

Teachers' Characteristics and Teaching Styles as Determinants of Students' Achievement in Senior Secondary Schools Civics and English Language in Osun State, Nigeria

Babatunde Adeniyi Adeyemi

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

Beatrice Bunmi Adeyemi

Olusegun Agagu University of Science and Technology, Okitipupa, Nigeria

Joshua Olayemi Salami

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

The study examined the status of senior secondary schools' students' achievement in Civic Education and English Language in Osun State. It also investigated the Civic Education and English Language teachers' characteristics in the state and determined the teaching styles of Civic Education and English Language teachers in the study areas and finally assessed the influence of teachers' characteristics and teaching styles on students' achievement in secondary schools Civic Education and English Language. The study adopted Discriminant Analysis. The study sample consisted of 600 senior secondary school students, 30 Civics teachers, and 30 English Language teachers that were selected using multi-stage sampling procedure. Four instruments were constructed and validated before use. Three research questions were asked and answered while one hypothesis was tested and verified. The results among others showed that more than 50% of the students that participated in the study had high status of achievement in Civic Education while more than 40% of English Language students that participated in the study had low status of achievement. The study also showed that teachers' characteristics pertinent to both Civic Education teachers and English Language teachers were, effective discipline skills (Civics, $M = 1.20$, $SD = 0.407$; English, $M = 1.40$, $SD = 0.498$) and good communication with parents (Civics, $M = 1.43$, $SD = 0.504$; English, $M = 1.40$, $SD = 0.498$). In addition, there was significant influence of teachers' characteristics and teaching styles on students' achievement in Civics and English Language in senior secondary schools ($\chi^2(2) = 16.37$, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that teachers' characteristics and teaching styles are major determinants of students' achievement in Civic Education and English Language.

Keywords: teachers' characteristics, teaching styles, Civics, English Language, students' achievement

Babatunde Adeniyi Adeyemi, Ph.D, Professor, Institute of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Beatrice Bunmi Adeyemi, Ph.D, Doctor of Philosophy, General and Entrepreneurial Studies Unit, Faculty of Science, Olusegun Agagu University of Science and Technology, Okitipupa, Nigeria.

Joshua Olayemi Salami, M.A.Ed, Ph.D student, Institute of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Introduction

It is no gainsaying when it is mentioned that teachers occupy a pivotal role in the affairs of any nation. A substantial measure of development of any nation is hinged on the performance and the operation of the teachers in such a nation. Teachers, though, not architects, are often dubbed as builders of nations; not potters, but often given the nomenclature of molders and yet not engineers per se but are often referred to as fabricators and chief movers of the society where they domicile. Civic Education and English Language are part of compulsory subjects that must be passed at least at credit level at senior secondary school level before one can gain admission into a higher institution of learning. Adeyemi (2018a) insisted that Civic Education curriculum at senior secondary must be effectively taught so that the goals and objectives of introducing the subject should be well impacted in the lives of the learners. In similar vein, Adeyemi (2016) had reiterated that since Civic Education starts from primary school level to senior secondary school level, the subject must be effectively taught with the appropriate teaching strategies that would inculcate right values in the lives of the pupils at the lower primary school level which will later be built up in the nearest future.

English Language as a discipline according to Adeyemi (2019a), as remained predominant in Nigeria, is expected that learners develop competence in it. She equally reiterated that English is a prestigious language, foreign language as well as second language. In another development, Adeyemi (2019b) posited that English Language should be taught effectively in this present dispensation and effort should be made in integrating ICT in English Language teaching. Salami and Fawole (2019) maintained that the importance of qualification of teachers in the teaching and learning situation cannot be overemphasized. They further averred that the teacher of English Language in the language learning situation is more than a guide but has a significant role to play. Cox (2021) therefore stated that teachers need to be flexible and be able to adapt to whatever is thrown their way. To be successful in their profession which requires absolute dedication, there is need for them to possess compatible personality with the teaching profession. It has often been maintained that the quality of a student depends largely on the quality of his teachers.

This claim had been attested over the centuries that the quality of any nation cannot go beyond the quality of her teachers. Consequently, worthwhile qualities are found traceable to teachers if they would discharge their noble assignments with success. Ozen (2015), among others, identified being flexible, creative, tolerant and having a democratic grip as some of the good qualities that must be possessed. Concerning the perception of the students about their teachers, 12 major characteristics were identified as being the most cherished. The 12 characteristics are preparedness, positivity, high expectations, creativity, fairness, displaying a personal touch, cultivating a sense of belongingness, compassion, having a sense of humour, respect for students, forgiving, and admitting mistakes (Renard and Rogers, 1999).

