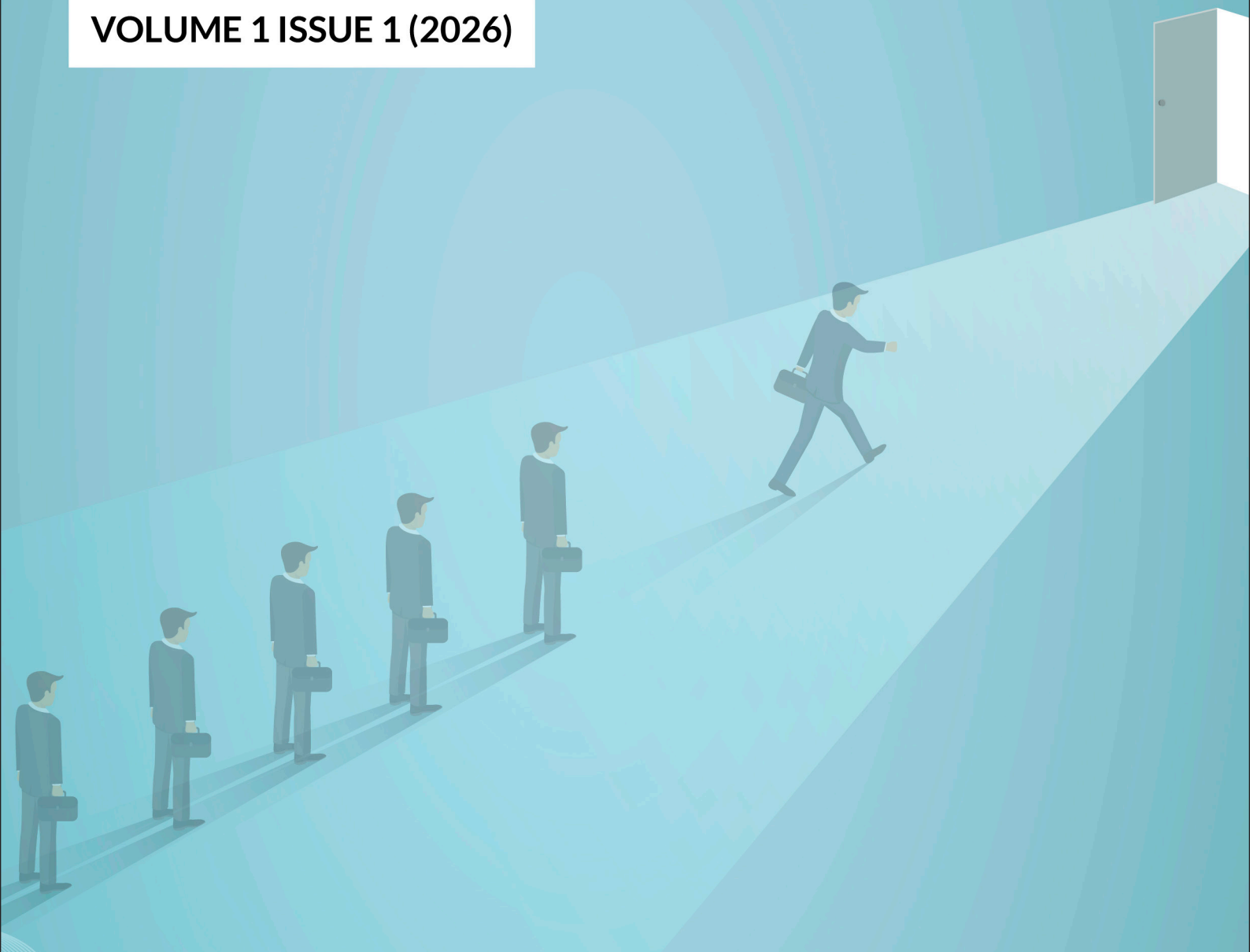
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Institutional Variables and the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting in Public Secondary Schools in Ekiti State

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated institutional variables and the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive research design of the survey type. The population comprised 4,239 financial accounting students in public secondary schools in Ekiti State. The sample for the study consisted of 360 financial accounting students, selected through a multistage sampling procedure. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. An instrument titled "Institutional Variables and the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting Questionnaire (IVPSFAQ)" was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by various experts. To assess the instrument's reliability, the test-retest method was used, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.80. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation and inferential statistics, Regression Analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that the level of performance of students in financial accounting was moderate. The study also revealed that instructional materials, school infrastructure, class size, and school administration each had a statistically significant impact on students' performance. The study concluded that institutional variables have a significant bearing on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State. It was recommended that school administrators should intensify supervision and support for the teaching of procedural accounting tasks; government and school authorities should ensure teachers are trained to effectively utilise instructional materials, particularly ICT tools, rather than merely increasing their supply.

