezomo Secondary School.

Research Instruments

The research instruments were made up of two sections. Section A sought for demographic information about the students such as name of school, age and sex and

career choice. Similarly, Section B sought information on the impact of students' characteristics on the academic performance of senior secondary schools in Ovia North-East LGA of Edo State.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Questionnaires was used as the research instrument for the study. The instruments were subjected to screening by the researcher's supervisor. Corrections and suggestions were made before the final instrument was produced; ensuring its face and content validity.

Method of Data Collection

The mode of data collection was through the administration of questionnaire to five (5) public secondary schools in Ovia North LGA of Edo state 237 students were selected for the exercise and the data analysis was conducted base on the information provided by the correspondents.

Method of Data Analysis

Qualitative and Quantitative methods of data analysis were used with both descriptive being applied to explain the results of the study. Descriptive statistics helped the researcher to describe the population of study, while simple percentage helped the researcher to make inferences about the population based on the results of

a representative sample. The frequencies, percentages, mean, as well as, standard deviation were also used.

$$\text{Percentage technique} = \frac{x}{\Sigma x} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Where,

x = number of responses in each category

Σx = total number of responses

% = percentage

$$\text{Mean technique} = \frac{\Sigma(fx)}{n}$$

Where,

$\Sigma(fx)$ = sum of individual responses

n = number of respondents

$$\text{Standard Déviation technique} = \sqrt{\frac{\Sigma x^2}{n} (/x^2)}$$

Tables were used to present the data collected from senior secondary school. The data was analyzed, described and interpreted. Discussion was made on the findings of the result and conclusions were drawn based on the evaluation of result.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This chapter deals with the findings of the study and discussion of results. The presentation is in two sections which are answering of research questions and discussion of findings.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: *Does Age affect students' academic performance?*

Table 1: Age of the students on academic performance

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
15	13	5.5
16	63	26.6
17	88	37.1
18	36	15.2
19	23	9.7
20	11	4.6
21	1	0.4
22	2	0.8
TOTAL	237	100

Sources: Researcher's fieldwork

To find out if age affects the students' academic performance, the data obtained from 5 sampled schools were organized using 46 students from each school. The information in Table 1 showed the summary of the results.

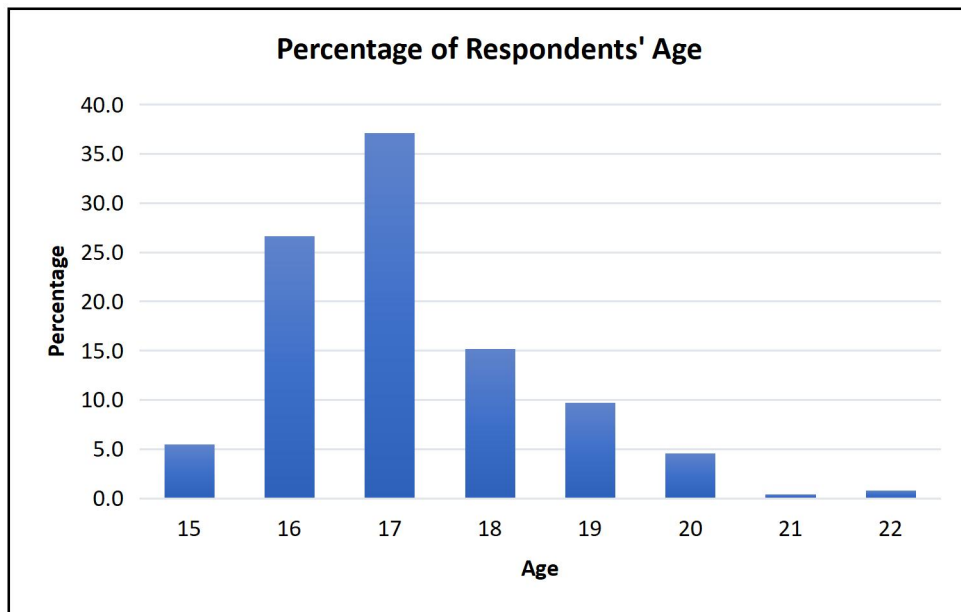


Fig. 1 Graphical representation of Percentage of Respondents by Age

From the result in Table 1, it was observed that most of the respondents were 17years old (37.1%) while 26.6% were 16years old and 15.2% were 18years old which signifies age of the students matters a lot in their academic performances.

