

# THE CAUSES OF STUDENT FAILURE IN NATIONAL EXAMINATION AND THE ADOPTED SOLUTION IN NIGERIA

AKWARA UCHENNA C.

Weafri Well Services Company Limited, C & I Data Engineer, Portharcourt - Rivers State, Nigeria,  
Email - uchenacha@yahoo.com

**Abstract:** *In this paper, the study of students' failure in National examination, the Cause of the failure and the proposed solution in Nigeria Educational system are welcome. This is to address the massive failure recorded in GCE, WASSCE, NECO, NABTEB, JAMB and other examination body in Nigeria from 2005 to 2011. The statistical data's analyzed are samples Collected from different examination rating at different location on the factors that contribute to student's poor performance in National examination in Nigeria. Also samples are collected from individuAal online, analyst rating, standard board rating and Local rating. The experimental procedure were analyzed and validated on Pentium IV, 2.5GB RAM, 40GB Hard disk and Microsoft Excel package.*

**Key Words:** *Examination, Failure, Student, Performance, National, Massive. Public, Private, Poor.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Examination may not naturally be the best in testing student IQ, Moral, Study performance but it is necessary and recommended for student Excellence, Promotion and Brain building after a long academic teching, lecture, tutoring and testing. The National examination board in Nigeria has come out to say that student performance in National examination is dropping tremendously when compared to other countries outside Nigeria. The performance of students in the last WASSCE conducted in 2011 produced massive failure when the result was released online, the same goes with GCE. The NECO board has come out to say that about 90% of the students failed the 2011 NECO result released and the percentage in 2010 was about 78% to

84% failure. The minister of education Prof. Rukayat Ruffy has lamented and blames the students, the teachers and the government as part of the causes to the massive failure in national examination conducted in Nigeria. There are massive brain drain and performance dropping in the results obtained from those exams conducted in Nigeria. The massive failure could be traced to so many factors which may not have been addressed between 2005 to 2011. There are literature updates to this effect:

Dike and Adebayo [1] established that one million students failed WAEC Exam. They reported that out of 1,540,250 candidates that wrote the May/June 2011 WASSCE conducted by WAEC, 31% made five credits including English language and Mathematics and 81,573 results were withheld while Awosiyani [2] discovered that 60% pass English, Math: As WAEC releases 2011 GCE results. He reported that about 226, 658 candidates, representing 60.86% obtained credit and above in Mathematics in November/ December 2011 WAEC. 226,188, Representing 59.82%, obtained credit and above in English Language.

Agande [3] pioneered mass failure in WAEC, NECO: Reps to conduct public hearing. He reported that Abuja-worried by the poor performance of students in public examinations like WAEC and NECO, the house of representative on Tuesday resolved to conduct an investigation in order to unearth the course of the poor performance while Dr. Otunba [4] pioneered WAEC upgrade 2011/ 2012 SSCE Result. In the report, WAEC has out of consideration following the intervention by various governmental and non-governmental bodies decided to upgrade the scores of candidates who participated in her 2011/2012 May/ June WASSCE across West Africa.

Further more, Ogundare [5] implemented WAEC records fair Nov/Dec WASSCE results 2011/2012. He reported that out of the total 404,863 candidates who sat for the exam, 176,484 candidates (representing 45.6%) obtained a minimum of credit pass in 5 subjects including English and Mathematics while Dike [6] implemented exam fraud: Education minister canvasses for 10 years ban on offending schools. He reported that the mass failure by students in WAEC AND NECO, the federal government had put in place measure to check the effect. A 10 year ban on any school found wanting during the conduct of public exam would serve as a deterrent to others.

## 2. PROBLEM:

This section highlight the general problems that could lead to students' massive failure recorded in National Examination conducted in Nigeria by WASSCE, GCE, NABTEB, NECO, NECO-GCE and other exams from the period of 2005 to 2011.

## **2.1. THE REGISTRATION OF UNDER AGE STUDENT IN EXAM**

The National examinations conducted for senior school leavers are not meant for students below 18 years. About 48% of the students registered for WASSCE, GCE, NECO, NABTEB, and JAMB are mostly from 14 – 17 years. These under age students are not matured enough, both in stature, brain, and mode of assimilation, thinking, body build and in moral to face examinations such as WASSCE, NECO, GCE, NECO-GCE, NABTEB etc. As these students are registered, they produce poor performance in results. The registration of underage students can not help matter; they would rather cause massive failure in National examination. If nothing is being done on this matter, the failure recorded would persist.