INTRODUCTION

Concern over the quality of learning outcomes in commercially-oriented subjects, including financial accounting, has grown among educators. Evidence supports this concern: students' performance in Accounting fell noticeably between 2021 and 2023; NECO results showed a 12 percent decline, while WAEC results dropped by 8 percent over the same period (Udoukpong & Okon, 2024). These troubling statistics raise urgent questions about the institutional conditions under which financial accounting is taught and learned in public secondary schools, and underscore the importance of interrogating school-level variables that shape student performance. Understanding what institutional factors drive or constrain learning outcomes is not merely an academic exercise; it is a prerequisite for evidence-based reform in Nigerian secondary education, especially in financial accounting.

Financial accounting is a specialized area of study focused on gathering, sorting, recording, and communicating financial information in ways that support decision-making by both internal and external users. It involves the organized process of recording, classifying, choosing, analyzing, and interpreting financial data, which in turn helps users make informed decisions (Agbede & Ba'aba, 2019). Beyond its technical dimensions, financial accounting plays a foundational economic role: it equips individuals and organizations with the capacity to manage income, track expenditure, and plan resources responsibly. As a discipline, financial accounting underpins the work of accountants, auditors, financial analysts, managers, and entrepreneurs across all sectors of the economy. Its principles apply universally across business, government, civil society, and household management, making proficiency in financial accounting an indispensable competency in the modern economic environment. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2024) stated that the broad goal of secondary school education is to prepare individuals for useful living within the society and higher education, a goal in which financial accounting instruction plays an integral part (Idam & Okoli, 2025). This broad utility explains why financial accounting has been embedded in the Nigerian secondary school curriculum, a deliberate policy to equip young Nigerians with the financial literacy needed for economic participation and productivity, and to prepare them for tertiary education in accounting and related fields.

Within Nigeria's secondary education system, financial accounting is taught as a core subject in both the commercial and social science streams at the Senior Secondary School (SSS) level. The National Curriculum for Senior Secondary Schools (NERDC, 2019) outlines three broad purposes for financial accounting education at this level (Idam & Okoli, 2025). First, it offers specialized training that prepares students for careers in bookkeeping and accounting. Second, it gives students

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basic knowledge that helps them function effectively as consumers, workers, and citizens in economic life. Third, it lays a foundation for students who wish to pursue further studies in bookkeeping and accounting at a higher level. Taken together, these objectives show that financial accounting at the secondary level serves two purposes: preparing students directly for accounting-related work, and preparing them academically for advanced study in the field. Students' achievement in financial accounting is measured through the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE), administered by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and/or the National Examinations Council (NECO) (Idam & Okoli, 2025). However, even though the subject holds clear importance in the curriculum, public secondary schools in Nigeria continue to struggle with ongoing structural and teaching-related problems. These challenges make it difficult for schools to fully achieve the goals set out for financial accounting education. The extent to which students can achieve the goals prescribed for financial accounting education depends heavily on the institutional environment that surrounds the learning process, pointing to a need to critically examine student performance outcomes in the subject.

Student performance in financial accounting at the secondary school level in Nigeria remains a serious concern. According to the WAEC and NECO report cited in Idam and Okoli (2025), students' performance in financial accounting in 2017 to 2022 indicated that most students performed poorly in the subject, with a 61% performance rate below credit level and only 39% at credit level. Udoukpong and Okon (2024) observed that the abysmal academic achievement of students in WAEC and NECO is alarming, leading observers to question whether teachers possess the requisite quality and apply proper competencies in teaching financial accounting to students. These recurring deficits in student performance cannot be attributed solely to individual student characteristics; rather, a growing body of literature points to institutional variables, as primary determinants of whether or not students achieve satisfactory outcomes in financial accounting. Therefore, it is imperative to identify, examine, and understand these institutional variables in the context of public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Institutional variables refer to the school-level organizational, structural, and resource-related factors that directly or indirectly influence the process and quality of teaching and learning within an educational institution. Divine-Welekwe and Abraham (2025) identified the key components of educational facilities in secondary schools as including classroom instructional facilities, library facilities, laboratories, recreational facilities, technology facilities, staff rooms, and administrative facilities, all of which constitute core institutional variables. Unlike student-level variables such as aptitude, motivation, or family background, institutional variables are embedded in the school's organizational structure and governance, making them particularly amenable to policy intervention. Umeh and Hamzah (2025) identified school leadership, environment, and motivation as key determinants of academic achievement in Nigerian secondary schools, with effective leadership practices such as professional development, recognition, and a supportive school culture boosting teacher motivation and, in turn, enhancing student learning. The institutional environment functions as the systemic backdrop against which all teaching and learning activities unfold, and its quality ultimately mediates whether curriculum goals, including those for financial accounting, are achievable in practice. Some of the institutional variables responsible for student performance in financial accounting include teacher quality and competence, availability and utilization of instructional materials, school funding and financial resource allocation, school infrastructure and physical facilities, class size, school administration and leadership, among others.