Research Question 2: *What is the impact of career choice on students' academic performance?*

To find out the impact of career choice on students' academic performance in Ovia North-East LGA public secondary school, data collected were analyzed using percentages as shown in Table 2. below.

Table 2: Career choice on students' academic performance

CAREER CHOICE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Political Related	16	6.8
Teaching Related	37	15.6
Business Related	37	15.6
Engineering Related	23	9.7
Medical Related	70	29.5
Law Related	25	10.5
Journalism Related	17	7.2
Others	12	5.1
Total	237	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork

From the Table 2 above, it was observed that 70 students (29.5%) would wish to pursue Medical related career while 37 students (15.6%) would wish to pursue Teaching and Business-related career each and 25 students (10.5%) would wish to pursue a career in Law which signifies that the level of career aspiration of a student usually affects the student curriculum choice and hence career choice.

Table 3: Mean performance of student per career choice in 2017 3rd Term Examination

Career Choice	Mean	N	Standard Deviation
Political Related	42.4375	16	21.8745
Teaching Related	43.3514	37	28.0382
Business Related	37.7027	37	20.5898
Engineering	35.3478	23	21.1714
Medical Related	61.4571	70	25.0806
Law Related	57.1200	25	26.8235
Journalism	61.8235	17	25.9746

Source: Researcher's fieldwork

This study furthermore observed in Table 3 that majority of the student would wish to pursue medical related careers and thus had the highest mean scores as compared to other career choices.

A graphical representation of mean performance to career choice is shown in fig. 4.2.

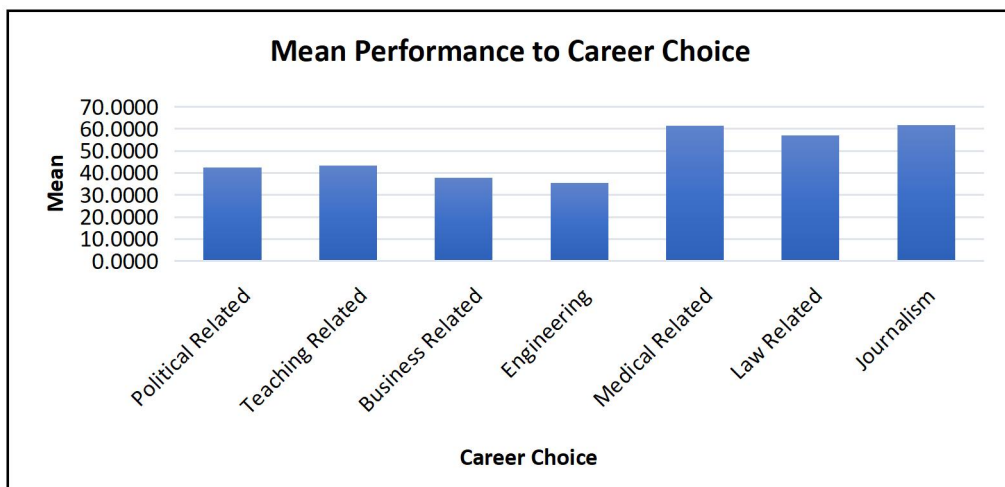


Fig. 2 Graphical representation of mean performance to Career Choice

Research Question 3: *Does gender affect students' academic performance?*

To find out the impact of gender on students' academic performance in Ovia North-East LGA public secondary school, data collected were analyzed using percentages as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Gender of the students' academic performances

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	108	45.6
Female	129	54.4
TOTAL	237	100

