

Teachers' Characteristics as Predictor of Students' Learning Outcomes in General English in College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Students' continual dismal performance in public examinations from the primary to the tertiary level of education is increasingly alarming and pathetic. The search for a panacea necessitated this survey of teachers' characteristics as predictor of students' learning outcomes in general english in College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, Nigeria. The aim is to assess how teachers' self efficacy, teaching style and rapport influence NCE students' achievement in General English. The study reveals that the teachers' teaching style and good rapport had significant influence on the students' achievement. Therefore it recommends that practicing teachers should make use of multiple teaching styles appropriately. And that good rapport enlivens the students' learning environment and boost learning outcome.

Keywords: *Teacher Characteristics, Students' Learning Outcomes, General English*

INTRODUCTION

The function of English Language for educational advancement in Nigeria is enormous. It is taught at all levels of educational systems. It is also the medium of instruction in the Nigerian schools right from the upper primary to the tertiary level. The knowledge of English language helps in understanding other school subjects since it is used to teach all other subjects except the indigenous languages. Good foundation of the language paves way to success in life. Donna (2007) asserts that a student whose performances in English language is high, usually have the tendency of good performances in other subjects expect in rare cases.

It is, however, a matter of great concern that the English language learning outcomes of the student right from the primary school levels to the tertiary institutions have been on a steady decline since 1960. Studies have shown that there is a low performance of students in English language at various levels of the educational sector (Fakeye, 2008). Furthermore, most of the students in tertiary institutions have so much difficulty with their communicative skills in the English language that they cannot function effectively in the academic use of

English and in the effective delivery of instruction (Jones, 2010). These very poor outings have made it increasingly difficult for students to fill their admission quota in the various colleges and universities in Nigeria. This standard is rather too low when one considers the extent of investment made in the educational sector by government, teachers, parents and other stakeholders (Joseph and Joshua, 2010). The poor performances of students in English language in public examinations in recent times have left a number of questions to be answered for years. Added to this is the poor performance of students in tertiary institutions which drastically affect the instruction made in our schools.

Onukaogu (1994) in his study reports that various factors are responsible for the poor performance of students in English language such as absence of vigorous language policy, inadequate materials and infrastructure for teaching the language an unequipped teachers, Fakeye (2012) states that the poor performance of students in English language at public examinations in recent times has been explained as a major cause of the decline in academic achievement and standard of education in Nigeria. It is in search for solution to this problem that researchers are now examining teachers effectiveness in English language teaching. Classroom studies have shown that teachers teaching styles (intellectual excitement) sense of efficacy and teachers interpersonal rapport are associated with increase in students' achievement in English language across schools (Jarvis, 2004; Good and Brophy, 2003). This means that teachers are among the most important players influencing students' achievement, holding the key to filling the gaps in the students' learning.

Teachers should therefore possess some characteristics to make them effective teachers. Over the years, there have been reports of an incessant poor performance of students in General English in the nation's tertiary institutions. Scholars have attributed this phenomenon to the teachers' teaching style, teachers' sense of efficiency and teachers interpersonal rapport, among other factors. Therefore, this study was carried out to investigate the extent to which teachers' characteristics could predict students' achievement in general English in College of Education Ikere Ekiti. Specifically, teachers teaching style and teachers' interpersonal rapport as predictors of academic achievement in General English were examined. The following research questions guided the study:

1. Is there any significant relationship between teachers' sense of efficacy and students' learning outcomes in General English?
2. Is there any significant relationship between teachers' teaching style and students' learning outcomes in General English?
3. Is there any significant relationship between teachers' interpersonal rapport and students' learning outcomes in General English?

Findings from this study would provide empirical information on the teachers' characteristics that could predict students' academic achievement in General English. The study would also contribute to researchers' effort towards finding solution to the problems of poor performance of students in General English. It will also serve as an eye opener to teachers and other stakeholders in education on which of the teachers' characteristics could predict students' academic achievement in General English.