The teacher's competence and professional qualifications are arguably the most consequential institutional variables influencing student performance in financial accounting. Udoukpong and Okon (2024) described teachers' quality as the ability of teachers to demonstrate sound professional attributes and skills, which are acquired through adequate training and continuous professional development. Students' academic achievement in financial accounting can be affected by many factors which include teachers' qualifications, teaching methods, and insensitivity to the nature of financial accounting when planning instructional activities in the classroom. Similarly, West African Examinations Council (WAEC, 2023) indicated that the quality of teachers remains a critical factor in the persistent underperformance of students in accounting-related subjects in public secondary school external examinations. The deployment of unqualified or under-qualified teachers to commercial subjects such as financial accounting remains a systemic challenge that directly depresses learning outcomes. Quality teacher preparation, continuous in-service training, and effective supervision are therefore critical for reversing the declining trend in student performance. The adequacy of teachers' professional preparation brings into focus the next institutional concern, the availability and deployment of instructional materials to support effective teaching.

Instructional materials are the physical and digital tools, including textbooks, accounting stationery, charts, calculators, and ICT equipment, that facilitate effective teaching and learning in financial accounting. Lack of facilities and inappropriate teaching and learning strategies are among the most cited factors contributing to students' poor academic achievement and declining interest in financial accounting (Idam & Okoli, 2025). Reliance on rote learning and chalk-and-talk methods, driven largely by a lack of appropriate accounting instructional resources, undermines students' ability to develop the practical and analytical skills financial accounting demands. The state of instructional materials

is closely connected to the broader question of how schools are financed, which leads to a consideration of school funding as another critical institutional variable.

Adequate and well-directed funding is an essential prerequisite for institutional effectiveness in secondary education. Ineye-Briggs (2023) observed that through funding, relevant instructional materials are purchased, and an adequate number of human resources are provided to realize the objectives of the school; as a result of inadequate funding, numerous problems arise in the sector, including poor infrastructural facilities, a poor number and quality of teachers, and low public confidence in the general quality of education. At the level of public secondary schools, poor financing results in direct instructional consequences: dilapidated classrooms, shortage of textbooks, unmotivated teachers, and the absence of modern teaching aids needed for financial accounting instruction. According to Umeh and Hamzah (2025), appropriate distribution of funds guarantees that teachers receive competitive remuneration, which helps attract and retain educators of high calibre, while also providing financial resources for professional development that allows teachers to improve their abilities and remain informed about recent educational methodologies. Without sustainable and equitably distributed funding, institutional improvement in public secondary schools remains elusive. School funding directly determines the physical environment of learning, which connects naturally to the role of school infrastructure and physical facilities.

The physical learning environment, comprising classrooms, libraries, laboratories, furniture, and ICT facilities, constitutes a fundamental institutional variable in shaping student academic outcomes. Divine-Welekwe and Abraham (2025) described educational infrastructure as encompassing classrooms, libraries, laboratories, ICT facilities, electricity supply, water systems, sanitation facilities, furniture, administrative buildings, and recreational facilities that support teaching and learning processes, asserting that school infrastructure constitutes the physical resources that facilitate effective educational delivery and students' academic performance. In accounting education specifically, a well-stocked library, functional classrooms, and access to business newspapers and financial records are essential to contextualizing accounting concepts for students. Dilapidated or poorly maintained infrastructure not only impedes instruction but signals to students a systemic devaluation of their education, with consequences for motivation and engagement. These physical conditions are further complicated by the number of students sharing the available space, which brings into focus the institutional variable of class size.

Class size refers to the number of students assigned to a single teacher in a given instructional session, and it represents one of the most widely debated institutional variables in the educational performance literature. Class size is the number of students per teacher in a given class and described it as one of the important determinants of academic performance over which teachers in schools have little or no control, noting that it has effects on students' feelings and performance as well as the quality of school budgets and administration (Garba *et al.*, 2023). Large class sizes force instructors to use class time for administrative activities rather than instruction, impacting the quality of teacher–student relationships and leading to poor academic performance among students. In financial accounting, where individual student practice, trial balances, journal entries, ledger postings, and financial statement preparation, is essential to mastery, overcrowded classrooms create significant pedagogical barriers. Reducing class sizes to manageable levels is therefore a key institutional reform imperative in the quest to improve financial accounting outcomes in public secondary schools. Complementing effective class management is the role of school leadership and administration, which functions as the coordinating force behind all institutional variables.