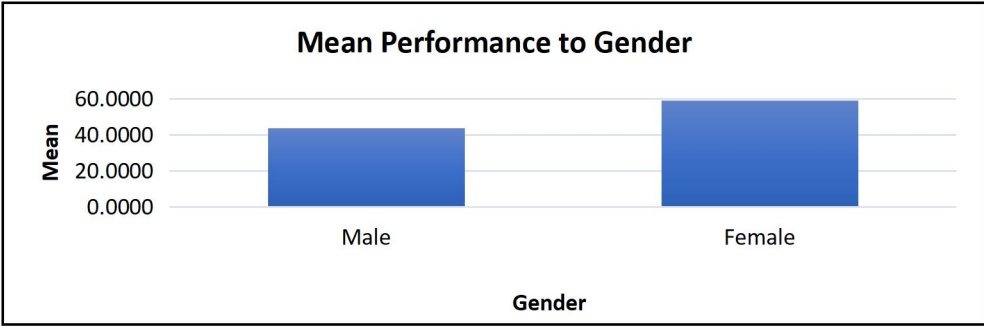
Source: Researcher's fieldwork

From Table 4, it was observed that the population of male were 45.6% compared to female students who had 54.4%. It was also found that there were more female students than male students which signifies that gender has a great influence on the academic performance of senior secondary school students.

Table 5: Mean performance of students per gender in 2017 3rd Term Examination

Gender	Mean	N	Standard Deviation
Male	43.6589	108	25.8507
Female	59.0370	129	23.8699
TOTAL	50.6667	237	25.3924

Source:



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Fig. 3: Graphical representation of the mean performance to Gender

Research Question 4: *Does study time affect students' academic performance?*

To find out the impact of study time on students' academic performance in Ovia North-East LGA public secondary school, data collected were analyzed using percentages as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Preferred study times of the students' academic performance

Study time	Frequency	Percentage
Holidays, Home and Morning times	89	37.6
Holidays and Morning times	30	12.7
Home and Morning times	10	4.2
Home and Holidays	90	37.9
Home time	18	7.6
TOTAL	237	100

Source: *Researcher's fieldwork*

The students chose several options when they preferred to study. In Table 6, it was observed that 90 students (37.9%) indicated they prefer to study at home and during the holidays, followed by 89 students (37.6%) who prefer to study during the holidays, at home and at morning times. Thus, it does seem that students who take their work seriously during morning times and during holiday perform better than those who choose other option.

Table 7: Mean Performance of Student per Study Time in 2017 3rd Term Examination

Study Time	Mean	N	Standard Deviation
Holidays, Home and Morning times	55.1573	89	21.0302
Holidays and Morning times	69.0667	30	14.4126
Home and Morning times	36.5000	10	22.1957
Home and Holidays	76.8890	90	24.0375
Home time	36.4222	18	20.7854
TOTAL	50.6667	237	25.3924

According to the study, students who preferred to study at home and during the holidays had the highest mean scores as compared to students who choose other options. Thus, it does seem that students who take their work seriously during morning times and during holidays perform better than those who choose other options.

