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The Influence of Teachers Agreeableness and Openness to Experience on Secondary School Students' English Language Academic Achievement in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

Purpose: The study sought to determine the extent to which teacher's agreeableness and teachers' openness to experience influence secondary school students' English language academic achievement in Ogoja education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. To carry out this study, two null hypotheses were formulated derived from the two research questions that were posed to guide the study.

Methodology: The research design adopted for the study was ex-post facto design. The stratified random sampling technique was used to select 800 out of 7,196 SS 1&2 students who participated in the study. A pilot trial test of the research instrument titled teacher's personality traits questionnaire (TPTQ) was administered to 50 SS 1&2 students in Calabar education zone. The analysis of the questionnaire yielded reliability coefficients ranging from .703 to .782 while that of the achievement test was .778. The data obtained were coded and analysed with the two (2) null hypotheses tested at .05 level of significance using simple linear regression.

Results: The results showed that Teacher's agreeableness does positively and significantly influence secondary school student's English language academic achievement. It also revealed that there is a significant positive influence of teachers' openness to experience on secondary school student's English language academic achievement in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practices: It was therefore recommended that teachers should expound their commitment by building caring relationships with students such that will make them approachable. It was equally recommended also that English teachers should be friendly and disposed at any time to meet the needs of the students academically.

Keywords: *Teachers agreeableness, Teachers openness to experience, Students' academic achievement.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers occupy unique position in the educational system of the world and Nigeria in particular. They have been universally accepted as one of the most important components of education and a competent teacher is sure to affect the educational outcomes of his or her students in many positive ways. Umoren and Ogbodo (2001) pointed out that emotional stability is one of the needed competences of the teacher. They emphasized that teachers should be emotionally stable in order to change the students under their control. In Nigeria, and indeed in Cross River State, teachers form a larger percentage of the workforce (Ashibi, 2005). This therefore means that teachers are in the forefront in the efforts made towards national development. Their efforts in manpower development in all fields and by extension the overall achievement of our national goals and objectives cannot be underestimated.

Sanders and Horn (2008) opined that the single most important factor in student academic performance is the classroom teacher. Therefore, identifying the characteristics that make teachers most effective is of high priority to school administrators, legislators, teachers, and students alike. Personality has been defined in many ways by many psychologists who wrote on the concept. According to Feldman (1994) in Daminabo (2008), Personality is the sum total of the characteristics that differentiates people, or the stability of a person's behaviour across different situations. In other words, it means those qualities the individual is noted for. Traits on the other hand are "enduring dimensions of personality characteristics which differentiates people from one another" (Colman, 2003 in Daminabo 2008). Traits are therefore the sum total of stable characteristics in a person across different times and situations, which make him or her unique or distinct from others.

Personality traits includes traits such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience, extraversion and locus of control developed by Daminabo, (2008). The acronym CAOEL is used to describe them. These personality traits according to Daminabo, (2008) affect academic performance of students, either positively or negatively. For the purpose of this paper, teacher's agreeableness and teacher's openness to experience shall be considered and how each influence secondary school students' English language academic achievement.

Agreeableness describes a teacher who is sympathetic, trusting and cooperative. Teachers with high scores on agreeableness are selfless, flexible and pleasant. Such teachers work with others and students easily with little or no friction. Those teachers scoring low on this trait however find it difficult to get along with others. Daminabo, (2008) noted this to be psychotics, which refer to a person who is skeptical, unsympathetic, uncooperative and rude. Low scores are expected to affect academic achievement of students negatively. In essence, teachers who possess this agreeable trait may influence their students' academic achievement positively.

Openness to experience on the other hand points to teachers who are creative, intellectually curious, aesthetic and having the ability to process complex situations. A student who is not doing well may be privilege to becoming better after having a close contact with teachers who are open to experience as such teachers always see the need to help and support

the students. These teachers may not be highly intelligent, but the attention they give to their students may put them on the path of doing well academically.