The quality of school leadership, particularly the principal's administrative style and management competence, functions as a powerful mediating institutional variable that shapes the overall institutional climate for learning. In the specific context of commercial subjects like financial accounting, where organized school timetabling, teacher deployment, and subject-specific resource acquisition require deliberate administrative decisions, the quality of school leadership is especially consequential. Idam and Okoli (2025) also recommended that school administrators should train and retrain financial accounting teachers on ways of adopting and effectively using innovative learning strategies, pointing to the pivotal role of administrative leadership in shaping instructional quality. A principal who is visionary, administratively competent, and instructionally focused creates the enabling environment within which teachers can deliver quality accounting instruction and students can realize their academic potential.

Statement of the Problem

The performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Nigeria has been persistently raising serious concerns among educators, parents, and policymakers. Students in public secondary schools seems to record low grades in financial accounting in both internal and external examinations, a trend that undermines their readiness for tertiary education and limits their prospects for entrepreneurial and professional engagement in accounting-related fields. Despite various government efforts to improve secondary education in the state, the problem of poor student performance in financial accounting seems to persists, suggesting that the solutions required go beyond the individual student and lie within the institutional environment of the schools. While several studies have examined student-related factors such as study habits, motivation, and gender as contributors to poor performance in financial accounting,

far less attention has been paid to the institutional variables operating within the schools, specifically availability of instructional materials, school infrastructure, class size, and school administration as determinants of student outcomes in the subject. Students' poor academic achievement in financial accounting has been linked to teachers' insensitivity to the nature of the subject, lack of facilities, and inappropriate teaching strategies. Similarly, the availability and utilization of educational facilities significantly correlate with students' academic performance in Nigerian secondary schools. It is on this note that the study seeks to examine institutional variables and the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the effect of institutional variables on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State. Specifically, the study intends to:

- determine the level of performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State;
- assess the impact of availability of instructional materials on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State;
- determine the impact of school infrastructure on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State;
- find out the impact of class size on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State;
- determine the impact of school administration on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

- What is the level of performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?
- To what extent does the availability of instructional materials affect the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?
- What is the impact of school infrastructure on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?
- What is the impact of class size on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?
- What is the impact of school administration on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- There is no significant impact of availability of instructional materials on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.
- There is no significant impact of school infrastructure on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.
- Class size will not significantly impact the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.
- School administration will not significantly affect the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.
- There is no joint significant impact of institutional variables on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The descriptive research design of the survey type was adopted in this study. The population for comprised 4,239 financial accounting students in public Secondary Schools in Ekiti State. A total of sample size of 360 financial accounting students was selected for the study. The sample size was determined by using Taro Yamane Formula and the sample was selected using a multistage sample procedure. A questionnaire titled " Institutional Variables and the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting Questionnaire (IVPSFAQ)" was the instrument used for the collection of data for the study. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the instrument was subjected face and content screening by the researcher's supervisor, a lecturer in Business Education unit and one expert in Tests, Measurement & Evaluation from Institute of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti. The test-retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument, and a reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained and was adjudged reliable. Descriptive analysis of mean and standard deviation was used to answer he research questions while all the hypotheses were tested using Regression Analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What is the level of performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?

Table 1 shows that four of the seven items relating to the level of performance of students in financial accounting were rated Moderate, while three items were rated Low, producing a grand mean of 2.64, which is above the cut-off mean of 2.50. Students rated their performance highest in the interpretation of accounting problems ($\bar{x}$ = 3.13, SD = 0.54), their general performance in continuous assessment tests ($\bar{x}$ = 3.10, SD = 0.70), and their performance in internal and mock examinations ($\bar{x}$ = 2.98, SD = 0.63). Performance in preparing financial statements was also rated Moderate ($\bar{x}$ = 2.59, SD = 0.49). However, students rated their performance Low in recording journal entries ($\bar{x}$ = 2.44, SD = 0.50), preparing trial balances ($\bar{x}$ = 2.16, SD = 0.59), and posting entries to

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis Showing the Level of Performance of Students in Financial Accounting in Public Secondary Schools in Ekiti State

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	My general performance in financial accounting in continuous assessment tests	3.10	0.70	Moderate
2	My performance in recording journal entries	2.44	0.50	Low
3	My performance in posting entries to the ledger	2.10	0.59	Low
4	My performance in preparing trial balances	2.16	0.59	Low
5	My performance in preparing financial statements (income statement and balance sheet)	2.59	0.49	Moderate
6	My performance in interpretation of accounting problems	3.13	0.54	Moderate
7	My performance in financial accounting in internal examinations and mock examinations	2.98	0.63	Moderate

N = 360; Grand Mean = 2.64; Cut-off mean: 2.50

the ledger ($\bar{x}$ = 2.10, SD = 0.59), the three items with the lowest means on the table.