In the same wise, Wentzel (2002), Adeyemi (2009), Adeyemi (2018b), and Adeyemi and Olajide (2019) believed that teacher's style and characteristics can make effective impacts on the students and greatly affect students' achievements. Aitikin and Zuvosky (1994) have demonstrated that teaching styles, which are thought to be a reflective of teachers' view on learning as well as teaching cum the behaviour that is preferred by the teachers receive a considerable degree of attention within the purview of educational literature. Opdenakker and Damme (2006), in their study, discovered that teacher characteristics with the attendant variables as gender, teacher education and certification, class management skills and job satisfaction and teaching styles are good indicators of good classroom practice. They averred further that presence of effective classroom practices can

best be explained by a learner-centred teaching style and by good class management skills. It is on this note that Yaratan and Muezzin (2016) concluded that every profession must target its development during its practice and they consequently attempted to develop a scale to measure teacher characteristics.

Statement of Problem

In Nigeria, it is apparently known that secondary school education is a critical period when students are very close to the examinations conducted by the external bodies like the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and the National Examination council (NECO). Good performances of students are the joy of the candidates, the parents or ward, the candidates themselves (students), and the teachers who present the students for the examinations. Hence, to record a sounding success in the examinations, teachers' characteristics and teaching style are very germane to the success or otherwise of the students. Similarly, research had been carried on teacher characteristics and styles as effectiveness enhancing general classroom practice (Opdenakker & Damme, 2006). The research did not pin the characteristics and teaching styles variables to the subjects, English and Civics.

Yaratan and Muezzin (2016) also researched into developing a characteristics scale to for the teaching profession but they did experiment it on any subject. Salami and Fawole (2019), in their own research, did not discuss anything relating to teachers styles and characteristics but their preoccupation was on the choice of language that must be carefully chosen by an English Language teacher. It is on this note that this research is considered as being necessary and important in order to fill these gaps that had been identified. English Language is also a subject that must be passed at least, at credit level before any candidate can gain admission into university. According to Fawole and Salami (2017), the cherished position English Language is accorded in Nigeria has made parents to wish their children to start speaking English Language while still in the womb if possible. In the same vein, Civics is just officially returned to the syllabus of secondary schools. Civics is seen as a panacea to solving many social ills that present themselves in the society. With the noble and significant roles assigned to these subjects, the paper is deemed fit to fill the gaps that are already identified.

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the status of senior secondary schools' students' achievement in Civic Education and English Language;
2. Investigate the Civic Education and English Language teacher's characteristics in state secondary schools;
3. Determine the teaching styles of Civic Education and English Language teachers in state secondary schools; and
4. Assess the influence of teachers' characteristics and teaching styles on students' achievement in secondary schools Civic Education and English Language.

Research Questions

1. What is status of the senior secondary schools' students' achievement in Civic Education and English Language?
2. What are the Civic Education and English Language teacher's characteristics in state secondary schools?
3. What are the teaching styles of Civic Education and English Language teachers in state secondary schools?

Hypothesis

There is no significant influence of teachers' characteristics and teaching styles on students' achievement in secondary schools Civic Education and English Language.

Methodology

The study adopted Discriminant Analysis. The population for the study comprised 137,683 students in senior secondary schools in Osun State and their teachers. The study sample consisted of 600 senior secondary school students, 30 Civics teachers, and 30 English Language teachers that were selected using multi stage sampling procedure. From the three senatorial districts in Osun State, three Local Government Areas (LGAs) were selected in each of the three LGAs using simple random sampling technique. Five schools were selected from each local government, 40 students, two Civics teachers as well as two English Language teachers in each school. Four instruments were used for the collection of data. These include: (i) Teacher Characteristics Questionnaire (TCQ), (ii) Teacher Teaching Styles Questionnaire (TTSQ), (iii) Civic Achievement Test (CAT), and (iv) English Language Achievement Test (ELAT).

TCQ was an inventory constructed for teachers. It has 10 distinct variables that consisted of variables that made teachers. These include: (i) an engaging personality and teaching style, (ii) clear objectives for the lesson, (iii) effective discipline skills, (iv) good classroom management skills, (v) good communication with parents, (vi) high expectations, (vii) knowledge of curriculum and standard, (viii) knowledge of subject matter, (ix) passion for children and teaching, (x) strong rapport with students. TCQ was trial tested and validated using 30 teachers of Civics as well as 30 teachers of English Language from co-educational public schools that were not part of the sample that participated in the study. Cronbach alpha was used to establish the construct validity and internal consistency of the instrument which was found to be 0.78.

