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**INVESTIGATION INTO THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ENGLISH TEACHERS IN  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TARAUNI LOCAL GOVERNMENT, KANO STATE.**

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**Abstract**

*This study was about Investigation into the qualifications of English teachers in secondary schools in Tarauni Local Government, Kano State. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The area of the study covered Tarauni Local Government Kano State of Nigeria. The Sample Size of the study comprised 113 respondents and it was chosen in accordance with the recommendation of Research Advisor (2006) from population of 150 English teachers. Random sampling technique was employed to select the participants. Data was collected by the researchers who developed questionnaire for the respondents. The instrument was validated by three experts from Al-Qalam University, Katsina State. The reliability coefficient of obtained was 0.77. The finding of the study indicated that majority of the teachers have B.ED qualifications followed by those who possess NCE qualification and the lowest number of the teachers has qualification of M.ED, while none of them have PhD qualification. It was recommended that More of M.ED English language qualified teachers should be employed in various secondary schools across the state; teachers whose area of specialization is English language should only be the ones to be employed to teach the subject in secondary schools in Tarauni Local Government, Kano State.*

***Keywords:*** *English, Investigation, Language, Teachers, Qualifications*

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**Introduction**

The most extensive catalog of the world's languages, generally taken to be as authoritative as any, had a total of 6,909 distinctive languages by 2009. English language is an Indo-European language family that is closely related to Frisian, German, and Dutch (in Belgium called Flemish) languages. English originated in England and is the dominant language of the United States, the United Kingdom,

Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, and various island nations in the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. It is also an official language of India, the Philippines, Singapore, and many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa. English is the first choice of foreign language in most other countries of the world, and it is that status that has given it the position of a global lingua franca. It is estimated that about a third of the world's population, some two billion persons, now use English. The teaching of ESL (English as a second language) began in the 15th century with the advent of England's increased trading and colonization throughout the world. The British were instrumental in developing large scale programs to teach English in their trading countries and colonies. The English had expanded their trade routes and they needed to communicate with those with whom they were trading. English became the *lingua franca*, the common language, of those doing business with the British. It was not until a few centuries later, that formal English instruction came into play, contend that as the British empire continued to grow, they needed a way to communicate with and effectively govern their overseas businesses and colonies and that during the next two hundred years, the British sent many teachers overseas to educate upper-class colonists and local government officials indoctrinating them with British ideas and culture, including the English language. Since Nigeria is one of the countries with multitude of languages, each ethnic group has its own language with its dialectal varieties. Bamgbose (2017) has pointed out that there are about 400 local languages in Nigeria, yet no ethnic group is ready to abandon its language since all languages are taken as veritable instruments of communication among the users. The absence of linguistic unity in the country has therefore led to the emphasis placed on the English language as a major medium of instruction in educational institutions in the country. As earlier noted, English language was introduced into Nigeria by the colonial masters just like in other African countries to help them administer the colonized people, spread their religion, and carry on their commercial activities. With the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates of Nigeria in 1914, English language became the official language of Nigeria and has continued to perform this function until today. In Nigeria, English is the language of religion, sports, politics, trade and commerce, education, science, and technology. According to Ufomata (2014), the domains of English in an ESL context like Nigeria tend to be formal. It is the official language which in essence means it serves the language of government, education, commerce, and to a limited extent,

social integration, especially among the educated elite. Ufomata (2014), indicates that in the context of such multilingualism, it is important for the government to stick to a neutral language such as English, as the official language. English has the additional advantage of long association, being the language of the colonial rulers. It is also a world language with all the advantages accruing to an individual who speaks such a language both nationally and internationally. Kachru (1986), opined that, "Competence in English and the use of this language signify a transmutation; an added potential for material and social gains and advantages. English is considered a symbol of modernism, and an extra area for success and mobility in culturally and linguistically complex and pluralistic societies. Ufomata (2014), notes that writers, enjoy a wider geographical spread of English in written form than any of the indigenous languages within Nigeria. Whatever the language of discussion, a serious business transaction is sealed up in writing in English. In addition, Ufomata (2014), stresses that in education, English is introduced as a subject from the first year in primary schools and used as a medium and subject of instruction from the third year through secondary and tertiary education. In recent years, oral English has become an integral part of senior secondary syllabus and examination in English language. The transition which English second language (ESL) students need to make when using English as language of learning in higher education is a matter of great concern in the Nigerian higher education sector.