Research Question 2: To what extent does the availability of instructional materials affect the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis Showing the Extent to which Availability of Instructional Materials Affects the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Accounting textbooks are available for students.	2.85	0.70	Often
2	Calculators are provided for accounting lessons.	3.25	0.59	Often
3	Accounting charts are used in teaching.	2.94	0.63	Often
4	ICT tools support accounting instruction.	1.78	0.55	Rarely
5	Instructional materials boost students' performance.	2.33	0.47	Rarely

N = 360; Grand Mean = 2.63; Cut-off mean: 2.50

Table 2 shows that three of the five items relating to the availability of instructional materials were rated Often, while two items were rated Rarely, yielding a grand mean of 2.63, which is above the cut-off mean of 2.50. Respondents indicated that calculators are often provided for accounting lessons ($\bar{x}$ = 3.25, SD = 0.59) and that accounting charts are often used in teaching ($\bar{x}$ = 2.94, SD = 0.63), while accounting textbooks are also often available for students ($\bar{x}$ = 2.85, SD = 0.70). However, respondents reported that ICT tools rarely support accounting instruction ($\bar{x}$ = 1.78, SD = 0.55), the lowest mean on the table, and rarely agreed that instructional materials boost students' performance ($\bar{x}$ = 2.33, SD = 0.47).

Research Question 3: What is the impact of school infrastructure on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis Showing the Impact of School Infrastructure on the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Classrooms are conducive for accounting lessons.	3.19	0.49	Agree
2	The library supports accounting studies.	2.68	0.56	Agree
3	Electricity supply is adequate for lessons.	2.04	0.65	Disagree
4	Furniture is adequate for students.	3.29	0.51	Agree
5	School infrastructure boosts students' performance.	2.70	0.57	Agree

N = 360; Grand Mean = 2.78; Cut-off mean: 2.50

Table 3 shows that four of the five items relating to school infrastructure were rated Agree, while one item was rated Disagree, producing a grand mean of 2.78, which is above the cut-off mean of 2.50. Respondents most strongly agreed that furniture is adequate for students ($\bar{x}$ = 3.29, SD = 0.51) and that classrooms are conducive for accounting lessons ($\bar{x}$ = 3.19, SD = 0.49). Respondents also agreed that school infrastructure boosts students' performance ($\bar{x}$ = 2.70, SD = 0.57) and that the library supports accounting studies ($\bar{x}$ = 2.68, SD = 0.56). However, respondents disagreed that electricity supply is adequate for lessons ($\bar{x}$ = 2.04, SD = 0.65), the

lowest mean on the table. These findings indicate that the basic physical infrastructure of classrooms, furniture, and library support is reasonably adequate in public secondary schools in Ekiti State, but that inadequate electricity supply remains a notable infrastructural gap affecting financial accounting instruction.

Research Question 4: What is the impact of class size on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State?

Table 4 shows that three of the five items relating to class size were rated Agree, while two items were rated Disagree, yielding a grand mean of 2.63, which is above the cut-off mean of 2.50. Respondents agreed that large classes limit accounting practice ($\bar{x}$ = 3.12, SD = 0.60), that small classes improve accounting understanding ($\bar{x}$ = 3.05, SD = 0.48), and that class size affects students' performance ($\bar{x}$ = 2.81, SD = 0.68). However, respondents disagreed that teachers give individual attention to students ($\bar{x}$ = 2.11, SD = 0.63) and disagreed that accounting classes are overcrowded ($\bar{x}$ = 2.04, SD = 0.53). These findings suggest that although students do not perceive their classes as literally overcrowded, they nonetheless recognise that class size has a bearing on the quality of individual attention they receive and on their overall performance in financial accounting.