## **2.2. TELEVISION MEDIA FACTOR**

Broadcasting is a means that should educate, promote cultural status, increase moral standard, provide vital information to people and the surrounding. About 60% of the television programs on the average are occupied with unpleasant music, immoral home videos, politics, unhealthy cartoons and disasters around the world. Little or none is being telecast on student's moral, socio-cultural programs, brain tiz programs, Educative teaching, and Learning and Educative drama in Nigeria. But unfortunately, what the media is concerned about is how to make money. Children and students learn fast on what they see, learn, perceive and hear from the television media. As these wrong telecasts are ongoing, the students would rather not read their book, carry out home work, study and provide solution to assignment in school. By so doing national examination is affected and the final results produced massive failure.

## **2.3. EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES**

Examination malpractices carried out in schools, colleges, exam centers, and universities and around the nation are big factors to be worried about. About 51% of private and public schools and colleges in the country are involved in such act since 2005 to 2011. The more students don't read and they fail, they look for other alternatives. They smuggle in prepared answers, text books, micro-chips and also pay invigilators, teachers, supervisor's money in form of bribe. About 53% of the teachers, staff, students and principal of public and some private school and colleges are involved in such act. There has been a loud cry by the government, minister of education, teachers, missionaries and other bodies on this matter. As these malpractices are ongoing, students are less prepared and massive failure increases.

## **2.4. INTERNET FACTOR**

Internet has advantage and disadvantage on students and youth who are writing and preparing for national examination. About 46% of our youth are aware of social network such as facebook, youtube, twitter, google etc. A countless number of them engage in such act after school, some bring in handset (phone) in class in order to brows internet when teacher is teaching. By so doing they lost concentration in class without achieving anything. Imagine a 12 years old student in possession of 600 dollar handset in class. Automatically, this kid would be carried away by these web facilities as the teacher is teaching and at the end of the day; they perform poorly with massive failure. Internet is a factor that also encourages poor performance in GCE, NECO, JAMB, NABTEB, and NECO-GCE in Nigeria.

## **2.5. UNSOUND TEACHER AND TUTOR**

"You can't give what you don't have". This is a popular saying in schools, colleges and universities. An unsound teacher or tutor would produce unsound student and unsound results in national examination. The managements of public and private school preferred unsound teachers because their monetary demands are very low. Many of tutorial centers are not fit for teaching but still students patronize them before the period of examination. The same goes with colleges and schools, countless number of them have untrained teachers who can not prepare students for WASSCE, GCE, and NECO etc. As these unsound teachers, lectures and tutors are patronized; they help students to produce bad results in national exams. This is one factor that causes student failure in national examination.

## **2.6. GOVERNMENT UNDERFUNDING OF EDUCATION**

It is the right of the government to fund education. But in Nigeria, we have less funding for education. Each year, about 11% or less is allocated to education in Nigeria. The government in Nigeria has failed in money allocation. The public school is much more affected by this under funding. . Navigating through public schools, you would found out that there are no good chairs and desk, no marker board, no good toilet, No water supply, No enough teacher, no ventilated environment, Unstructured building, no electric supply, leaking roof and no welfare packages. When all these amenities are not available, automatically, it would affect students thinking ability, assimilation, and students' preparation for exam. That is why students in public schools records low performance in national examinations each year.

## **2.7. UNEDUCATED PARENT PROBLEM**

The level of brilliancy in a child is measured by the amount of proper education and training acquired. When a child is brilliant, about 60% of its brilliancy comes from his or her educated parent. When parents are not educated, the level of brilliancy in that child or student would drop, the thinking ability would reduce. The transfer of moral, education and brilliancy always flow from the parent to the child or student. Majority of uneducated parent do not send their children to school and if they do, they send them to bad schools where the student thinking ability, creativity and assimilation drops and automatically, produce bad results in national examinations. In most cases, uneducated parents produced uneducated student.

## **2.8. UNDERAGE STREET HAWKING AND BEGGING**

The level of street begging and hawking in Nigeria, is as a result of poverty in the family. As we navigate across Nigerian roads and streets, we would notice underage children begging for arms. About 53% of them hawk to survive. Instead of the students to be in school, they rather go hawking and street begging. Majority of them are abused and could affect their performance in school. These students under this act perform badly in national examinations because their brain have been stigmatized and abused. Many of them end up as prostitute, taut, hoodlums and garage boys. At the cause of all these, they perform poorly in exam and they join the massive failure recorded in exam.