According to Maurine (2016), Language education is recommended since it impacts the practical learning skills: listening; speaking, reading and writing to enable the students use the language effectively, competently and intelligently. The goals of language teaching are to improve the knowledge of language learners so that they can function better in their studies, in their work, and in their interaction with people from other cultures. English language teaching and learning as a second language in Nigeria's educational system is in the hands of English language teachers. The objective of second language teaching, according to Tiffen (2017: 14) is to make learners have a complete grasp of the subject matter of the language. He goes further to state that: *English language teaching in Africa is not simply a question of refining a language already known or of acquiring a certain amount of the language for cultural or limited purposes. It is a question of ensuring that pupils have a complete mastery of the language, and ability to use it, which is almost second nature.* Second nature in this context implies that teachers will be so familiar with the English language that they can

speak it easily without the need to think very much about it. In other words, speaking English language will become part of them especially when teaching in the class. Obi (2016: 5) is of the view that English language is indeed a tool for shaping a better Nigeria when he opines that: *The study of English language should be made effective in Nigeria educational system because it will aid in the achievement of high level scientific, political, socio - economic and technological developments, which are the hallmarks of social change and national development.* These assertions are true because an effective and well defined course of instruction in English language enables the learner to have a better grasp of the English language as a subject, as well as other subjects in the school curriculum, since English is normally the medium of instruction for other subjects in the curricula in Nigerian Schools. Banjo (2009:4), firmly subscribes to this viewpoint of a functional language education influence on other school subjects. According to him, “...other school subjects have to be taught and learnt in the medium of English. Thus, success at each level of the educational system depends largely on competence in English.” What this means is that, to be regarded as an educated Nigerian, some level of proficiency in English language is required. English language is a second language in Nigeria not because it is the second language, the average Nigerian child acquires or learns after his/her mother tongue, but it is so because of the various roles it plays in other subjects taught in the schools. There is the need for the learners to acquire a form of the language generally accepted as the standard form, if such learners are to function effectively in the present day world. The teacher should make additions on the activities that are not in the approved course books. Teaching has developed from an all comer’s vocation over the years and has become a reputable profession for the bright brain. There is no education, in the real sense of it, without teaching. Researchers such as Oyetunde & Mowudumogu (2007) have further shown that there is a close relationship between English language competence and educational attainment. One of the basic challenges that are facing education in Nigeria is that a number of teachers who teach English in secondary schools have no teaching qualifications. Oyetunde & Muwudumogu (2007) further posit that the decline in educational standards in Nigeria has to do with the quality of English teaching and learning in Nigerian schools. Also, Majasan (2008) asserts that the success of any student in school lies heavily on his mastery of English because educational failure is basically a linguistic failure. This is because communication is at the center of the entire process of teaching and learning.

Since language is the ultimate vehicle of communication, educational failure is therefore seen as linguistic failure.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Evidence abounds of the low performance of Secondary students in English language in Kano State. The 2015-2018 report of the Chief examiner, West African Examinations Council reveals that candidates' performance in the examinations between those periods was always poor. The report clearly shows that there was no improvement in the performance of candidates who sat for English language in Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) in some states of the country including Kano State. The report further indicates that students, who registered for English language, judging by their performance, were not well prepared for the examinations. Their performance fell below standard. These failures, according to the report, were more pronounced among candidates in Kano State. Therefore, the inclusion of Kano State in the list of states with candidates whose performances was poor in the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination, (SSCE) by West African Examinations Council's Report, paints a clear picture of lack of adequate knowledge of the language among Senior Secondary School students in Kano State. These multitudes of factors may have combined to account for this frustrating atmosphere of affairs, which possibly could include motivational and curricula issues, as related to the teachers in the study area. Besides, it is not certain whether the teachers have required teaching qualifications in the teaching of the English language in Secondary Schools in the State. To the best of our knowledge, no study known to the present researcher has shown the status and qualification of teachers of English and the state of English language teaching in terms of the prevailing teacher- classroom practices, learning environment, methodology etc in the Secondary Schools in Kano State at the moment has been conducted. This study therefore seeks to examine the qualification of English teachers in some selected secondary schools in Kano State with the aim of finding out those who are qualified to teach in secondary schools in Kano State.