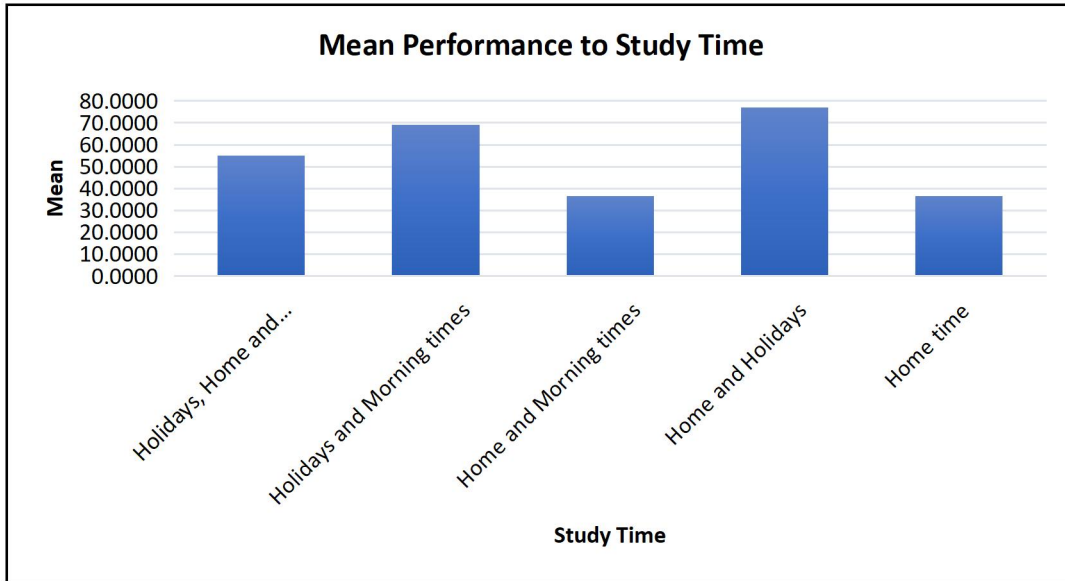


Fig. 4 Graphical representation of the mean performance to study time

Research Question 5: *Does class attendance affect students' academic performance?*

To find out the impact of class attendance on students' academic performance in Ovia North-East LGA public secondary school, data collected were analyzed using percentages as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Class attendance on students' academic performance

Class Attendance	Frequency	Percentage
NO	165	69.6
YES	72	30.4
TOTAL	237	100

Source: Researcher's fieldwork

From Table 8 above it was observed that 165 students (69.6%) attend classes regularly while 72 students (30.4%) fails to attend classes regularly. This means that students who attend classes regularly perform better than those who miss classes.

Table 9: Mean performance of student per class attendance in 2017 3rd

Term Examination

Class Attendance	Mean	N	Standard Deviation
NO	53.6667	165	20.7169
YES	49.3576	72	27.0778
TOTAL	50.6667	237	25.3924

Source: Researchers fieldwork

This means that in table 9 above, students’ who attend classes regularly perform better than those who miss classes. From these observations, we can therefore assert, that class attendance has a great impact on the academic performance of senior secondary school students.

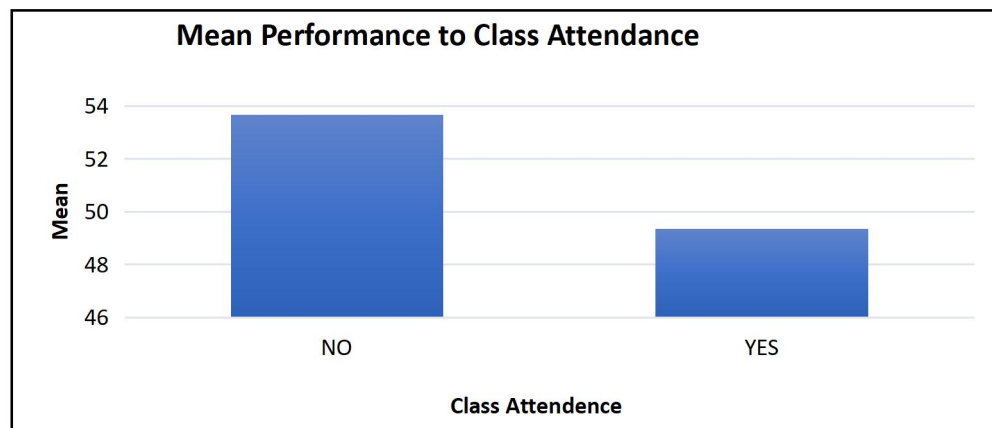


Fig. 5 Graphical representation of the mean performance to class attendance

Discussion of Findings

The result revealed that age has impact on the student academic performance of public senior secondary schools in Ovia North-East Local Government Area in Edo state. Age of the individual usually affects the various developmental changes and subsequently affects every area of human performance. In addition, it is often said that older students being, more highly motivated and more experienced in many realms of life, should obtain higher grade point average (Bitrus *et al.*, 2016).

Table 1 showed that most of the students were 17 years old and this therefore implies that the growth and development of a student has a positive impact on student mental development which implies, that older students perform better than younger students as a result of their ability to cope with school work and also manage their time effectively and efficiently.