The TTSQ was administered to both Civics and English Language teachers to determine the teaching style mostly employed by them. It is a standardized instrument with two sections adopted from the teaching style of Reichmann (1996). Section A contained teacher's bio data, i.e., subject taught, gender, and so on, while Section B consisted of 40 items describing the four categories of teaching styles. It was a rating scale instruments with four options ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" such that SD = 1, D = 2, A = 3, and SA = 4. The items consisted of four categories of teaching styles of which formal authority had 11 items, demonstrator had 10 items, facilitator had 10 items, and delegator had nine items. The maximum point for the formal authority was 44 points, demonstrator was 40 points, and facilitator was 40 points while delegator was 36 points. The total score obtained in each category provided the basis for the classification of the teaching styles of Civics and English Language teachers. The instrument was re-validated in another environment different from where the study was carried out. The instrument was administered on 30 Civics teachers and 30 English Language teachers outside the study area before use and a reliability index of 0.89 was obtained using Cronbach alpha.

CAT and ELAT were administered on the sampled students consisted of 40 items objective test in each subject based on the scheme of work that had been covered by the students in all the sampled schools. CAT and ELAT were validated with the use of split-half and the spearman prophecy formula. The reliabilities coefficient of 0.81 and 0.87 respectively were obtained.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the status of senior secondary school students' achievement in Civic Education and English Language?

To answer this research question, student's responses to CAT and ELAT based on the items in the questionnaire as rated by the researcher were used. The students' respective correct scores were summed up and the percentage was taken to build their achievement status. Students whose scores were 60 and above were considered as having high status, students whose scores are between 40-59 are considered as having moderate status, and students whose score are below 40 score were considered as having low status.

Table 1

Status of Students' Achievement in Civic Education and English Language

Subject	High (%)	Moderate (%)	Low (%)	Total (%)
Civic Education	350 (58.3)	200 (33.3)	50 (8.3)	600 (100.0)
English Language	152 (25.3)	170 (28.3)	278 (46.3)	600 (100.0)

Table 1 show that 58.3% of Civic Education students had high status, 33.3% had moderate status, and 8.3% had low status. Also, 25.3% of English Language students had high status, 28.3% had moderate status, and 46.3% had low status. There is an indication from this result that more than 50% of the students that participated in the study had high status of achievement in Civic Education while more than 40% of English Language students that participated in the study had low status of achievement.

Research Question 2: What are the Civic Education and English Language teacher's characteristics in senior secondary schools?

Table 2

Teachers' Characteristics in Senior Secondary School

Teachers' characteristics		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
An engaging personality and teaching style	Civics	30	1.10	0.305
	English	30	1.50	0.509
Clear objectives for lessons	Civics	30	1.20	0.407
	English	30	1.33	0.479
Effective discipline skills	Civics	30	1.20	0.407
	English	30	1.40	0.498
Good classroom management skills	Civics	30	1.17	0.379
	English	30	1.10	0.305
High expectations	Civics	30	1.10	0.305
	English	30	1.13	0.346
Knowledge of curriculum and standards	Civics	30	1.13	0.346
	English	30	1.23	0.430
Knowledge of subject matter	Civics	30	1.03	0.183
	English	30	1.23	0.430
Passion for children and teaching	Civics	30	1.13	0.346
	English	30	1.30	0.466
Good communication with parents	Civics	30	1.43	0.504
	English	30	1.40	0.498
Strong rapport with students	Civics	30	1.13	0.346
	English	30	1.30	0.466
Valid N (listwise)		30		

Table 2 indicates the teaching characteristics of Civics and English Language teachers in senior secondary schools. It can be observed that Civic Education teachers mostly had good communication with parents with a mean score of 1.43 and a standard deviation of 0.504, clear objectives for lessons with a mean score of 1.20 and standard deviation of 0.407, and effective discipline skills with a mean score of 1.20 and a standard deviation of 0.407.

It can also be observed from the table that majority of English Language teachers had an engaging personality and teaching style with a mean score of 1.50 and a standard deviation of 0.509. They also had effective discipline skills with a mean score of 1.40 and standard deviation of 0.498 and good communication with parents with a mean score of 1.40 and standard deviation of 0.498.

It can be therefore be deduced that teachers' characteristics pertinent to both Civic Education teachers and English Language teachers were effective discipline skills (Civics, $M = 1.20$, $SD = 0.407$; English, $M = 1.40$, $SD = 0.498$) and good communication with parents (Civics, $M = 1.43$, $SD = 0.504$; English, $M = 1.40$, $SD = 0.498$).

Research Question 3: What is the teaching style of Civic Education and English Language teachers in senior secondary schools?