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis Showing the Impact of Class Size on the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Accounting classes are overcrowded.	2.04	0.53	Disagree
2	Teachers give individual attention to students.	2.11	0.63	Disagree
3	Large classes limit accounting practice.	3.12	0.60	Agree
4	Small classes improve accounting understanding.	3.05	0.48	Agree
5	Class size affects students' performance.	2.81	0.68	Agree

N = 360; Grand Mean = 2.63; Cut-off mean: 2.50

Research Question 5: What is the impact of school administration on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State? Table 5 shows that four of the five items relating to school administration were rated Agree, while one item was rated Disagree, producing a grand mean of 2.76, which is above the cut-off mean of 2.50. Respondents most strongly agreed that the principal supervises accounting lessons ($\bar{x}$ = 3.03, SD = 0.59), and agreed that timetabling supports accounting instruction ($\bar{x}$ = 2.91, SD = 0.62) and that school administration boosts students' performance ($\bar{x}$ = 2.91, SD = 0.57). Respondents also agreed that administration provides accounting resources ($\bar{x}$ = 2.69, SD = 0.46). However, respondents disagreed that teacher training is organised regularly ($\bar{x}$ = 2.27, SD = 0.61), the lowest mean on the table. These findings indicate that school administrators in public secondary schools in Ekiti State are reasonably active in supervision, resourcing, and timetabling for financial accounting instruction, but that regular in-service training for financial accounting teachers remains inadequate.

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis Showing the Impact of School Administration on the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

S/N	Items	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	The principal supervises accounting lessons.	3.03	0.59	Agree
2	Administration provides accounting resources.	2.69	0.46	Agree
3	Teacher training is organized regularly.	2.27	0.61	Disagree
4	Timetabling supports accounting instruction.	2.91	0.62	Agree
5	School administration boosts students' performance.	2.91	0.57	Agree

N = 360; Grand Mean = 2.76; Cut-off mean: 2.50

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant impact of availability of instructional materials on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Table 6 shows a statistically significant relationship between the availability of instructional materials and the performance of students in financial accounting, R = 0.229, R^2 = 0.052, F(1, 358) = 19.765, p = 0.000 (p

Table 6: Simple Regression Analysis Showing the Impact of Instructional Materials on the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

Coefficients					
Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	3.078	0.098	-	31.310	0.000
Instructional Materials	-0.165	0.037	-0.229	-4.446	0.000

R = 0.229,R Square = 0.052,Sig. = 0.000[b]

< 0.05). The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicates that instructional materials accounted for 5.2% of the variation in students' performance. However, the direction of the relationship is negative (B = -0.165, Beta = -0.229, t = -4.446, p = 0.000), indicating that higher ratings of instructional materials availability were associated with lower performance scores in the sample. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, as availability of instructional materials was found to have a statistically significant, though inverse, impact on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant impact of school infrastructure on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Table 7: Simple Regression Analysis Showing the Impact of Instructional Materials on the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

Coefficients					
Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	2.906	0.085	-	34.247	0.000
School Infrastructure	-0.095	0.030	-0.163	-3.121	0.002

R = 0.163, R Square = 0.026, Sig. =0.002[b]

Table 7 shows a statistically significant relationship between school infrastructure and the performance of students in financial accounting, R = 0.163, R^2 = 0.026, F(1, 358) = 9.740, p = 0.002 (p < 0.05). The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicates that school infrastructure accounted for 2.6% of the variation in students' performance. As with instructional materials, the direction of the relationship is negative (B = -0.095, Beta = -0.163, t = -3.121, p = 0.002). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, as school infrastructure was found to have a statistically significant, though inverse and comparatively weak, impact on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Hypothesis Three: Class size will not significantly impact the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Table 8: Simple Regression Analysis Showing the Impact of Class Size on the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

Coefficients					
Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	2.025	0.091	-	22.295	0.000
Class Size	0.235	0.034	0.340	6.841	0.000

R = 0.340, R Square = 0.116, Sig. =0.000[b]

Table 8 shows a statistically significant, positive relationship between class size and the performance of students in financial accounting, R = 0.340, R^2 = 0.116, F(1, 358) = 46.796, p = 0.000 (p < 0.05). The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicates that class size accounted for 11.6% of the variation in students' performance (B = 0.235, Beta = 0.340, t = 6.841, p = 0.000). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, as class size was found to have a statistically significant impact on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Hypothesis Four: School administration will not significantly affect the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Table 9: Simple Regression Analysis Showing the Impact of School Administration on the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

Coefficients					
Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	1.432	0.070	-	20.419	0.000
School Administration	0.439	0.025	0.676	17.379	0.000

R = 0.676, R Square = 0.458, Sig. =0.000[b]

Table 9 shows a statistically significant, strong positive relationship between school administration and the performance of students in financial accounting, R = 0.676, R^2 = 0.458, F(1, 358) = 302.021, p = 0.000 (p < 0.05). The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicates that school administration alone accounted for 45.8% of the variation in students' performance, the largest single contribution among the four institutional variables examined (B = 0.439, Beta = 0.676, t = 17.379, p = 0.000). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, as school administration was found to have a statistically significant impact on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Hypothesis Five: There is no joint significant impact of

Table 10: Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Joint Impact of Institutional Variables on the Performance of Students in Financial Accounting