It was shown that career choice has impact on the academic performance of public senior secondary school in Ovia North-east area of Edo State. It was revealed that 29.5% of the students would wish to pursue medical related career, while 15.6% would wish to pursue teaching and business-related career and 10.5% would wish to pursue a career in law. This study further more observed in the Table 3, that majority of the students would wish to pursue medical-related careers and thus had the highest mean scores as compare to other career choices. It can be thus said that the level of

career aspiration of a student usually affects the student's curriculum choice. Bandura et al., (2001) in Mercy (2017), viewed that each individual undergoing the process of making a career choice is influenced by some factors as the context in which they live, their personal attitude and their educational attainment in other words, making career choice is controlled by some phenomenon such as environment, individual's ability and educational achievement. Parents, teachers should not force their students or children in the career path to pursue, counsellors should only guide students on the career choice they wish to pursue.

This study shows that gender has impact on the academic performance of Public Senior Secondary School students in Ovia North-east Local Government Area of Edo State. Table 4, revealed that the population of male were 45.6% compared to female students who had 54.4%. The result further established that there were more females than male students. Eze *et al.*, (2015) observed that there is a general believe that boys are superior to girls in terms of cognition and logical reasoning and in academic performance. It was also noticed that factors that affect students' academic achievement in science subjects include sex role stereotype, masculine image and female socialization process and inability to withstand stress. However, this study revealed that female students perform better as compared to male students, reason being that female students are more conscientious and thus less likely to miss classes.

It was observed that study time had impact on the academic performance of Public Senior Secondary School students in Ovia North-east Local Government Area of Edo State. It indicates that 37.9% preferred to study at home and during the holidays, followed by 37.6% who preferred to study during the holidays, at home and at morning times. According to the study in table 7, students who preferred to study at home and during the holidays had the highest mean scores as compared to students who chose other options. Grace (2013) also maintains that the process of learning is still a little mysterious but studies do show that the most effective process for studying involves highly active behaviour over a period of time. In other words, to study effectively, one must read, draw, compare, memorize and test himself overtime. The study shows that those who chose morning times and holiday to study are brighter than those who have to look for extra time to study. Study habit also influences students' academic achievement. Teacher, administrators, parents, school counsellors and the government should take study habit into consideration in order to curb the menace of poor academic performance.

Class attendance has impact on the academic performance of public senior secondary school students in Ovia North-east Local Government Area of Edo state. It was analyzed that 69.6% of the students attend classes regularly, while 30.4% fails to attend class regularly. This study in table 9 also states that students who did not miss classes had a higher mean score compared to those who missed classes. Naila and

Khalid (2017) have established that students who attend classes more regularly seems to be more successful in their studies than those who are regularly absent. In addition, students who attend class regularly are more likely to remember well information and apply the knowledge effectively throughout their lives. From the observation in table 9, we can deduce that class attendance has a great impact on the academic performance of students. The government, teachers, school authorities, school counselors and parents and all those who knows the value of education should come together to effect and propel the necessary changes, needed for optimum academic performance of public senior secondary school, in other for the goal and objectives of education to the achieved.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with summary, conclusion and recommendations.

Summary

Students' failure in Examinations in public senior secondary school had been a major challenge to their guardian, parent, teachers, government and the school authorities. Due to these reasons researchers had to find out the various causes of poor academic performances, after various research had been carried out, other factors or variables were brought by the researchers, which include; age, career choice, gender, study time and class attendance had a great impact on the academic performance of public senior secondary school student. This factor should be looked upon by students, teachers and guardian for a much more improved and better academic performance. Qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were used with both descriptive being applied to explain the result of the study.

The findings of this study revealed that:

- Age has a great impact on the academic performance of students', it was revealed that, older students are more knowledgeable than the younger

students. This could be as a result of their level of maturity and reaction towards school pressure and their ability to cope with school work.

- The career choice one prefers to pursue does influence performance because it was found that medical related students did far better than students who preferred other career choices.
- It was revealed that gender influences student's academic performance in the sense that from the study, female students outperformed their male counterpart.
- Students who preferred to study during holidays, home and morning performed better academically than other students who choose other various options as regards their study time.
- Students who attend classes regularly perform better than students who often miss classes. It was observed that class attendance influenced students' performance in schools since the students who did not miss classes had a higher mean score as compared to those who did miss classes.

Conclusion

In sequel to the analysis conducted one can adequately conclude that age, career choice, gender, study time and class attendance of students has great impact on the academic performance of public senior secondary schools in Ovia-North Local Government Area of Edo State.