The researcher is not benighted of the fact that other factors such as insufficient teaching facilities, poor funding and a host of others may lead to academic underachievement in English language, but the present study however seeks to determine the extent to which teachers agreeableness and openness to experience influences secondary school students English language academic achievement in Ogoja education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of teacher's agreeableness and openness to experience on secondary school students' English language academic achievement in Ogoja education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study were:

- i. To investigate the influence of teacher's agreeableness on secondary school students' English language academic achievement.
- ii. To determine the influence of teacher's openness to experience on secondary school students' English language academic achievement.

Research hypothesis

The following hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance:

- i. Teacher's agreeableness does not significantly influence secondary school students' English language academic achievement.
- ii. There is no significant influence of teacher's openness to experience on secondary school students' English language academic achievement.

2. METHOD

The research design adopted for this study was the expost-facto method. This was adopted because the research studied the phenomena after they had occurred. Also considering the fact that the variables were not inherently manipulated by the researchers. The study population comprised all secondary school students in Ogoja Education Zone. The sampling technique adopted to select the sample was the stratified random sampling technique in order to ascertain a proportional representation of respondents from all the zones. A total of 800 students from all the zones formed the sample of the present study.

Instrumentation

The data collection instrument was a fact-finding questionnaire designed by the authors titled 'teachers personality traits questionnaire' (TPTQ). The basis for item development was based on conceptual definition of variables. It was administered to 50 SS 1&2 students in Calabar education zone. The analysis of the questionnaire yielded reliability coefficients ranging from .703 to .782 while that of the achievement test was .778.

Data Analysis

Data for the two hypotheses were analysed using simple linear regression to determine its influence on secondary school students' English language academic achievement.

- HO₁:** Teacher's agreeableness does not significantly influence secondary school students' English language academic achievement.
- HO₂:** There is no significant influence of teacher's openness to experience on secondary school students' English language academic achievement.

3. RESULT

Hypothesis one

Teacher's agreeableness does not significantly influence secondary school students' English language academic achievement.

To test this hypothesis, simple linear regression analysis was applied with teacher's agreeableness as the independent variable and students' English Language achievement as the dependent variable. The F-ratio test was used to test for the significance of the overall influence model, while t-test was used to test the significance of the relative contribution of the regression constant and coefficient (which represents the influence of the independent variable) in the model. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Regression of students' Eng. Lang achievement on their teachers' agreeableness

R – value = .093		adj. R – Squared = .007			
R – squared = .009		std. error = 8.784			
Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F-value	P-value
Regression	517.566	1	517.566	6.707*	.010
Residual	59262.929	768	77.165		
Total	59780.495	769			
Predictor variable	Unstandardised coeff		Std coeff	t-value	p-value
	B	Std. error			
Constant	15.965	2.050		7.786*	.000
Teachers' conscientiousness	.224	.086	.093	2.590*	.010

* Significant at .05 level. $P < .05$

The results in Table 1 show that an R-value of .093 was obtained, giving an R-squared value of .009. This means that about .9% of the total variation in students' English language

academic achievement is accounted for by the variation in teachers' agreeableness. The P-value (.010) associated with the computed F-value (6.707) is less than .05. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that teachers' agreeableness does significantly influence students' academic achievement in English language with both the regression constant (15.965) and coefficient (.224) making significant positive contribution in the influence model ($t = 7.786$ & 590 , $P = .000$ & $.010$ respectively). The influence model can therefore be written as

$$y = 15.965 + .224x$$

where x = teachers' agreeableness

$$y = \text{English language achievement}$$

Hypothesis two

There is no significant influence of teacher's openness to experience on secondary school students' English language academic achievement.

To test this hypothesis, the procedures used in testing hypothesis one were adopted, with teachers' openness to experience as the independent variable. The results are presented as Table 2.