Coefficients					
Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**T**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	1.346	0.145	-	9.290	0.000
Instructional Materials	-0.104	0.027	-0.144	-3.875	0.000
School Infrastructure	0.009	0.022	0.015	0.407	0.684
Class Size	0.152	0.026	0.219	5.826	0.000
School Administration	0.416	0.024	0.641	17.288	0.000

R = 0.673476, R Square = 0.538, Sig. =0.000[b]

institutional variables on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Table 10 shows a statistically significant joint impact of the institutional variables, instructional materials, school infrastructure, class size, and school administration, on the performance of students in financial accounting, $R = 0.734$, $R^2 = 0.538$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.533$, $F(4, 355) = 103.514$, $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). The coefficient of determination (R^2) indicates that the four institutional variables jointly accounted for 53.8% of the variation in students' performance in financial accounting. The coefficients table shows that school administration made the strongest individual contribution to the model (Beta = 0.641, t = 17.288, p = 0.000), followed by class size (Beta = 0.219, t = 5.826, p = 0.000) and instructional materials, which made a significant negative contribution (Beta = -0.144, t = -3.875, p = 0.000). School infrastructure did not make a significant independent contribution to the joint model (Beta = 0.015, t = 0.407, p = 0.684), even though it was significant on its own in the simple regression reported in Table 7. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, as institutional variables were found to have a statistically significant joint impact on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State.

Discussion

Students in public secondary schools in Ekiti State rated their overall performance in financial accounting as moderate, but performance was consistently weaker on the core procedural tasks of journalising, posting entries, and preparing trial balances than on conceptual or examination-based tasks. This pattern supports the position of Idam and Okoli (2025), who linked persistently low financial accounting outcomes in WAEC and NECO to a mismatch between how the subject is taught and its inherently practical demands. It also aligns with Hamzat and Emeasoba (2024), who argued that mastery of financial accounting depends on repeated practical exercises such as posting entries and balancing accounts, and with Udoukpong and Okon (2024), who traced declining results in the subject to weaknesses in classroom practice rather than to students' conceptual ability alone. Financial accounting is a practice-oriented subject, so students can grasp concepts and perform reasonably on tests while still lacking the sustained hands-on drilling needed to master its step-by-step procedures.

Respondents indicated that conventional instructional materials, including textbooks, calculators, and charts, were often available, but ICT tools were rarely available and students were not convinced that available materials improved their performance. This finding is consistent with Idam and Okoli (2025) and with the broader observation that many Nigerian public secondary schools lack sufficient teaching aids for financial accounting instruction. It also reflects the caution raised by Ameen *et al.* (2024), who noted that it is the appropriate use of materials, and not merely their physical presence, that determines their effect on learning outcomes. Schools appear to have stocked low-cost, conventional materials without extending this investment to digital tools, so the materials available may not be the kind that meaningfully support current accounting practice.

School infrastructure was generally rated adequate, particularly in terms of furniture and classroom conditions, but electricity supply was rated inadequate, the only infrastructure item on which respondents disagreed. This is broadly in line with Agbor *et al.* (2022), who described physical facilities as essential structural resources for effective schooling, and with Divine-Welekwe and Abraham (2025), who identified electricity and ICT facilities as components of infrastructure that are often overlooked relative to classrooms and furniture. Static infrastructure such as furniture and classrooms is easier to provide and maintain than ongoing operational needs like electricity, which explains why physical structures score better than power supply.

Respondents disagreed that their classes were overcrowded or that teachers gave them individual attention, yet they agreed that large classes limit accounting practice and that class size affects performance overall. This finding supports Garba *et al.* (2023), who described class size as a determinant of performance that shapes the quality of teacher-student interaction even where enrolment is not extreme, and Akinyemi *et al.* (2024), who found that smaller classes allow for deeper content coverage and more individualised attention. Students appear sensitive to how class size affects the practice time and personal feedback they receive, which matters more for financial accounting than for subjects that rely less on individual procedural correction.

School administration was rated positively overall, with strong ratings for lesson supervision, timetabling, and resource provision, but respondents disagreed that teacher training was organised regularly. This aligns with Bassey *et al.* (2023), who found that active, coaching-oriented leadership improves teacher effectiveness, and with Idam and Okoli (2025), who recommended that administrators take a more active role in training and retraining financial accounting teachers specifically. School leaders appear engaged in routine academic management but have not prioritised continuous professional development, leaving a gap between administrative activity and teacher capacity-building.