### **Specific Objectives**

1. To find out the qualifications of English teachers in secondary schools in Kano State.

### **Research Questions**

2. What are the qualifications of English teachers in secondary schools in Kano State.

### **Research Methodology**

The research design adopted was descriptive research design with the help of quantitative approach. Quantitative method was used to collect, interpret and analyze numerical data which was done in form of tables, figures and frequencies. It is considered because the design focuses on the collection, analysis and interpretation of information on the English language teachers with aim of finding out those qualified to teach in English Language. According to Marks and Coleman (1989), a descriptive design study is the one which attempts to assess the worth of an event or situation in its real life. The Sample Size of the study comprised 113 respondents and it was chosen in accordance with the recommendation of Research Advisor (2006) from population of 150 English teachers. As per sampling technique, random sampling technique was used to select the students who participated in the study without any bias. The research instrument was given to three experts for face validation. One of the experts was from the Department of education, Measurement and Evaluation and two were from the Department of English language, all in the University of Nigeria, Yusufu Maitana Sule. The instructed were reported valid after face validity of the instrument. Regarding reliability of the instruments, a test was carried out to assess the reliability of the instruments. 30 copies of the questionnaires were distributed on a sample of 30 teachers who teach the English language in the various secondary schools in Katsina Central Geopolitical Zone of Taraba State. Katsina State was not part of the study area but the teachers there have the same characteristics with the teachers in Kano because there were from the same geopolitical zone and at the same time they use the same curriculum. The researcher administered the instrument once and the data were collected and analyzed using Cronbach Alpha and the internal consistency reliability coefficient of the items was 0.77. Hence, the instrument is reliable to be used for the study. Analysis is important because new insights into the data are drawn, connections were made and relationships established. The data was analyzed using frequency distribution tables and percentages.

**Result**

**Table 1: Qualification of English language teachers**

S/N	Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	NCE	28	25
2	B.ED	67	59
3	M.ED	18	16
4	PhD	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>113</b>	<b>100</b>

Dansharif and Lamido (2022)

Table 1 shows the educational qualifications of the English language teachers in secondary schools in Kano State, Tarauni Local Government. Those with B.ED are at the highest frequency of 67 (59%), followed by teachers NCE with the frequency of 28 (25%), followed by those who hold M.ED with a frequency of 18 (16%), while those with PhD have frequency of 0 (0%).

**Table 2: English language teachers' areas of specialization**

S/N	Area of Specialization	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	English language	56	50
2	Literary Studies	34	30
3	M.A English Language	23	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>113</b>	<b>100</b>

Dansharif and Lamido (2022)

Table 2 shows the English language teachers' areas of specialization. Those who specialized in English language have highest frequency of 56 (50%). Those who specialize in literary studies followed with frequency of 34 (30%), while those who specialized in M.A English language have a frequency of 23 (20%). From the table, it is revealed teacher specialization is adequate.

**Table 3: Teaching experience of English language teachers in Kano State Tarauni Local Government**

S/N	Teaching experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	1 – 5 years	29	26
2	6 – 10 years	66	58
3	11years and above	18	16

Total	113	100
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Dansharif and Lamido (2022)

Table 3 indicates the teaching experience of English language teachers in Kano State. Those with 6 – 10 years teaching experience have highest frequency of 66 (58%). Those with 1 – 5 years teaching experience followed with a frequency of 29 (26%), while those with 11years and above teaching experience have the frequency of 18 (16%). This information is a clear portrayal that schools are equipped with experienced teachers.

### Conclusion

Majority of the teachers have B.ED qualification followed by those who possess NCE qualification. Lowest number of the teachers has qualification of M.ED, while none of them have PhD qualification. The finding is in line with Ehimmidus' (2015), observation that the teaching of English language in secondary schools deserves to have highly qualified and motivated teachers who possess relevant knowledge and skills for effective handling of secondary education. Qualification of teachers determines how much they can deliver in the classroom in terms of teaching. Also, the findings showed that majority of the teachers specialize in English language, followed by those who specialized in Literary Studies, while those who specialize in M.A English Language are smallest in number. This showed that majority of teachers who teach English language in Kano State were specialists in English language. However, some are non- specialists, yet they teach the subject. The findings agreed with Ajayi (2005), suggestion that teachers should be appointed to teach in the area of their specializations in order to bring out the best in them. The findings of the study also show that the teaching experience of English language teachers in Tarauni local government. Teachers with 6 – 10 years teaching experience are highest in number, followed by those with 1 – 5 years teaching experience, while those with 11years and above teachers are the smallest in number. The study showed that experienced English language teachers were not adequate in Tarauni local government Kano State. This is in line with earlier finding by Ajayi (2005) that majority of English language teachers in some States in Northern geopolitical zones of Nigeria were not adequately experienced. In a research carried out by Thomas (2008), he posited that teaching experience has a significant positive effect on students' achievement. This is in line with the current study. As commented earlier, teaching experience is needed for better teaching



## Recommendations

Based on the findings and implications of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. More of M.ED English language qualified teachers should be employed in various secondary schools across the state.
2. Teachers whose area of specialization is English language should only be the ones to be employed to teach the subject in secondary schools in Tarauni local government, Kano State.
3. English language teachers who have 6 – 10 years of teaching experience should not be employed to teach the subject in the State since they are adamant to change.

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