## **2.9. UNSEATTLED HOME**

Family problems or simply family crises are always a wrong factor that adds to a child performance to national examination. In Nigeria, there are series of clashes between the bread winner which is the father and the mother which is more rampant in our society and homes. Children are always the affected ones when fighting or quarrelling begins at home. The misunderstanding between the father and the mother could lead to breaking home. When there is breaking home any children in school would be demoralized and stigmatized among peers. The student would be off balance in academics and would not be able to access national examination very well which could lead to poor performance in written examination such as GCE, NABTEB, WASSCE, NECO, JAMB.

## **3. SOLUTION:**

This section highlight the proposed solutions that would solve these problems mentioned above. When these solutions are implemented, the massive failure recorded in national examination from GCE, NABTEB, WASSCE, NECO, JAMB etc would be eliminated.

### **3.1. ERADICATION OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES**

The more examination malpractices are being patronized, the more our educational system depreciates. Examination malpractice is a disaster that has eaten up the mind of all the key players in education. The eradication of these menaces from our system should be encouraged. The implementation of these listed points below would help eradicate examination malpractices in Nigeria.

- The examiners in charge of setting questions should keep it secret the kind of questions sets for the exams.
- Question papers printers or manufacturers should be thoroughly checked to prevent paper smuggling from the control room.
- Only trust worthy staffs should be asked to handle question papers.
- Invigilators, teachers and supervisors should be sacked, if found guilty of examination malpractice.
- Parent should not be allowed to pay bribe or settlement to principal, teachers and for question paper s leaks.
- The government should introduce online national examination to all the exam bodies across the country.

### **3.2 ADOPTING FREE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

As we have it in other developed countries, free education systems should be introduced in all Nigeria public schools. The three tiers of governments should adopt free education, to reduce boarding on parents who can't afford to educate their children. This free education should cut across the 9-3-4 educational systems practiced in Nigeria. The public school should be given education packages, free books, free lunch, free writing material and uniform. When education is free, students would have sound mind to read, study and prepare for examination. When free education is established in public school, be reassured that the massive failure recorded in GCE, WASSCE, NECO, JAMB etc would disappear for ever.

### **3.3. ERADICATION OF INFERIORITY COMPLEX BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

The comparism between public and private school should be eradicated. About 45% of parents send their children and students to private school believing that private school students are better of than students in public schools. This should not be so. The students in public schools should not be underrated to their counterpart in private

schools. The government, NGO's, parents and private establishment should help to eradicate this inferiority complex existing between public and private schools. All hands should be on desk to promote the same unity, teaching, tutoring, mentoring and prevent comparism. The more we inform public students that they have equal chances with students in private school, the more they would want to prove better in performance, which would finally replicate better results in national examination in Nigeria.

### **3.4. ADOPTING SOCIAL-EDUCATIVE PROGRAMS ON THE MEDIA**

The media plays a big role in educating students for better performance in examinations. Adopting social educative programs on the media such as television, radio, handset (phone) and in software packages etc would go along way in promoting sound mind and sound brain in students. Social-educative programs like quiz competition, interschool debate, science and engineering drama, educative cultural drama, epic, creative art , seminars, youth training program, children /student modeling, interschool beauty competition, examination ethics etc should be broadcast. When all these fact are adopted on the media, it would automatically lunch the students into performing excellently in national examination which would eliminate student failure in exam.

### **3.5. FUNDING OF EDUCATION BY GOVERNMENT**

The best way to enjoy education is when education is funded by the government and private owners. It is the total duty of federal government and state government to fund education in Nigeria. In other developed countries, about 45% to 52% are allocated to education. There is a popular saying that "If you train a child, you built a nation". So, funding a child education is building a nation. Basic and social amenities are needed in the smooth ruining of education, such as textbook, furniture's, buildings, clean water, payment of school fees and exam fees for GCE, NECO, WASSCE etc and students welfare packages should be provided by the government through budgetary allocation of up to 40% and not the usual 11% or less allocated in past years. As this high funding is implemented, it would eliminate the massive failure recorded in national examination.