Instructional materials were found to have a statistically significant relationship with students' performance, but the direction of the relationship was negative, meaning higher-rated availability was associated with lower performance. This result departs from Mustapha *et al.* (2022) and Adenagbe *et al.* (2024), both of whom reported significant positive relationships between instructional materials and performance in Nigerian secondary schools, including within Ekiti State. Lucas and Morbo (2025) ran an experiment with 44 students and found that multimedia instructional materials significantly raised posttest scores of students. Mustapha *et al.* (2022) and Adenagbe *et al.* (2024) found a positive effect, which your negative result departs from. It is, however, consistent with the caution raised by Ameen *et al.* (2024), who argued that appropriate utilisation, rather than mere availability, is what drives learning outcomes. Materials that are nominally available but limited to conventional items and underused, as reflected in the low rating for ICT tools, may not translate into improved performance regardless of how available they are rated to be.

School infrastructure showed a statistically significant but weak and negative relationship with performance, and this effect disappeared once the other institutional variables were controlled for. This departs from Agbor *et al.* (2022) and Ayodele *et al.* (2025), who both found that better-equipped schools recorded stronger academic outcomes. It is more consistent with Divine-Welekwe and Abraham (2025), who argued that no single institutional factor operates independently of the others. Infrastructure may not function as an independent driver of performance in this context, since its effect appears to be absorbed by stronger institutional factors such as administration once these are considered together.

Class size showed a statistically significant positive relationship with performance, confirming it as a meaningful independent predictor. This is consistent with Garba *et al.* (2023), Akinyemi *et al.* (2024), and Utsu *et al.* (2026), all of whom found that class size significantly influenced students' academic outcomes in Nigerian secondary schools, and with Genga-Ayiemba (2025), whose meta-analysis found that smaller classes consistently enhance teacher-student interaction and differentiated instruction. Malabarbas *et al.* (2022) found no association between class size and kindergarten pupils' developmental performance which is in contrasts with significant result of the current study, but it covers a different level and outcome. Manageable class sizes likely allow for more individual attention and hands-on practice, both of which are essential for mastering the procedural skills that financial accounting demands.

School administration produced the strongest and most significant positive relationship with performance among the four institutional variables examined. This finding aligns with Bassey *et al.* (2023), who found that coaching-oriented leadership styles improved both teacher effectiveness and student outcomes, and with Umeh and Hamzah (2025), who identified school leadership as a central institutional determinant of achievement through its influence on teacher motivation. Reyes and Oropa (2025) found that supervision was highly practised but not significantly linked to learner performance. This adds to the strong administration finding and supports the current study recommendation that supervision be paired with teacher training. Administrative quality likely functions as the coordinating factor that determines how well other institutional conditions, such as materials and infrastructure, are actually implemented and used in the classroom.

The four institutional variables jointly produced a statistically significant effect on performance, with school administration making the strongest contribution, followed by class size, while instructional materials made a significant negative contribution and school infrastructure lost significance once the other variables were controlled for. This corroborates Isma'ila *et al.* (2022), who found that human and physical resources jointly explained a significant proportion of variance in financial accounting performance in Bauchi State, and Adebule and Adeusi (2017), who found that school size and facilities utilisation jointly explained a substantial share of variance in academic performance among Ekiti State secondary school students. Institutional variables appear to function as an interconnected system rather than as isolated factors, so their combined effect is stronger and more revealing than the effect of any single variable considered alone.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that institutional variables have a statistically significant bearing on the performance of students in financial accounting in public secondary schools in Ekiti State. School administration emerged as the most consequential institutional variable, exerting the strongest positive influence on performance, followed by class size, while instructional materials and school infrastructure, though statistically significant, related to performance in an inverse rather than a supportive direction, suggesting that the mere availability of materials and physical facilities is not sufficient on its own to guarantee improved performance unless accompanied by effective utilisation and administrative support.

Recommendations

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

1. School administrators should intensify supervision and support for the teaching of the procedural aspects of financial accounting, particularly journal entries, ledger posting, and trial balance preparation, where students recorded the lowest performance;
2. Government and school authorities should not merely increase the supply of instructional materials but should ensure that teachers are trained on how to effectively utilise available materials, particularly ICT tools, to translate material availability into improved student performance;
3. Government should prioritise the improvement of electricity supply in public secondary schools in Ekiti State to support consistent and effective delivery of financial accounting instruction;
4. School authorities should work towards manageable class sizes for financial accounting instruction and encourage teachers to adopt strategies, such as small-group practice sessions, that increase individualised attention to students regardless of overall class enrolment;
5. Given the strong positive influence of school administration on performance, principals and school administrators should be supported and held accountable for organising regular in-service training for financial accounting teachers, an area this study found to be inadequate;
6. Educational policymakers and curriculum planners in Ekiti State should adopt a joint, coordinated approach to institutional improvement, recognising that instructional materials, infrastructure, class size, and administration interact together, rather than addressing any single institutional variable in isolation, in efforts to improve financial accounting performance.

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