Table 2 Regression of students' Eng. Lang achievement on their teachers' openness to experience

Source of variation		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F-value	P-value
Regression		2.312.901	1	2312.901	30.910*	.000
Residual		57467.594	768	74.828		
Total		59780.495	769			

Predictor variable	Unstandardised coeff		Std coeff	t-value	p-value
	B	Std. error			
Constant	11.199	1.823		6.127*	.000
teachers' conscientiousness	.438	.079	.197	5.560*	.000

* Significant at .05 level. $P < .05$

From Table 2, an R-value of .197 was observed, resulting in an R-squared value of .039. This means that about 3.9% of the total variation in English language academic achievement

is accounted for the variation in teacher's openness to experience. The P-value (.000) associated with the computed F-value (30.910) is less than .05. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that teacher's openness to experience has a significant influence on secondary school students' English language academic achievement, with both the regression constant (11.199) and coefficient (.438) making significant contribution in the influence model ($t = 6.127$ & 5.560 , $P = .000$ respectively). The model can therefore be written as

$$y = 11.199 + .438x$$

Where x = Teachers' openness to experience

y = Students' English language academic achievement.

4. DISCUSSION

The statistical analysis of hypothesis one has shown that teachers' agreeableness does positively and significantly influence secondary school student's English language academic achievement. These findings are in agreement with Schneiderjan (2005) who in his meta-analysis in California found a strong correlation between teacher's agreeableness as a trait and students' academic success in web-based business course. One can then maintain that, students will learn better when they are in the company of teachers who possesses agreeable trait, as further added by Larson (2015) who quoted Lane (2014) that secondary school students who rated their teachers as highly conscientious and agreeable felt more academically supported and encouraged.

These findings are also in consonance with Karen (2002) study on the big five personality on students learning outcome in Katsina. He found out that agreeableness is one of the personality trait of a teacher that has the magnitude to influence the learning outcome of students. The result of the study also revealed that teachers' who possesses agreeable personalities encouraged students to learn and study effectively.

The findings further corroborated with a meta-analysis of job performance by Mount, Barrick, and Stewart, (2008), who showed that agreeableness is the best predictor of performance for jobs requiring interpersonal interaction with co-workers, clients or students. This means that a teacher who possesses agreeable personality trait encourages student's performance both academically and psychologically. From the above revelations, it is very clear that a teacher who possesses agreeable trait, is friendly and compassionate, he or she is ever willing to agree with the students and solve their problems and on such bases, such a teacher will significantly and positively influence the academic achievement of students as revealed by this study.

The statistical analysis of hypothesis two of this study has revealed that, there is a significant positive influence of teacher's openness to experience on secondary school students English language academic achievement. These findings are in line with a study carried out by Armstrong and Fusliety (2013) on teachers' personality and students' mathematics knowledge in Lagos. They discovered that openness to experience is principal to knowledge accumulations

in mathematics subject. The authors further reported that among the personality traits, openness to experience are the fastest traits that boosts students learning ability in classroom.

These findings are also in consonance with a study carried out by Barrick and Mount (2001). They found that openness to experience was positively related to performance for managers and to performance for professionals such as teachers. The authors opined that teachers who have the personality trait of openness to experience build confidence in student thereby increasing their performance in academics.

However, the findings of this study disagree with that of Malick (2011), who conducted a study and found out that openness to experience of high school social studies teacher of Lincoln high institution did not correlate positively with student's academic achievement.

Nevertheless, a teacher who is open to experience is more motivated to engage in intellectual pursuits and trainings that will increase his or her knowledge and technology base; thereby giving the students a more updated knowledge on the subject matter. This by extension will positively and significantly influence the students' academic achievement as it will make them to be curious and inquisitive thereby making them to appreciate the advent of new teachings methods, technology and novel developments.

5. CONCLUSION

It was generally concluded that, teachers' agreeableness and openness to experience significantly influence secondary school students' English language academic achievement in Ogoja education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

English teachers should be friendly and disposed at any time to meet the needs of the students academically.

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