### **3.6. THE USE OF NEW TEACHING AIDS AND METHODS**

Students in a class, have different ways of assimilating lectures and teachings which have being taught. A teacher, lecturer or tutor should be able to use the newest teaching method that would aid adaptation in class and understanding of topics. Teaching aids like flow charts, flip charts, projection systems, marker board, puzzle box, diagrams, internet, conference video, sound systems (audio) etc should be encouraged. The teachers, lecturers and tutors should used all these aids to capture 92% of the students attention in class and afterward. The implementation of such teaching aids and methods would help the students to perform excellently in national examination (GCE, JAMB, WASSCE, NECO etc). With this implementation, massive failure would disappear and be eliminated.

### **3.7. TRAINING AND RE-TRAINING OF TEACHERS**

"No one is an island of knowledge". This is a popular saying in academic field. Every human brain gets to a certain state in life and start to depreciate gradually. A teacher, lecturer and tutor need to get more and more teaching method and technique through reliable training and re-training courses that would catapult the teachers both old and new into the training program. Innovation and Ideas would be encouraged and also teaching model and ethics would also be applied from the training courses. As these teachers acquired the rightful training and re-training ideas and methods, they would automatically impact the students with the right knowledge that would see them through in national exams (GCE, WASSCE, NECO, JAMB etc) conducted nation wide.

### **3.8. ADOPTING STUDENTS MENTOR AND WELFARE PACKAGE**

Parents play a big role in training their students for better performance. "The way you lay your bed is the way you will lay on it". Parents should mentor their ward or students in school and also provide welfare package for their upkeep. The parents should provide enough packages that would make the student balance well in class and not to feel hungry. "A hungry man is an angry man", a popular saying in English language. When these are implemented, the students would remain focus and be corrected when ever they are off track by their older students in higher class, who also serve as mentor to them and finally, it would reduce poor performance obtained in national examination in Nigeria.

### **3.9. SEATTLED HOME**

A Seattle home or a peaceful home among the society is where a child would love to leave. When there is Seattle home, any student would give out all it best in national examination. 99% of students from peaceful home always come out with flying colours in their national examination; they tend to do better than students from broken home. Majority of the student from Seattle home are more relaxed in their academics, they attend tutorial/home



teaching classes, they attend school regularly, they are well brought up among the society and able to face minor challenges and tackle such challenge with the help of their parents backing them up. A child from unseattled home would not enjoy or benefit the reward of Seattle home unless there is a peaceful home and coexistence among the parent. The issue of parent divorcing should not come to play because when the two parents are leaving differently there would not be proper assimilation on education by the student from broken home that is why, there should be a Seattle home for any student written national examination. Apart from this matter, there must be agencies set up to foresee the moral understanding of any student preparing for national examination.

**4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION:**

This section highlights the results obtained from the analysis conducted on the percentage level of the causes of student’s failure in national examination such as GCE, WASCE, JAMB, NABTEB, NECO etc) from 2005 to 2011 in Nigeria.

Table 1. The validation table for the percentage level of the causes of student failure in national examination in Nigeria.

S/N	YEAR	UT (%)	FG (%)	EM (%)
1	2005	65	82	68
2	2006	63	80	70
3	2007	61	75	63
4	2008	57	70	58
5	2009	53	67	56
6	2010	50	61	54
7	2011	48	55	51

IF (%)	UP (%)	TM (%)	US (%)
40	63	42	32
44	60	47	36
48	58	51	40
53	57	54	45
56	54	59	50
60	50	62	55
63	48	65	60

KEY:

UT = % LEVEL OF UNSOUND TEACHER

FG = % LEVEL OF UNDER FUNDING OF EDUCATION BY GOVERNMENT

EM = % LEVEL OF EXAMINATION MALPRACTICES

IF = % LEVEL OF INTERNET FACTOR

UP = % LEVEL OF UNEDUCATED PARENTS

TM = % LEVEL OF TELEVISION MEDIA FACTOR

US = % LEVEL OF UNDERAGE STUDENTS REGISTERED IN NATIONAL EXAMINATION

Table 1. Represents the percentage validation table for the causes of student’s failure in national examination. In the percentage level of unsound teachers, there was a rapid decrease from 65% in 2005 to 48% in 2011. In the percentage level of under funding of education by the government, in 2005; it was 82%, in 2008; we have 70% and then later dropped to 55% in 2011.

Further more, in the percentage level of examination malpractices; there was 2% increase difference from 2005 to 2006 and 63% in 2007 then dropped to 51% in 2011 meanwhile, the percentage level of internet factor was increased from 40% in 2005, 56% in 2009 and then 63% in 2011.