Recommendations

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

- In order to improve the level of students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Ovia North-East LGA, there should be need for adequate counselling of students by trained counsellors and teachers in secondary schools.
- The Federal Ministry of Education should enforce rules and regulation to public senior secondary on the optimum percentage required for every student class attendance.
- Counsellors and psychologist should be employed in public secondary school, because they understand development process coupled with various behaviors ascribed to each age progression of students.
- Parent and guardian should encourage their children to read during holiday and at home for a much better academic performance.
- Every student has an ambition consigning a particular choice of career field therefore parents and guardians should encourage their children into choosing

a favorable course with regards to their career choice and not forcing them to choosing something else.

Suggestions for further studies

1. This study could be extended to rural areas of Edo state
2. A thorough investigation of the impact of students' characteristics on the academic performance of senior secondary schools should be conducted both in Ovia North-East and Edo state in general.
3. The study should be repeated in other states and throughout the federation.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

As part of the requirement for the award of B.Sc. (Ed) Educational management in the Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, I am required to write a project work on the Students' Characteristics on the Academic Performances of Senior Secondary Schools in Edo State. To this effect, the questions below are primarily designed to help me in carrying this research work. It will be highly appreciated if you give your opinion in the box by ticking (√). All information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

SECTION A

Please fill the following details correctly.

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

AGE: _____

SEX: _____

CLASS: _____

CAREER CHOICE: _____

SECTION B

Please tick or fill whichever is appropriate on the column for each answer in the space provided.

S/N	Items	YES	NO
1.	Do you think that age can affect academic performance?		
2.	Are older students able to understand concepts taught by teachers compared to younger students?		
3.	Do younger students have retentive memory than older students in their academic work?		
4.	Can older students cope with academic pressure compared to younger student?		
5.	Do older students perform more academically than younger student?		
6.	Does gender affect students' academic performance?		
7.	Do you think boys perform better than girls in quantitative subject like mathematics?		
8.	Do you think girls outperform boys in qualitative subject such as English?		
9.	Is there occupation that are specifically made for male or female?		
10.	Does career choice have impact on student academic performance?		
11.	Did you choose your career based on its high rating in the society?		
12.	Did you choose your career because your friend also chooses the career?		
13.	Is there parental influence on your career choice?		
14.	Do you think class attendance can affect students' academic performance?		
15.	Does teacher's approach towards teaching and learning process motivate students' class attendance?		
16.	Do you attend lectures regularly?		
17.	Does study time affect students' academic performance?		

18.	Do you read during the holidays?		
19.	Do you read at home?		
20.	Do you wake early in the morning to read?		

APPENDIX B

Table B-1: Showing the SSII 3rd Term Examination Students' Academic Scores for Five (5) Public Secondary Schools in Ovia North East LGA of Edo State.

Ekosodin Secondary School		Army Day Secondary School		Ekiadolor College		Ohonre Secondary School		Ezomo Secondary School	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
15	70	54	16	67	45	13	67	54	25
94	83	55	55	54	56	10	54	32	19
20	15	85	54	76	67	14	67	42	25
56	10	80	40	54	50	10	89	50	15
85	99	75	90	44	55	11	67	55	70
43	67	65	88	82	86	45	76	17	62
55	65	67	75	45	54	50	67	39	65
76	89	54	15	90	45	15	57	13	75
10	62	20	30	76	65	10	89	18	40
66	96	52	50	65	52	30	75	10	49
21	17	45	54	34	32	13	72	14	57
90	70	15	90	88	73	98	25	43	58
85	54	75	75	85	72	95	14	15	23
69	50	34	55	78	54	10	50	70	42
88	90	55	43	67	56	91	12	46	15
40	95	23	65	82	54	70	13	15	80
30	66	67	67	53	65	13	15		31
	56	88	54	88	43	50	67		68
	88	67	52	56	76	47	46		10
	57	56	77	89		45	51		40
			75	57		27	28		45
			99	67		62	13		15
				77		14	12		20

				56			12		25
				85			16		18
				73			18		19
				68			18		16
				73			10		25
				34			13		42
				74			12		68
							11		76
									79
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									52
									59
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									26
									44
									28