METHOD

This study adopted a survey research design. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to select the participants for the study. They consisted of 10 TEFL teachers and 50 selected students of College of Education, Ikere Ekiti. As measure of students' achievement, the end of the year examination scores in general use of English was used. Teachers' senses of efficacy (TSE) questionnaire was constructed based on criteria for instructional efficacy, students' engagement and classroom management. Teachers' teaching style (TTS) questionnaire was also constructed on teachers' perceptions and preferences with respect to the concepts of Intellectual Excitement (IE) and Interpersonal rapport (IR). Also, the first semester general English result in a standardized written examination measuring the progress of the students in all the areas of the course outlines covered in the course for the semester was used to measure students' achievement. The first examination scores of the student participants in general English was retrieved from the general studies department, college of education, Ikere Ekiti along with the names of the participants' teachers. The questionnaires items were constructed by the researchers with input from experts in language unit, university of Ibadan. It was trials tested using Crombach alpha to determine its reliability co-efficient. A value of 76 was obtained meaning that the instrument is reliable. Multiple regression analysis was used as the main statistical procedure for the purpose of investigating the hypotheses put forward in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the relationship between teacher's sense of efficacy and students' achievement. The result obtained from the analysis showed that the calculated value of 0.0986 is less than r-critical value of 0.250 at 0.05 level of significance. As such the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between teachers' sense of efficacy and students' learning outcomes in General English is rejected. This shows that there is no significant relationship between teachers' senses of efficacy and students' achievement in general English. Table 2 shows the relation between teacher's teaching style and student's achievement in general English. The result obtained from the analysis shows that the calculated value of 0.250 is greater than r-critical value of 0.1848 at 0.05 level of significance as such the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between teachers' teaching style and students' learning outcomes in General English is rejected. This shows that there is significant relationship between teachers' teaching style and students' achievement in general English. Table 3 presents the relationship between teacher's interpersonal rapport and student teachers' achievement in use of English. The result obtained from the analysis shows that the calculated value of 0.250 is greater than r-critical value of 0.01303 at 0.05 level of significance as such the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between teachers' interpersonal rapport and students' learning outcomes in General English is rejected. This showed that there is significant relationship between teachers' interpersonal rapport and students' achievement in general English.

Table 1: Is there any significant relationship between teachers' sense of efficacy and students' learning outcomes in General English?

Variables	Frequency	X	SD	DF	r-cal	r-tab
Teachers' sense of efficacy	10	2.5800	0.7848	48	0.0986	0.250
Students' learning outcomes	50	2.8200	0.8965	48	0.0986	0.250

Source: Survey, 2013

Table 2: Is there any significant relationship between teachers' teaching style and students' learning outcomes in General English?

Variables	Frequency	X	SD	DF	r-cal	r-tab
Teacher's teaching style	10	2.800	0.8965	48	0.250	0.1848
Students' achievement	50	2.8200	4.0811	48	0.250	0.1848

Source: Survey, 2013

Table 3: Is there any significant relationship between teachers' interpersonal rapport and students' learning outcomes in General English?

Variables	Frequency	X	SD	DF	r-cal	r-tab
Teacher's interpersonal rapport	10	2.56	0.8965	48	0.250	0.01303
Students' learning outcomes	50	2.820	0.7602	48	0.250	0.01303

Source: Survey, 2013

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study surveyed teachers' characteristics as predictor of students' learning outcomes in general english in College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, Nigeria. Based on the results of the findings, it is concluded in this study that teacher's teaching style and personal rapport has significant effect on the achievement of students based on the rate at which calculated values of the hypotheses generated were more than their critical values which led to their total rejection at 0.05 level of significance. According to the findings, it was revealed that the calculated value of 0.0986 was less than r-critical value of 0.250 at 0.05 level of significance, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Therefore it was deduced that teachers' sence of efficacy has no significant influence on students' achievement in General English. This study hereby recommends that practicing teachers should employ several teaching styles that could enhance a better learning on the students' academic performance and develop good rapport with their students in order to create room for conducive learning environment. However, it is suggested that progressive researchers can look into the possible influence that self efficacy of teachers could have on their improvement as teachers, and how to also better the lots of prospective students in the classroom.

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