In the percentage level of television media factor; there was a rapid increase from 42% in 2005 to 65% in 2011 while in the percentage level of underage students registered in national examination; there was increased from 32% in 2005, 40% in 2007 and then 60% in 2011.

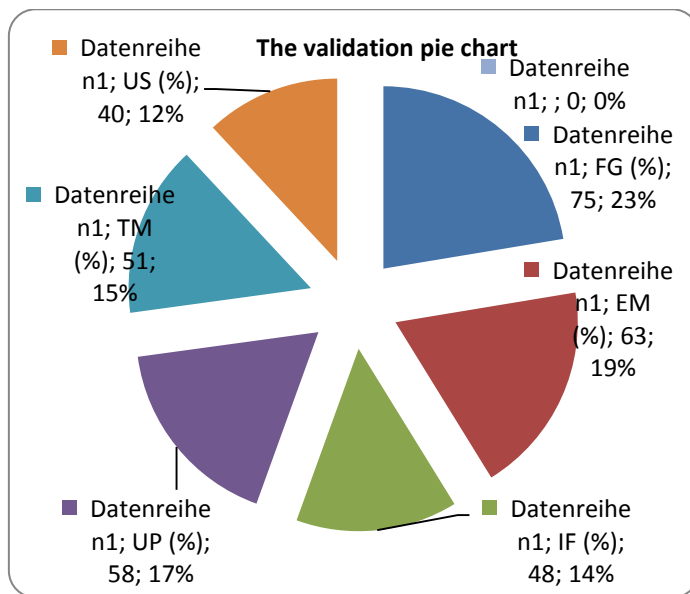


Figure 1. The validation pie chart of the percentage level of the causes of student's failure in GCE, WAASCE, NABTEB, JAMB, NECO etc.

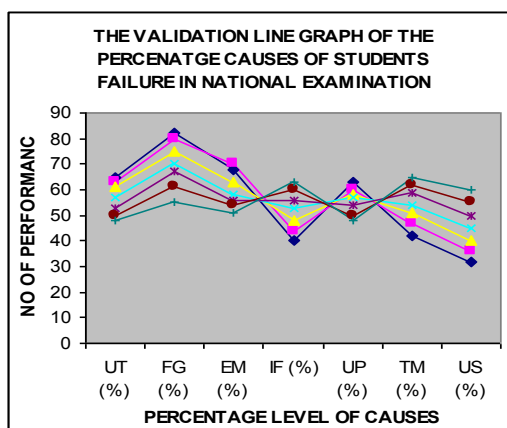


Figure 2. The validation line graph of the percentage level of the causes of student's failure in GCE, WAASCE, NABTEB, JAMB, NECO etc.

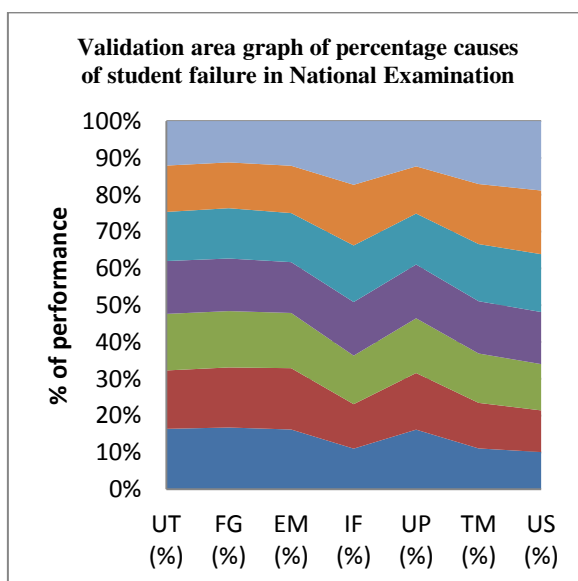


Figure 3. The validation area graph of percentage level of the causes of student's failure in GCE, WAASCE, NABTEB, JAMB, NECO etc.

Figure 1. Represents the validation pie chart on the percentage causes of student's failure in national examination. In the chart, the average percentage of the level of unsound teacher was 17%, 21% on average represents under funding of education by government, 17% represents examination malpractices on the average, 10% represents internet factor on the average, 16% represents uneducated parents on the average, 11% represents television media factor on the average score and finally, 8% represent underage students registered in national examination.