Table 3

Teaching Styles of Senior Secondary School Teachers

		Teaching styles			
		Formal authority	Demonstrator	Facilitator	Delegator
Civic Education	Mean	32.13	22.90	29.43	27.67
	Standard Deviation	6.972	3.907	4.216	5.047
English Language	Mean	32.77	35.00	25.03	28.17
	Standard Deviation	6.826	3.384	4.867	3.630

Table 3 shows the mean scores and standard deviations of senior secondary school teachers of Civic Education and English Language. The most prevalent teaching styles of Civic Education teachers are formal authority ($M = 32.13$, $SD = 6.972$) and facilitator ($M = 29.43$, $SD = 4.216$). The table also shows that the most prevalent teaching styles of English Language teachers are demonstrator ($M = 35.00$, $SD = 3.384$) and formal authority ($M = 32.77$, $SD = 6.826$).

Hypothesis: There is no significant influence of teachers' characteristics and teaching styles on students' achievement in Civics and English Language in senior secondary schools.

A Discriminant Analysis was carried out using two predictors, teacher styles and teaching characteristics. The Mean was calculated and used for the analysis. The grouping variable was students' achievement in Civics and students' achievement in English Language.

This table below gives basic descriptive statistics for Civics and English Language students achievement on the dependent variables (teaching styles & teachers characteristics).

Result in Table 5 reveals that Wilks' Lambda was statically significant for the combined functions, $\chi^2(2) = 16.37$, $p < 0.05$. Hence, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected since the p value 0.000 is less than 0.05. This means that there is significant influence of teachers' characteristics and teaching styles on students' achievement in Civics and English Language in senior secondary schools.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Characteristics and Teaching Styles on Students' Achievement in Civics and English Language

Achievement		Mean	Std. Deviation
Civics achievement	Teachers' characteristics	1.16	0.145
	Teaching styles	28.03	2.025
English achievement	Teachers' characteristics	1.29	0.218
	Teaching styles	30.24	2.344
Total	Teachers' characteristics	1.23	0.195
	Teaching styles	29.14	2.441

Table 5

Discriminant Analysis of Teachers' Characteristics and Teaching Styles on Students' Achievement in Civics and English Language in Senior Secondary Schools

Test of function(s)	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	0.750	16.369	2	0.000

Discussion of Findings

The study so far has examined teachers' characteristics and teaching styles as determinants of students' achievement in senior secondary schools Civics and English Language in Osun state, Nigeria. The study showed that there is significant influence of teachers' characteristics and teaching styles on students' achievement in Civics and English Language in senior secondary schools. This research corroborated the finding of Baldwin (2010) who also maintained that teachers' characteristics have a great impact on students' achievement. The finding of study is also in line with the results of Yaratan and Muezzin (2016) who concluded that teachers' characteristics are good indicators that would determine the achievements of students. Opdenakker and Damme (2006) study effects of teachers' characteristics (gender, teacher education and certification, class management skills, and job satisfaction). It was also found out in the research that the presence of effective classroom practices can be explained by a learner-centred style. The research supported the current research in that teaching style of teachers is a determinant of students' achievement. On teachers' styles, the study of Hussain and Ayub (2012) also supported this study that teachers should realize the importance and implications of their learning styles which invariably is bound to rob off on the achievements of students.

Toraman's (2019) argument is also in line with this study as the study saw effective teacher characteristics such as competence in subject matter knowledge, teaching skills, personal characteristics, and professional development as variables that are germane to students' achievement. The important variables that were identified in this study were also noted by Brown and Cinamon (2016) as necessary characteristics that teachers must reflect in order to impact their students positively. The variables identified are extraversion, openness, conscientiousness, among others.

Limitation to the Study

The study focused on senior secondary schools; further studies may be carried out at primary school level, junior secondary school level, and tertiary level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

English Language and Civics are subjects that are often downgraded mostly by students. They perceive the subjects as ones that can be easily read and understood with little or no assistance from any tutor or teacher. This wrong perception has undoubtedly affected the performance of the students in the external examinations. Seeing the abysmal failure of students in these subjects requires that teachers who are certificated in the subjects project the subjects in a better mood with their teaching characteristics and style. It is recommended that English Language and Civics teachers endeavour to hone their skills. These can better be achieved when they have clear objectives of the lesson to be taught, possess good classroom management skills, and have high expectations. It should be noted as well that teachers of English Language and Civics should extend their tentacles beyond classroom; home front of the students are also a veritable arena that must be exploited by the teachers. This could best be achieved if they have passion for the children and thereby have good communication with the parents. The strong passion they have for the students can also be demonstrated when English Language and Civics teachers create a strong rapport with the parents of the students under their tutelage. Doing all these would make the subjects appealing to the students and the performance of the students would be appealing to all the stake holders encompassing the parents, the students, and the teachers themselves.

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