Figure 2. Represents the validation line graph on the percentage causes of student's failure in national examination. In the chart, the blue line, the brown line, the red line, the green line, the light blue line, the pink line and the light brown all represents the general performance level at different rating below 100% which rate the causes of student's failure in national examination conducted in Nigeria.

Figure 3. Represents the validation area graph of percentage level of the causes of student's failure in national examination. In the chart, the blue colour is the % area level of unsound teacher which covers a difference of 17% from the period of 2005 to 2011, the brown colour is the % area level of underfunding of education by government which covers a difference of 27% from the period of 2005 to 2011, the green colour is the % area level of examination malpractices which covers a difference of 19% from the period of 2005 to 2011, the pink colour is the % area level of internet factor which covers a difference of 23% from the period of 2005 to 2011, the light blue colour is the % area level of uneducated parents which covers a difference of 15% from the period of 2005 to 2011, the orange colour is the % area level of television media factor which covers a difference of 23% from the period of 2005 to 2011 and finally, the light pink is the % level of underage students registered in national examination which covers a difference of 28% from the period of 2005 to 2011.

## 5. CONCLUSION:

Within the context of this paper, we have analyzed and validated the results obtained from samples collected from different quarters. The results have shown to be efficient, authentic and effective. The proffered solution was robust and when implemented would eliminate and eradicate the causes of student's failure in national examination such as GCE, WASSCE, NECO, JAMB, NABTEB etc across the federation. The future paper expected includes; the re-structuring of post UTME systems in Nigeria university and the effect of educational systems from 6-3-3-4 to 9-3-4 systems in Nigeria.

## REFERENCES:

1. Dike, G. and Adebayo, M. (2011), 1 Million Students Fail WAEC Exam, NBF News Article, Nigeria best forumblog.htm, pp.1-2.
2. Awosiyan, K. (2011), 60% Pass English, Math. As WAEC release 2011 GCE results, African Newspaper of Nigeria plc, Article, pp. 1.
3. Agande, B. (2011), Mass Failure in WAEC, NECO: Reps to Conduct Public Hearing, NBF News Article, Nigeria best forumblog.htm, pp.1-2.
4. Dr. Otunba (2012), WAEC Upgrades 2011/2012 SSCE Result, Article, Nairaland forum on education, [www.nairaland.com](http://www.nairaland.com), pp. 2.
5. Ogundare, T. (2012), WAEC Records Fair NOV/DEC. WASSCE Result 2011/2012, National Mirror News Article, [www.nationalmirroronline.net](http://www.nationalmirroronline.net), pp.1-2.
6. Dike, G. (2012), Exam Fraud: Examination Minister Canvasses For 10yrs Ban on Offending Schools, NBF News Article, Nigeria best forumblog.htm, pp.1.
7. Otokunefor, T. (2011), Relationship between Post-UME Scores and Performance in the First year of study in a Nigeria University, Alpha education foundation, Educational Monograph, (5), pp. 1-10.
8. Ebimomi, V. (2011), WAEC Refutes Report on May/June Students' Performance, The Sun Newspaper Article, [www.sunnewsonline.com](http://www.sunnewsonline.com), pp. 1.
9. Osakuade, J. O. (2012), Effectiveness of University Matriculation Examination and Post-University Matriculation Examination on the Academic Performance of Nigeria Undergraduate students, Article, [www.iiste.org/journals/index.php/JFP/article/view/442](http://www.iiste.org/journals/index.php/JFP/article/view/442), pp.1-2.
10. Ajayi and Taiwo (1988), A System approaches towards remediation of Academic Failure in Nigeria School, Nigeria Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 3, (1), pp. 28-35.
11. Adebule, S.O. (2004), Gender differences on a locally Standardized anxiety rating Scale in Mathematics for Nigerian Secondary Schools, Nigerian Journal of Counseling and Applied Psychology, Vol.1, pp. 22-29.
12. Salahdeen, H.M. and Murtala, B.A. (2005), Relationship between Admission Genders and Performances of Students in the First Professional Examination in a New Medical School, African Journal of Biomedical Research, (8), pp. 51-57.
13. Afolabi et al. (2007), The Effect of Mode of Entry into Medical School on Performance in the First two years, Journal of Medical Science, (7), pp. 1021-1026.
14. Adesemowo, P.O. (2005), Premium on affective education: Panacea for Scholastic Malfunctioning and Aberration, 34<sup>th</sup> Inaugural Lecture, Olabisi Onabanjo University Ago-Iwoye, Olabisi Onabanjo University press.